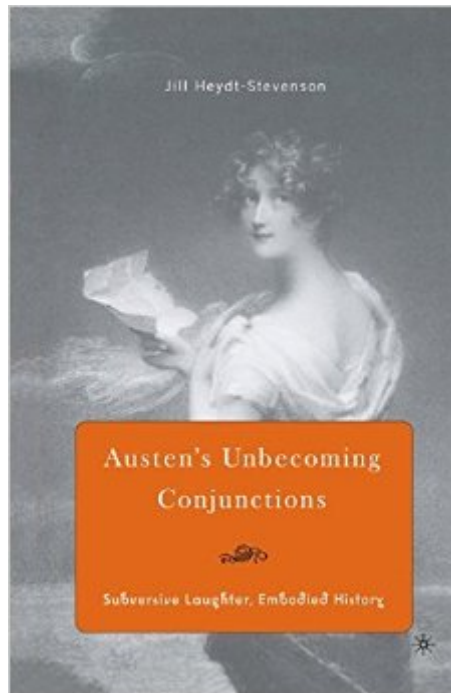


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# Austen's Unbecoming Conjunctions: Subversive Laughter, Embodied History



## Synopsis

Austen's *Unbecoming Conjunctions* is a contemporary study of all Jane Austen's writings focusing on her representation of women, sexuality, the material objects, and linguistic patterns by which this sexuality was expressed. Heydt-Stevenson demonstrates the subtle, vulgar, and humorous ways Austen uses human bodies, objects, and activities (fashion, jewelry, crafts, popular literature, travel and tourism, money, and courtship rituals) to convey sexuality and sexual appetites. Through the sexual subtext, Heydt-Stevenson proposes, Austen satirized contemporary sexual hypocrisy; overcame the stereotypes of women authors as sexually inhibited, sheltered, or repressed; and addressed as sophisticated and worldly an audience as Byron's. Thus through her careful reading of all the Austen texts in light of the language of eroticism, both traditional and contemporary, Heydt-Stevenson re-evaluates Austen's audience, the novels, and her role as a writer.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

As a former student of Heydt-Stevenson's I was most pleasantly surprised to find this - - it was a rather long time in preparation. Anyone, whether a student or a casual reader of Austen's work (say, are there any of those around?), should find this eminently readable book a delight.

Heydt-Stevenson's close readings offer observations that are both comical and wry, two qualities not always immediately apparent in Austen's own work. Along with Daniel Pool's historical *What Jane Austen Ate And Charles Dickens Knew*, it's a very enlightening supplement. Yes, Heydt-Stevenson stretches some of her points pretty far in order to persuade. But what would a

work of literary criticism be without stretched points? After reading this book, Sense And Sensibility will never be the same for you. And you can decapitalize both of those S's, by the way.

Helpful book. I'm using a chapter in my Jane Austen class next semester.

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