

politics and humanities ep 3

[00:00:00.06] TOM MERRILL: Hello. This is Politics and the Humanities, a podcast from American University. I'm Tom Merrill. I'm here with Sarah Marsh, my colleague from the Department of Literature. We are going to be discussing Pride and Prejudice and the problem of self-knowledge and self-deception today.

[00:00:17.19] Before I get started, I should say that if you want to comment or if you have a reaction, please send it to us at PoliticsAndTheHumanities-- in one word-- @gmail.com. And we'd love to get your responses and hear what you think. And if you ask us question, we'll try to respond to it on a future episode. But we're here to talk about Pride and Prejudice and Jane Austen.

[00:00:41.67] Sarah, you teach this book. Is that right?

[00:00:44.46] SARAH MARSH: I do. I teach it every year. I think I've probably read it every year since I was in graduate school. And I have a lot of ideas about this book and delighted to get to talk with you about it today.

[00:01:02.29] TOM MERRILL: So I confess that I have never taught this book. I think I read it once back when I was in college. And I thought that it was a soap opera and never returned to it. So I think your first job is, coming from a part of the science world, this looks like a lot of mere interpersonal interactions, I guess you might say.

[00:01:25.77] SARAH MARSH: Mm-hmm.

[00:01:26.19] TOM MERRILL: So am I wrong about that?

[00:01:28.74] SARAH MARSH: Just a little. So that's a dominant view. That was a reading of Austen that held sway for a very long time. And when I teach this book, we talk about that a lot-- the idea that folks who have read Pride and Prejudice or seen any of the film adaptations are taught by the popular culture to understand Austen as chick lit or as a great romance. And I think there's plenty of material in the books to support those kinds of readings.

[00:02:00.31] But I also tell them that Austen was a savvy observer of social and political relationships. And one of the things that we try to do in the classes I teach is to sort of put those ideas t01 72.024 2.65 464.23 Tm0 G[q TJETQMC P MCID 5BDC q0.00000912 0 G. 2 Tf1 0 0 1 72.024 478.0

[00:10:28.79] And I feel like Austen does that without quite having a character who's going to look straight at the camera. She says things, and if you read it quickly, it seems to mean one thing. But if you read it slowly, you start to realize that she's being sarcastic or that she undercuts it immediately, and that there's a subtext that is closer to what she really thinks about the thing that you have to do some thinking in order to get to.

[00:10:54.51] And it occurred to me-- if you could go through and, as it were, highlight the subtext, make the subtext the text, you might actually come up with a quite different impression of the book--

[00:11:05.41] SARAH MARSH: Yes.

[00:11:06.83] TOM MERRILL: --than you would if you just thought that it were just another soap opera. And so I thought-- would you help me? I want to have some thoughts about the opening lines of the book?

[00:11:18.40] SARAH MARSH: Oh, yeah. Let's do it.

[00:11:20.11] TOM MERRILL: Would you mind reading?

[00:11:21.94] SARAH MARSH: Not at all. OK. Here it is. Volume 1, chapter 1. "It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife. However little known the feelings or views of such a man may be on his first entering a neighborhood, this truth is so well fixed in the minds of the surrounding families that he is considered as the rightful property of some one or other of their daughters."

[00:11:58.99] TOM MERRILL: So on the first sort of go-round, it looks as though you have this heroic male figure striding onto the scene right who is the focus of attention.

[00:12:09.79] SARAH MARSH: Uh-huh.

[00:12:10.38] TOM MERRILL: And it seems to be somehow an assertion of-- there is an assertion of universality, that this is sort of the paradigm story in human life, is that the male shows up, and he's going to find a wife.

[00:12:27.38] SARAH MARSH: Right.

[00:12:28.41] TOM MERRILL: Who do you think is speaking in that first line?

[00:12:33.33] SARAH MARSH: Yeah. So the analogy to *The Office* is so smart. Tell your kids how brilliant they are at Austen scholarship, because the camera work is the way the narrator works in what Austen is doing here. It's a kind of, like, roving eyeball that can zoom in and have intimacy with some characters, even sometimes get inside of their subjectivity.

[00:13:00.79] But I think what we've got here-- like, this is the big-- if we were watching a film or we were watching this on television, this would be the big, wide camera angle. And then it would slowly zoom in to the families that we're about to meet. But

[00:13:17.02] This view, this narrator's framing of the whole novel, is the big scene of the whole human experience, as you said, Tom-- that there's a man, and traditionally, men with fortunes need wives. That's the abstraction. And then everything that follows is the sort of detail that unfolds, the particularity of the problems and what we can accomplish or not through that system.

[00:13:53.12] TOM MERRILL: But I was thinking something slightly different, because-- well, number one, the thing that's so striking about it is how passively it's phrased.

[00:14:02.08] SARAH MARSH: Yeah.

[00:14:02.29] TOM MERRILL: It's almost completely anonymous. It's not-- I mean, I was thinking about alternative ways you could have written the sentence. And one of them might be-- because the speaker-- the obvious answer is, the speaker is Jane Austen. And Jane Austen could have said, I have observed that when a man moves into a neighborhood, that all the families around are immediately marrying them off in their minds.

[00:14:25.37] But that would be a different-- that would be a more honest sentence, but it wouldn't say exactly what I think she's trying to say.

[00:14:31.36] SARAH MARSH: Yeah.

[00:14:31.93] TOM MERRILL: There's something about the anonymity of "it is a truth universally acknowledged" that strikes me as really important. And then, the other thing that I thought-- you tell me what you think about this-- but we talked about John Stuart Mill and the idea of social tyranny of the majority. I think that's what this is. I think the definition of social tyranny in the majority is, it's a social construction that we have naturalized and that we never think to even question. We think that it's as natural as gravity or, you know, the stars going around the Earth in the night or whatever.

[00:15:07.22] But this is a truth that is a highly contingent truth that has been elevated into what seems to be a law of nature.

[00:15:16.84] SARAH MARSH: Yeah. That's right. And in that sense, the book becomes sort of like a proof or disproof of the general principle that it is a truth universally acknowledged.

[00:15:34.03] TOM MERRILL: Right. And she's going to undercut it in many different ways. Right? And part of the funniness of the line is that it turns out not to be quite true.

[00:15:45.49] SARAH MARSH: Right.

[00:15:46.25] TOM MERRILL: And even as early as the second line, "however little known the

[00:24:05.85] TOM MERRILL: Comedy is funny when we see somebody who thinks they're doing one thing. That's why Michael Scott is so funny, is because he thinks he lives in a world of what he's imagined. And everyone else can see you're a fool. You're about to slip on the banana peel.

[00:24:20.72] SARAH MARSH: Right. And that's what Mr. Bennet says, I think, toward the end of the book. He says, what do we live for but to make sport for our neighbors and laugh at them in our turn? And this sort of-- this is part of the human comedy, that we all take our role, for better or for worse, as Michael Scott. Maybe we're not all Michael Scott.

[00:24:46.89] TOM MERRILL: Well, my children inform me that I'm the Michael Scott of our household. I'm not sure how I'm supposed to feel about that.

[00:24:53.73] [LAUGHTER]

[00:24:57.51] SARAH MARSH: Like I said, it sounds like you have some Austen scholars on your hands.

[00:25:00.78] TOM MERRILL: [LAUGHS] So shall we-- I can tell you that my daughter, who's now 12, read this, I think, last year and was revolted at the idea that anyone was going to make her get married to anybody. So several days of protest, which I guess is to be expected. Should we talk about Mr. Collins, speaking of comic figures?

[00:25:25.53] SARAH MARSH: Speaking of the Michael Scotts of the world.

[00:25:29.22] TOM MERRILL: Yeah. How would you describe-- we need to set it up a little bit. How would you describe Mr. Collins?

[00:25:35.28] SARAH MARSH: So it's really hard for me to imagine Mr. Collins without thinking of David Bamber's portrayal of him in the BBC *Pride and Prejudice*. So I sort of think of a diminutive figure who's sort of always bowing and undertaking these rituals of deference. And it's interesting though. In the book, he is described as being a tall, well-formed figure. So he is not the sycophant that David Bamber portrays in what I think is a well-known film.

[00:26:15.00] So that struck me this time through to think about the ways that even Mr. Collins might cut some kind of a figure, at least physically. And then he opens his mouth and gives the lie to every other impression.

[00:26:33.58] TOM MERRILL: We have to also just note-- he's the heir to Mr. Bennet's money.

[00:26:38.88] SARAH MARSH: That's right.

[00:26:39.33] TOM MERRILL: And through some weird legal thing-- I mean, this is sort of the gimmick that makes the whole story work. Through some weird legal thing, Mr. Bennet can't leave his money to his daughters, which you would think would be the just thing and the thing that he would want.

[00:26:54.49] And so Mr. Collins is going to inherit. And he thinks, well, since I'm going to inherit, I might as well marry one of the daughters.

[00:27:00.30] SARAH MARSH: Right.

[00:29:41.04] SARAH MARSH: That's right.

[00:29:41.88] TOM MERRILL: And if you think about this politically, what's the political message of Austen's book? I mean, Lady Catherine is pompous and condescending and basically a horrible person. And Collins is somebody who likes kissing up to powerful people.

[00:29:59.43] And so I think the implication is that the nobility is completely self-absorbed and oblivious to everyone else in the world and that the clergy spends its time kissing up to the nobility and telling them how great they are. That's a pretty radical thing to imply, I would think.

[00:30:18.57] SARAH MARSH: That's right. And when we consider that Austen's own father was a clergyman, she had some insight into these dynamics. And Austen's family was by no means part of the aristocracy. This was undoubtedly something she had an opportunity to observe during her own lifetime.

[00:30:39.93] And we see the dichotomy, too. I think it comes out more strongly in Emma, with the character of George Knightley. But there's also the idea that the aristocracy is good for some things. You know, we have a Darcy, who is-- we hear over and over again that he is a good steward to the poor and that he takes care of his tenants and his servants.

[00:31:09.99] And I think those two views of the aristocracy are really, really fighting it out with one another in the relationship of Lady Catherine to Darcy in the book, which is another really interesting wrinkle, because, of course, she is his aunt.

[00:31:24.93] TOM MERRILL: Right. Well, shall we read some of Mr. Collins?

[00:31:30.15] SARAH MARSH: Yeah. Tom, why don't you take it from the top of the proposal?

[00:31:35.24] TOM MERRILL: So just to set it up-- so Mr. Collins says, "but before I'm run away--" so he's proposing to her. And he says, "before I'm run away by my feelings on the subject, perhaps it would be advisable for me to state my reasons for marrying-- and, moreover, for coming into Hertfordshire with the design of selecting a wife, as I certainly did."

[00:31:54.38] And Jane interjects. "The idea of Mr. Collins, with all his solemn composure, being run away by his feelings made Elizabeth so near laughing that she could not use the short pause he allowed in any attempt to stop him further." Right? So Elizabeth is already cracking up at the ridiculousness of this.

[00:32:12.42] SARAH MARSH: Right. And the other piece of what's so funny about this is that Mr. Collins can't leave Hertfordshire, which is where the Bennets live, without someone promising to marry him, because Lady Catherine dispatches him from where he lives at Hunsford. And she's like, go find a wife. I want someone to visit. Go find a wife.

[00:32:36.56] TOM MERRILL: He's following the instructions of the person that he really cares about.

[00:35:27.26] But he starts off by saying, well, I think it would be good for me to set an example for everybody else. It's like, is somebody paying attention to you that I'm unaware of here?

[00:35:38.93] SARAH MARSH: Right. And I think that the other part of the joke is that he is going to be the example of marriage. Already, he doesn't understand what it's about. And somehow he is going to be the one to model it back home, I think is the other part of the joke.

[00:35:58.74] TOM MERRILL: So one word that I think is important in his speech there-- "twice she has condescended." That word condescended mostly has a negative sense for us, but also could have a positive sense.

[00:36:11.85] SARAH MARSH: For Collins, it does. It's a mark of his visibility to the powerful or the people he presumes to have a certain kind of power. And, in some ways, that's the sum total of his of his motivation. He's busy fulfilling the obligations of the entailment. There's nothing he can do to not inherit Longbourn, even though he already has a place to live.

[00:36:44.49] I mean, when Mr. Bennet dies, Mr. Collins will have two estates. He'll have the living at Hunsford, which is the parish that's associated with Lady Catherine's landed estate. And he'll have Longbourn, which now belongs to the Bennets, which is another really interesting point in this sort of novel with all these people who are not going to have a place to live. We have this one man who has two houses.

[00:37:12.32] TOM MERRILL: And there's no way that he's going to go live in Longbourn, because he's so--

[00:37:15.30] SARAH MARSH: Oh, no.

[00:37:16.08] TOM MERRILL: This is really a love speech to Lady Catherine, not to Elizabeth.

[00:37:20.15] SARAH MARSH: No. He would--

[00:37:57.71] SARAH MARSH: And the other thing-- this is one of those examples of what you were pointing out at the beginning, Tom, of the narrator, or of Austen herself intervening and giving a wink or creating some depth or some double-ness what we're reading. So this line-- "you will find her manners beyond anything I can describe." And that is true. Right? Elizabeth--

[00:38:24.52] TOM MERRILL: That's right. But not in a good way.

[00:38:26.39] SARAH MARSH: But not in the way that he thinks. And that capacity of the language that Austen is choosing is what I think gives the book so much energy. And it's part of the comedy. And it cues you in to the idea that the novel is happening on a lot of different levels all at once.

[00:38:54.02] TOM MERRILL: And it's just pleasurable as a reader to see these things and be able to appreciate them.

[00:39:00.08] SARAH MARSH: Yeah.

[00:39:01.85] TOM MERRILL: It's kind of a practice in expanding your imagination. I mean, I remember one point in my life when I was talking to somebody, and I suddenly realized, in order to understand what this person is saying, I have to hear what they're not saying, the things that they're avoiding trying to say. And it was kind of a revelation. Like, I needed to see everything upside down.

[00:39:22.54] SARAH MARSH: Yeah.

[00:39:24.42] TOM MERRILL: But maybe all of us speak that way, because it's hard to say the entire truth.

[00:39:30.11] SARAH MARSH: Right. And we only have the words that we're able to say in the time that we've got allotted. And yet there's all the other things.

[00:39:37.90] The other thing that this brings up for me, too, is the pleasure of rereading books. And I think *Pride and Prejudice* is one of those books that people tend to go back to over and over again, because moments like this afford pleasure. Because if you read the first time, we don't know yet that Elizabeth is going to have a very particular kind of relationship with Lady Catherine.

[00:40:02.70] But the second time through, you've got all of that in your mind. And you can see Austen pointing toward it. And I think it speaks to the way that a reading public would have engaged novels during the period of Austen's life, but also an invitation to contemporary readers to re-engage and to go back and read it again, which is not something our reading practices tend to be about these days. It's not like we're--

[00:40:44.04] SARAH MARSH: Right.

"because I know it to be the established custom of your sex to reject a man on the first application, and perhaps you have even now said as much to encourage my suit as would be consistent with a true delicacy of the female character."

[00:42:42.28] SARAH MARSH: "Really, Mr. Collins,' cried Elizabeth with some warmth, 'you puzzle me exceedingly. If what I have hitherto said can appear to you in the form of encouragement, I know not how to express my refusal in such a way as may convince you of its being one.'"

[00:43:00.76] TOM MERRILL: "You must give me leave to flatter myself," because otherwise I wouldn't do it.

[00:43:06.16] [LAUGHTER]

[00:43:08.72] Sorry. "You must give me leave to flatter myself, my dear cousin, that your refusal of my addresses is merely words of course. My reasons for believing it are briefly these-- it does not appear to me that my hand is unworthy your acceptance, or that the establishment I can offer would be any other than highly desirable. My situation in life, my connections with the family of de Bourgh, and my relationship to your own are circumstances highly in my favor. And you should take it into further consideration, that in spite of your manifold attractions, it is by no means certain that another offer of marriage may ever be made to you.

[00:43:48.07] Your portion is unhappily so small that it will in all likelihood undo the effects of your loveliness and amiable qualifications. As I must therefore conclude that you are not serious in your rejection of me, I shall choose to attribute it to your wish of increasing my love by suspense, according to the usual practice of elegant females."

[00:44:09.83] SARAH MARSH: "I do assure you, sir, that I have no pretension whatever to that kind of elegance which consists in tormenting a respectable man. I would rather be paid the compliment of being believed sincere. I thank you again and again for the honor you have done me and your proposals. But to accept them is absolutely impossible. My feelings in every respect forbid it. Can I speak plainer? Do not consider me now as an elegant female intending to plague you, but as a rational creature speaking the truth from her heart."

[00:44:47.36] TOM MERRILL: It just strikes me that those two speeches, Mr. Collins last speech and Elizabeth's last speech-- and there's a little bit more, but I think this is the key-- are finely matched, that they echo each other.

[00:45:02.09] SARAH MARSH: Yes.

[00:45:02.57] TOM MERRILL: And that he finally reveals that he thinks of women as elegant females who say one thing, but you don't really have to take seriously what they say.

[00:45:14.42] SARAH MARSH: That's right.

[00:45:15.83] TOM MERRILL: Because they're going to say yes eventually anyway.

[00:48:13.07] SARAH MARSH: Yes.

[00:48:13.58] TOM MERRILL: Right? But, yeah, I mean, there is something-- I mean, number one, you absolutely-- I mean, I've never seen the BBC version, but I can easily imagine Steve Carell playing this character. You can imagine Michael Scott making proposals that might look like--

[00:48:30.14] SARAH MARSH: I think he makes a couple of proposals in The Office that go, like, a lot--

[00:48:34.51] TOM MERRILL: [LAUGHS] I mean, I guess Mr. Collins takes himself a lot more

[00:51:01.90] There are some minor characters, like Lydia, whose characterological development happens in the terms of passion. And then there are characters like Elizabeth, who is aware of her own thought practices as she is grappling with these social problems, like the fact that when her father dies, she and her family won't have anywhere to live. And I think the analogy to Douglass is really salient.

[00:54:06.37] SARAH MARSH: No, no. I think the theory is right. I think that she recanted. She accepted a proposal by a man named-- Harris was his first name, I think. Harris Bigg-Withers, B-I-G-G-hyphen-W-I-T-H-E-R-S.

[00:54:22.00] TOM MERRILL: Wait. His name was Bigg-Withers?

[00:54:23.57] SARAH MARSH: Mm-hmm. Bigg-Withers.

[00:54:25.86] TOM MERRILL: That sounds [INAUDIBLE].

[00:54:26.90] SARAH MARSH: There are critics who joke that she just couldn't abide that last name, because she had no choice. But she accepts him at first. And then the next morning, she recants her acceptance. And so I think there are biographical instances of Austen making these sorts of moves. Now, what her motivations were exactly, we can't know.

[00:54:53.33] But I think that some amount of being a rational creature, being a thinking being, must, of course, have played in to her choices. And I think it's also true, just if you look at the plain history of what it meant to be a married woman in early 19th-century Britain, and what one's childbearing duties were, in order to produce male heirs to continue these property dynasties, and when you add in the risks of having a baby during the period and the high rates of maternal mortality, we might not have all the novels if she had gotten married.

[00:55:40.88] And I think that's part of the direction of the novel, the way it directs us to think about the well-examined life.

[00:55:58.23] TOM MERRILL: You mean because there might be a tension between leading a life of strong practical attachments where you feel like you can do something really good and a life dedicated to seeing things as clearly as a human being could and articulating that.

[00:56:12.73] SARAH MARSH: Yes.

[00:56:13.35] TOM MERRILL: And there might be two attractive models of the good life that are in tension.

[00:56:17.70] SARAH MARSH: Yes. And that sometimes, like in the Collins example, those are at cross purposes with one another. And then, of course, that gets resolved at the end of the novel with the proposal from someone who is Elizabeth's--

[00:56:36.63] TOM MERRILL: Rich. Rich and otherwise acceptable.

[00:56:40.29] SARAH MARSH: Rich and otherwise acceptable.

[00:56:42.20] TOM MERRILL: Right. Yeah.

[00:56:43.32] SARAH MARSH: Yeah. I mean, I think Austen's pretty clear that this happy ending requires 30,000 pounds a year and a big estate, because that's ultimately what solves

some of the problems that crop up toward the end of the novel. So yeah, I think there's no world in which Austen is not thinking about money as essential for comedic endings, like the one she imagines in *Pride and Prejudice*.

[00:57:22.30] TOM MERRILL: Or just the realism that the romanticism that we see and that in a way attracts us-- you know, because we love these stories because there are attachments, and then they get broken up, and then they come back together. But the underlying realism may be the deeper message.

[00:57:38.34] SARAH MARSH: Yes. And I think there's a lot of scholarship that really pays attention to how much money is in play. What are the relationships of wealth to characters' motivations? And Caroline Bingley, in this novel, is, I think, the exemplar of that mercenary sensibility that's really using marriage, thinking about marriage as a way of consolidating money.

[00:58:07.87] TOM MERRILL: Yeah. They're hedge fund traders, except that marriage is their means of investing.

[00:58:14.93] SARAH MARSH: That's right.

[00:58:16.15] TOM MERRILL: So I want to say a couple more things. And then I have a final thing I want to ask you about. I mean, I was thinking about the way that-- so some of the authors that my students are reading in class, thinking about this roots of political economy class especially-- Adam Smith, I think, would very well understand what Austen is saying, that he's also very attuned to the realities of money. And what's the economic substructure that's necessary for having the kind of life that-- and many of us try to avoid thinking about these ugly realities.

[00:58:49.17] But one of the things you can learn from Smith, as, I think, you can learn from Austen if you really take her seriously, is that you can't avoid those things. But he and Austen, I think, would be sort of more or less on the same page. Like, the world is messed up. We try to do the best that we can.

[00:59:06.30] Karl Marx, I think, would see the same thing but would flip the entire narrative and say, look, this is why this world is so screwed up. And anyone with a heart has to rebel. Right? And I think that one could understand that reaction as well, because for all the happy ending of this book, there are many things that should-- I mean, somebody has to get married to Mr. Collins. Right? It's poor Charlotte. And that's sort of a human sadness, I think, from Austen's point of view.

[00:59:35.36] SARAH MARSH: Yeah.

[00:59:36.27] TOM MERRILL: Not to mention all of the other-- there's a whole world of people who are not able to participate in this conversation that I think Austen is aware of but doesn't highlight.

[00:59:46.80] SARAH MARSH: That's right. I mean, are you thinking, Tom, about the servants who--

[00:59:50.92] TOM MERRILL: Yeah. The servants, the poor, right? I mean, this is a time in which there's an increasing number of people who've been displaced by the Industrial Revolution and who have really horrific lives in ways that even getting married to Mr. Collins isn't in the same realm, the same magnitude of horribleness.

[01:00:10.41] SARAH MARSH: Right. And as Austen's writing the novel, across the ocean, in a former British colony, institutions of chattel slavery are still very much in practice in the United States. And Austen--

[01:00:29.69] TOM MERRILL: You can't write a comedy about that.

[01:00:31.11] SARAH MARSH: You can't. And that's why Austen writes Mansfield Park, which maybe we should talk about in a different conversation. But those things start to become more visible to Austen as she gets older. She's writing Pride and Prejudice as a fairly young woman.

[01:00:46.62] And as she gets older, I think that the realities of social life in Britain and across the ocean in the United States become very real for her. Her brothers serve in the navy. She does have a certain kind of global sensibility, even though she is typically read as the author of--

[01:01:08.88] TOM MERRILL: The most domestic of authors.

[01:01:09.87] SARAH MARSH: --of domestic manners, in a small village, writing about three or four families, which is something, at one point, she says about herself. But, of course, we know that Austen is saying one thing and doing something else.

[01:01:22.62] TOM MERRILL: Doing another. So we need to wrap up here pretty soon. I have one more line that I feel personally insulted by that I need you to tell me if I should be personally insulted or how I should think about this. So this is a line that comes at the very end of chapter 54-- so near the end of the book.

[01:01:44.22] And it's a conversation that Elizabeth is having with Jane. And it seems a little bit like a throwaway line. It's almost too good for the context, like the context doesn't quite fit. It's the very last-- do you know where I am?

[01:01:58.76] SARAH MARSH: I don't. No, I don't have it. But I think--

[01:02:01.45] TOM MERRILL: I'll read it, and you'll recognize it.

[01:02:03.54] SARAH MARSH: OK.

[01:02:05.46] TOM MERRILL: Jane says, "but why should you wish to persuade me that I feel more than I acknowledge?" And Elizabeth answers, "that is a question which I hardly know how to answer. We all love to instruct, though we can teach only what is not worth knowing."
[LAUGHS] And I just can't help but thinking that line-- "we all love to instruct, but we can only teach what is not worth knowing--" that's a slam at professors. Isn't it? I mean, she's talking trash about-- Sarah, she's talking trash about you. Is that fair?

[01:02:31.33] SARAH MARSH: She's on to all of us. Well, no one is safe from Austen's satire, which is why it's so good. Right. I mean, she's making some deliberations. Or she's making some conclusions about how human knowledge practices work and the way we hang on to certain things that we think that we know.

[01:02:56.96] TOM MERRILL: So would you explain that to me?

[01:03:00.46] SARAH MARSH: So can you read the line again?

[01:03:03.31] TOM MERRILL: "We all love to instruct, though we can teach only what is not worth knowing."

[01:03:08.40] SARAH MARSH: Right. So the idea being that teaching can only happen when we are not hanging on to the thing that we're teaching as if it is that shared social knowledge that

