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Nota di contenuto	Front matter -- Contents -- Introduction -- PART I. Historicizing Austen -- 1. History, Silence, and "The Trial of Jane Leigh Perrot" -- 2. The Picturesque, the Real, and the Consumption of Jane Austen -- 3. Why Jane Austen Is Not Frances Burney: Probability, Possibility, and Romantic Counterhegemony -- PART II. Reading the Historical Austen -- 4. Lady Susan and the Failure of Austen's Early Published Novels -- 5. Narrative Incompetence in Northanger Abbey -- 6. Jane Austen's Future Shock -- 7. Nostalgia in Emma -- 8. The Body in Persuasion and Sanditon -- Notes -- Index -- Acknowledgments
Sommario/riassunto	Selected by Choice magazine as an Outstanding Academic Title Jane Austen, arguably the most beloved of all English novelists, has been regarded both as a feminist ahead of her time and as a social conservative whose satiric comedies work to regulate rather than to liberate. Such viewpoints, however, do not take sufficient stock of the historical Austen, whose writings, as William Galperin shows, were more properly oppositional rather than either disciplinary or subversive. Reading the history of her novels' reception through other histories-literary, aesthetic, and social-The Historical Austen is a major reassessment of Jane Austen's achievement as well as a corrective to the historical Austen that abides in literary scholarship. In contrast to interpretations that stress the conservative aspects of the realistic tradition that Austen helped to codify, Galperin takes his lead from

Austen's contemporaries, who were struck by her detailed attention to the dynamism of everyday life. Noting how the very act of reading demarcates an horizon of possibility at variance with the imperatives of plot and narrative authority, *The Historical Austen* sees Austen's development as operating in two registers. Although her writings appear to serve the interests of probability in representing "things as they are," they remain, as her contemporaries dubbed them, histories of the present, where reality and the prospect of change are continually intertwined. In a series of readings of the six completed novels, in addition to the epistolary *Lady Susan* and the uncompleted *Sanditon*, Galperin offers startling new interpretations of these texts, demonstrating the extraordinary awareness that Austen maintained not only with respect to her narrative practice-notably, free indirect discourse-but also with attention to the novel's function as a social and political instrument.
