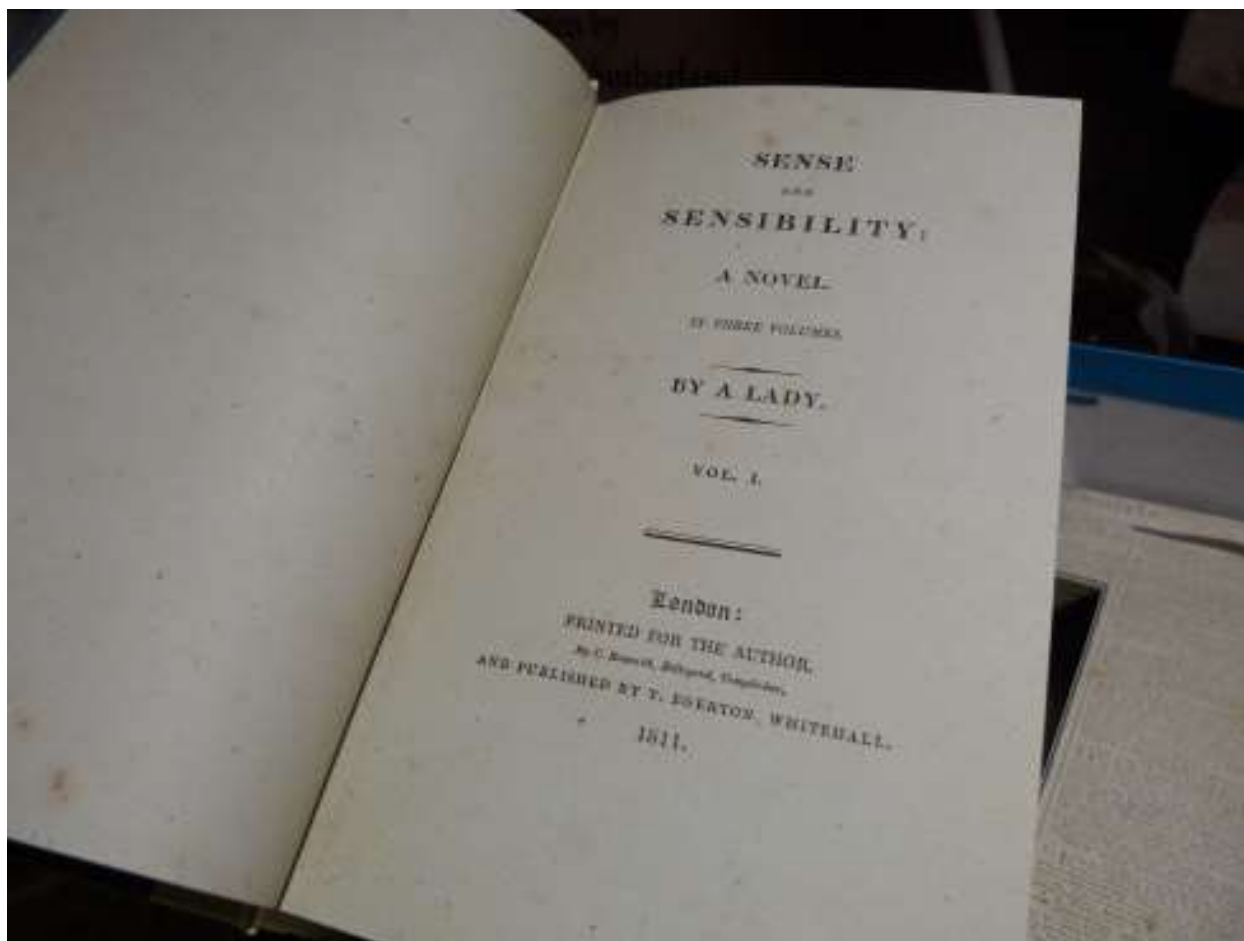


Sense and Sensibility:
A Virtual Gallery

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Sense and Sensibility was Jane Austen's first published novel. It was printed in 1811 with the insignia "By a Lady" on its opening title page¹. Austen was a new author with a new story; a story focused on ladies rather than the men they are trying to attain. *Sense and Sensibility* is a story that focuses on the importance of sororal bonds and friendship over romance.



The title page from a first edition of *Sense and Sensibility*².

In this virtual exhibit, visual representations of *Sense and Sensibility* are on display to highlight the lasting impact of Jane Austen's first ever published novel. This exhibit showcases how her novel has been read and interpreted in a variety of ways throughout time. It begins with the first illustrations found in her novels and includes television and film adaptations of the work as well as new artwork in association to it.

¹ Cavendish, Richard. *Publication of Sense and Sensibility 'By a Lady.'* History Today, 2011. <http://www.historytoday.com/richard-cavendish/publication-sense-and-sensibility-'-lady'>. Accessed 9 Oct 2017.

² "Sense and Sensibility First Edition." *Austenonly*, 17 Jan 2013, <https://austenonly.com/category/200th-anniversary-of-publication-of-sense-and-sensibility/>.

The Illustrations of William Greatbatch

In 1833, the first illustrated copy of *Sense and Sensibility* was published. The edition only included two illustrations. These illustrations were steel engravings etched by the artist William Greatbatch. They reflect the style of the 1830s rather than the period in which the novel was set. This artistic choice was made in an attempt to appeal to the audience of the time³.



The first illustration appears in Volume One Chapter 22. In the illustration, Lucy Steele has produced a portrait of Edward Ferrars as proof of their engagement⁴. Elinor Dashwood (left) appears to be looking intently at the image as if in shock. The illustrations perfectly reflect the scene from the novel. Miss Lucy Steele proudly produces the portrait of her lover while Elinor stands in amazement over the news of the man she loves being attached to another. She is astonished, yet she composes herself, and in leaning on her parasol for support she “stood firm in incredulity and felt in no danger of an hysterical fit, or a swoon” (Austen, 71).



³ Gilson, David, “Later publishing history, with illustrations”, p. 127 *Jane Austen in Context*, edited by Janet Todd, Cambridge University Press (2005) from <https://austenprose.com/tag/william-greatbatch/>. Accessed 10 Oct 2017.

⁴ Greatbatch, William. Austenprose, 11 Apr 2008. Laurel Ann, 1833, <https://austenprose.com/tag/william-greatbatch/>.

In Volume Three Chapter Seven, Elinor is tasked with looking after Marianne, who has fallen ill after losing her beloved Willoughby. In the image, it is clear that the woman in bed, with her elaborate bonnet, is Marianne. Elinor stands over her in an attempt to provide comfort. She is simply dressed. Her focus is on her sister's health, not how she is perceived by the world⁵.

⁵ Greatbatch, William. Austenprose, 11 Apr 2008. Laurel Ann, 1833, <https://austenprose.com/tag/william-greatbatch>.

The Illustrations of Hugh Thomson

In 1896, another illustrated edition of *Sense and Sensibility* came into print. The illustrator of this edition was Hugh Thomson, and he aimed to encapsulate the humor within *Sense and Sensibility* in his illustrations⁶. The expressive faces he incorporates in his drawings bring to life Austen's mockery of social decorum interwoven throughout the novel.



Hugh Thomson chose to include an illustration of Lucy Steele's conversation with Elinor about her secret engagement to Edward Ferrars just as Greatbatch did for the 1833 edition⁷. Thomson's illustrations showcases Elinor's shock just as Greatbatch's illustration, however, it is much subtler and more in keeping with the novel. Elinor is a woman of exertion; she conceals her emotions and pertains a persona

⁶ Hugh Thomson's *Illustrations for Sense and Sensibility, Part One*. Austenonly, 2011. <https://austenonly.com/2011/02/18/hugh-thomsons-illustrations-for-sense-and-sensibility-part-one/>. Accessed 10 Oct 2017.

⁷ Thomson, Hugh. "Amiably bashful." *Austenonly*, 1896, <https://austenonly.com/2011/04/17/hugh-thomson's-illustrations-for-sense-and-sensibility-part-five/>.

of indifference before members of society. The slight lifting of her hand to her mouth highlights her subtle nature; it is hard to notice that she is greatly moved by Lucy's news of the secret engagement. In the Greatbatch rendition, Elinor leans on her parasol and on Lucy Steele for support. Elinor's restraint upon her emotion and strength of disposition is much more emphasized in Thomson's depiction than that of Greatbatch. Thomson also displays the sly nature of Lucy Steele in his drawing much more than Greatbatch does in his own. In Thomson's drawing, Lucy Steele's true catty nature is plainly displayed just as in the text. Miss Steele is "amiably bashful" when she reveals her secret to Elinor. Her bashfulness is an act put on to rile a reaction out of Elinor; it is a form of acting for the purpose of evoking a response from her audience.



This illustration is Thomson's representation of Elinor's response to Marianne's sighting of Willoughby at a ball in London⁸. Marianne is all smiles and cannot conceal her excitement upon seeing Willoughby, who she has been waiting to hear from. Elinor, in response to Marianne's open display of emotion, tries to caution her against wearing her heart on her sleeve for a man who has essentially dismissed her. Can you guess which sister is which in Thomson's illustration of the scene?

⁸ Thomson, Hugh. "At that moment she first perceived him." *Austenonly*, 1896, <https://austenonly.com/2011/04/17/hugh-thomson's-illustrations-for-sense-and-sensibility-part-five/>.

The Illustrations of C.E. Brock

In his illustrations, C.E. Brock kept in mind the time period in which *Sense and Sensibility* was written and drew the characters of the novel with expressive faces much like Thomson⁹. Brock's illustrations, however, seem to embrace Austen's novel more than Thomson's illustrations. Through his own illustrations, Brock showcases the humor in *Sense and Sensibility* while also emphasizing the divide between Elinor and Marianne that is central to the novel. He gives the sisters different hair colors, thus furthering the reader's differentiation between the two women. One sister is a brunette and represents sense, while the other sister is blonde and the essence of sensibility.



This illustration is included in Volume One Chapter 16 of the novel¹⁰. Marianne has been deserted by Willoughby, the love of her life. She cannot bear to go on without him. In his absence, she is suffocated

⁹ The Republic of Pemberley. *Illustrations for Jane Austen's other novels*, by Charles E. Brock and others. Pemberley, 2004-2011. <http://www.pemberley.com/janeinfo/jabrokil.html>. Accessed 10 Oct 2017.

¹⁰ Brock, C.E. "Indulging." *Mollands*, Cinthia, <http://www.mollands.net/etexts/senseandsensibility/snsillus.html>.

by despair. She strolls while “indulging the recollection of past enjoyment and crying over the present reverse” (Austen, 47). Marianne allows her emotions to overcome her; she is the epitome of sensibility, solely derivative of emotion and feeling.



Brock includes an illustration of the Lucy Steele and Elinor’s conversation over Lucy’s secret engagement¹¹. Like Greatbatch, Brock focuses on when Miss. Steele shows Elinor the portrait she carries of Edward. Brock appears to give the most accurate representation of the scene, however. In his illustration, Elinor’s exertion in keeping in her emotions is most fully emphasized. Elinor’s eyes are only on the portrait, looking intently. There appears to be a slight color to her cheeks, but other than that there is no sign of how she truly feels—heartbroken. In this drawing, Brock showcases Elinor as a symbol of sense.

¹¹ Brock, C.E. “She could have no doubt.” *Mollands*, Cinthia, <http://www.mollands.net/etexts/senseandsensibility/snsillus.html>.

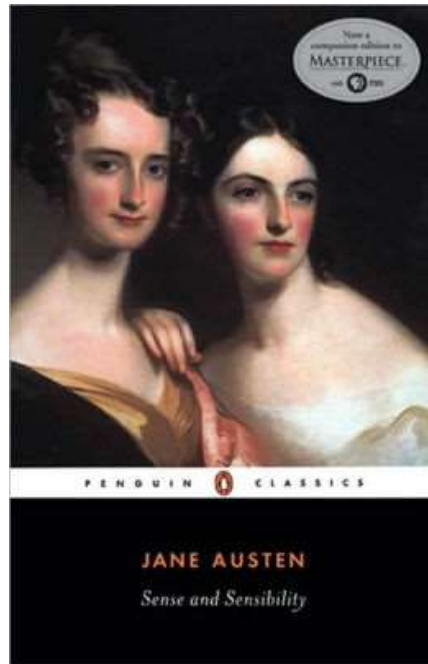


In this scene, Elinor reads Willoughby's letter to Marianne that puts an end to all of Marianne's hopes and dreams regarding their romance¹². Marianne results to hysterics after reading the letter, while Elinor calmly peruses the letter and thinks it over. This illustration showcases how polarly opposite the two sisters are, while also highlighting how inseparable they are. Marianne needs an Elinor for comfort and for guidance and Elinor needs a Marianne to guide and show her the side of life unrestrained by sense.

¹² Brock, C.E. "With what indignation." *Mollands*, Cinthia, <http://www.mollands.net/etexts/senseandsensibility/snsillus.html>.

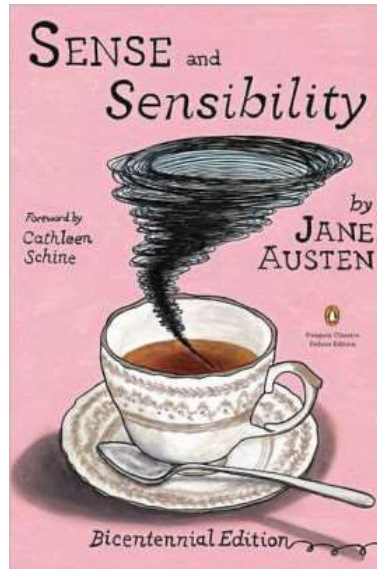
Modern Illustration

More recent editions of *Sense and Sensibility* highlight the differences between Elinor and Marianne by their cover art. This art ranges from traditional to abstract. The variety of style showcases how *Sense and Sensibility* has a place in modern society.



The cover of this Penguin Classics edition of the novel juxtaposes Elinor and Marianne¹³. One sister gazes off into the distance while the other looks forward. One sister wears white and has violent, rosy cheeks while the other is dressed in brown and appears centered in reality. Which sister is Elinor, Marianne?

¹³ Sense and Sensibility. Amazon, Penguin Classics, 1995, https://www.amazon.com/Sense-Sensibility-Penguin-Classics-Austen/dp/0141439661/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1508080515&sr=8-1&keywords=sense+and+sensibility+penguin+classics.



The cover art of this edition emphasizes the role of society in *Sense and Sensibility*¹⁴. On the cover, there is a teacup. This teacup is indicative of social decorum. The tornado coming out of it highlights the disorder that underlies social decorum. Elinor works to keep up this decorum while Marianne completely ignores it. This cover could potentially be a critique on sense.

¹⁴ Sense and Sensibility: Bicenennial Edition. Amazon, Penguin Classics, 1992, https://www.amazon.com/Sense-Sensibility-Penguin-Classics-Deluxe/dp/014310652X/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1508080827&sr=1-1&keywords=sense+and+sensibility+penguin+classics+deluxe+edition.



This cover is of a graphic novel version of *Sense and Sensibility*¹⁵. It adds a higher level of playfulness to the novel. One sister winks at Austen's audience while the other glances at the audience from her book. At the bottom it also appears as if two characters are fighting with wooden swords. This rendition of *Sense and Sensibility* appears to add to the story, to morph it into a tale that is more adapted to social decorum today, which is more expressive than social decorum during Jane Austen's time.

¹⁵ Sense and Sensibility (Marvel Illustrated). Amazon, Marvel, Nancy Butler & Sonny Liew, <https://www.amazon.com/Sense-Sensibility-Marvel-Illustrated-Butler/dp/0785148205>.

Television and Film Adaptations of Sense and Sensibility

As television and film technology developed, many adaptations of *Sense and Sensibility*¹⁶ emerged. These range from television mini-series to a critically acclaimed feature film, along with several other unique adaptations. As with earlier illustrations, the depictions of the Misses Dashwoods vary, with each emphasizing a different interpretation of their personalities and relationship.

Sense and Sensibility: BBC Mini-Series, 1971



In the 1971 BBC television mini-series, actresses Joanna David and Ciaran Madden play Elinor and Marianne Dashwood, respectively. Both actresses appear slightly older, are similar in appearance, and are both blonde, emphasizing their sisterly bond rather than their differences in personality. In this image, the more serene expression on Elinor's face versus the emotion on Marianne's makes it easier to differentiate between the two.

¹⁶Anguish and Comedy in *Sense and Sensibility*, 1971.' Jane Austen's World, 2 Aug. 2008, <http://www.janeaustensworld.wordpress.com/2008/08/02/anguish-and-comedy-in-sense-and-sensibility-1971>

Sense and Sensibility: BBC Mini-Series, 1981



In 1981, ten years after their first production of *Sense and Sensibility*, BBC produced another mini-series.¹⁷In this series, the actresses that play Elinor and Marianne are closer in age to the actual characters. They also chose to portray Marianne as blonde and Elinor as brunette, evoking the common images of sense and sensibility. In this still, Marianne leans on Elinor as they clasp hands, showing their close relationship and Marianne's reliance on Elinor's steadfastness.

¹⁷ "Sense and Sensibility (TV Mini-Series 1981-)." *IMDb*, IMDb.com, www.imdb.com/title/tt0089991/.

Sense and Sensibility, 1995 Film



In the most popular and critically acclaimed version of *Sense and Sensibility*¹⁸, directed by Ang Lee in 1995, Emma Thompson and Kate Winslet play Elinor and Marianne Dashwood. The sisters are once again both blonde, but their mannerisms, overall appearance, and facial expressions make it very easy to tell who is who. The differences in the sisters' personalities are evident here, with Thompson as Elinor is putting on a socially acceptable front and pleasant smile, while Winslet's concerned expression shows Marianne's inability to hide her emotions.

¹⁸ "Sense and Sensibility (1995)." *IMDb*, IMDb.com, www.imdb.com/title/tt0114388/.

Kandukondain Kandukondain (I Have Found It), 2000 Film



Kandukondain Kandukondain, or *I Have Found It*¹⁹, is an Indian Tamil adaptation of *Sense and Sensibility* released in 2000. Although the setting, plots, and characters vary, the personalities of Meenakshi (Marianne) and Sowmlya (Elinor) shine through with the actresses Aishwarya Rai and Tabu, respectively. Although this film is vastly culturally different from the novel, this still demonstrates the calm serenity of Sowmlya and the passionate nature of Meenakshi, making it easy to see which character is which. Despite the differences from the original plot, the general themes and ideas of *Sense and Sensibility* are still evident.

¹⁹ River, Holy. "Poison Apple." Top 5 Reasons Why *Kandukondain Kandukondain* Is an Underrated Classic, 13 Oct. 2016, kanggatheren-manogaran.blogspot.com/2016/10/top-5-reasons-why-kandukondain.html.

Sense and Sensibility: BBC Mini-Series, 2008



BBC produced another television mini-series of *Sense and Sensibility*²⁰ in 2008. Once again, Elinor (Hattie Morahan) is portrayed as a brunette and sense, and Marianne (Charity Wakefield) is blonde and sensibility. Similar to the 1981 mini-series, the differences in the sisters' personalities are evident through their style, appearance, and facial expressions. In this image, both women seem surprised by something, but Elinor's clasped hands show more of a sense of composure than Marianne's expression.

²⁰ "Page to Screen: Sense and Sensibility." *Parchment Girl*, 24 Nov. 2015, parchmentgirl.com/sense-and-sensibility/.

From Prada to Nada, 2011 Film



*From Prada to Nada*²¹ is a Latina modern take on *Sense and Sensibility* produced in 2011. Despite the vast difference in setting and some major plot changes, including an emphasis on a riches-to-rags concept, once again, the characters of Nora Dominguez (Elinor) and Mary Dominguez (Marianne) stay true to the original Dashwood sisters. Both sisters are brunette, but Elinor wears glasses in the film to emphasize her more serious nature and to better contrast her with Marianne (a trite but useful tool). As with most portrayals of the sisters, this image shows their close relationship and love for each other.

²¹ "From Prada to Nada." *From Prada to Nada (2011)* - Rotten Tomatoes, 12 Mar. 2017, www.rottentomatoes.com/m/from_prada_to_nada_2011/.

Scents and Sensibility, 2011 Film



In another modern take on *Sense and Sensibility*, *Scents and Sensibility* (2011)²² also emphasizes a riches-to-rags plot, with the Dashwood's father being jailed for fraud as an added plot twist. The sisters are both brunette, and it is more difficult to differentiate between the characters, especially in this image. However, Marla Sokoloff's wide smile and expressive eyes make for a perfect Marianne, while Ashley Williams' genuine happiness while with her sister shows Elinor's love and devotion to Marianne

Which Adaptation is Best?

Although a clearly subjective question, many Austen fans debate the merits of each television and film adaptation of *Sense and Sensibility*. Varying plot points and settings aside, each portrayal does seem to do justice to the ultimate themes of the novel of sororal bonds and friendship above all else. Which version do you prefer?

²² "Scents and Sensibility (2011)." *IMDb*, IMDb.com, www.imdb.com/title/tt1600438/.