

# **Re-Creating the Text: Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* and Its Film Adaptations**

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS  
in  
ENGLISH EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO  
MAYAGÜEZ CAMPUS  
2009

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## Abstract

Film adaptation is a relatively new and popular form of studying texts, which is very important to our society because of the effect that adaptation has on it. The differences between the “original” text and adaptation are what should make them relevant and worthy of further study. These differences allow us to see the changes in how we historicize a text, as well as the changing ways the novel is made “relevant” to new audiences. In essence, film adaptations keep the source text alive within culture and the audience.

The theories behind film adaptations are many and are to be explored in the first chapter of this study. In the second chapter the films *Pride and Prejudice* (1940) directed by Robert Z. Leonard, *Pride and Prejudice* (1995 miniseries) directed by Andrew Davis, and *Pride and Prejudice* (2005) directed by Joe Wright will be analyzed and discussed. In the third chapter the more contemporary adaptations-- *Bridget Jones's Diary* (2001), *Pride and Prejudice* (2003) and *Bride and Prejudice* (2004)--will also be discussed and analyzed. The six adaptations that will be discussed show us the various ways in which a text can be re-read by a different audience and enhance the “original” text by giving it new life.

## Resumen

La adaptación de novelas a películas es un area de estudio relativamente nueva. La popularidad de el cine y de las adaptaciones de novelas clasicas a este medio de comunicación hacen que esta sea un area importante de estudio, ya que contribuye a como lectores veamos el mundo de una forma distinta. Este estudio “Re-Creating the Text: Jane Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice* and Its Film Adaptations” analizo las adaptaciones fílmicas de Jane Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice* como entidades individuales que han sido influenciadas por el texto original, pero que son separadas. Las adaptaciones estudiadas son: Robert Z. Leonard’s *Pride and Prejudice* (1940), la mini-serie por BBC dirigida por Andrew Davis *Pride and Prejudice* (1995), *Pride and Prejudice* (2005) dirigida por Joe Wright, Sharon Maguire’s *Bridget Jones’s Diary* (2001) , *Bride and Prejudice* (2004) dirigida por Gurinder Chadha ,y *Pride and Prejudice* (2003) dirigida por Andrew Black.

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to take this opportunity to show my appreciation to the people who have made many contributions to this study. First and foremost, I would like to thank my family for their undying support and encouragement. I would also like to thank my best friends Keyla Sepulveda, Nydia Rodríguez, Vivian Ruiz and Yalitza Santos; who have been my greatest fans and cheerleaders through it all. I would also like to thank all of my committee, but specially Prof. Nick Haydock for introducing me to the wonderful and mysterious world of film theory. Last but not least, I would thank Prof. Nandita Batra for her support, encouragement and great patience through this study. Thank you all for making this possible.

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## Chapter 1: Film Adaptations: The Movement of Words

A picture is worth a thousand words. (Idiomatic Expression)

What is film adaptation? What does making a film adaptation entail? Does the source text have to be recognizable or acknowledged for the film to be considered an adaptation? Does the source text and adaptation relationship really matter or can a film adaptation stand on its own? These are some of the questions to be explored in this chapter. Even though they seem like simple questions they have been the focus of film adaptation theory since its birth. As Linda Hutcheon explains in her book *A Theory of Adaptation* the definition of adaptation is complicated because it is used as both the process and the product. “As a product, an adaptation can be given a formal definition, but as a process--of creation and reception--other aspects have to be considered” (Hutcheon 16). A very important consideration which will be explored further later on is that adapters are readers first. It is here that we can see the birth of the adaptation, through the reader's interaction with the text to fill in the gaps left in the text. In other words what is not said is as important as what is said. As Wolfgang Iser points out in “Chapter 2: Interaction between Text and Reader,”

...What is said only appears to take on significance as a reference to what is not said; it is the implications and not the statements that give shape and weight to the meaning. But as the unsaid comes to life in the reader's imagination, so the said “expands” to take on greater significance than might have been supposed: even trivial scenes can seem surprisingly profound” (Iser, *Interaction* 34).

An example of this list “filling in the gaps” which proved to have a big impact on the film adaptation is Patricia Rozema’s *Mansfield Park*.

An adaptation by name points out its relationship to other works, but this is not something that is unfamiliar to us all because all stories are related to other stories in one way or another. But this does not mean that adaptations are not autonomous. As Linda Hutcheon points out, “adaptation is repetition, but repetition without replication” (Hutcheon 7). She goes further on to indicate that the dictionary meaning of the verb “to adapt” means to change an original “to adjust, to alter, to make suitable” (7). Julie Sanders also explains adaptations in the conflict over why they exist and how they exist. For Sanders adaptations exist for the need to fill in the voids left within the source text or to highlight a point that may not have been given enough attention.

Adaptation is frequently involved in offering commentary on a source text. This is achieved most often by offering a revised point of view from the ‘original’, adding hypothetical motivation, or voicing the silenced and marginalized. Yet adaptation can also constitute a simpler attempt to make texts ‘relevant’ or easily comprehensible to new audiences and readers via the process of proximation and updating. (Sanders 18-9)

Sanders borrows Geoffrey Wagner’s three categories for assessing adaptations via Brian McFarlane’s *Novel to Film*: transposition, commentary, and analogy. She then makes an important distinction between adaptation and appropriation.

An adaptation signals a relationship with an informing source text or original...On the other hand, appropriation frequently affects a more decisive journey away from the informing source into a wholly new

cultural product and domain. This may or may not involve a generic shift, and it may still require the intellectual juxtaposition of (at least) one text against another that we have suggested is central to the reading and spectating experience of adaptations. But the appropriated text or texts are not always as clearly signaled or acknowledged as in the adaptive process. (Sanders 26)

With this definition of appropriation one can see how Helen Fielding's novel *Bridget Jones's Diary* is an appropriated text with Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) as its source text. This would then make Sharon Maguire's film *Bridget Jones's Diary* (2001) both an adaptation of Fielding's novel as well an appropriation of Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813).

Linda Hutcheon examines the adaptation in general to make a historical examination of the adaptation as well as the importance of the basic questions that plague the study of adaptations: Why? How? Who? And what? Hutcheon does not focus on film adaptation but encompasses all types of adaptations.

Furthermore, Hutcheon uses three perspectives or realms in which adaptations should be examined as adaptations. She envisions these three realms of study from the qualities that make an adaptation an adaptation: a product, a process of creation and a process of reception.

First, seen as a *formal entity or product*, an adaptation is an announced and extensive transposition of a particular work or works. This 'transcoding' can involve a shift of medium (a poem to a film) or genre (an epic to a novel), or a change of frame and therefore context: telling the



same story from a different point of view for instance, can create a manifestly different interpretation...Second, as a *process of creation*, the act of adaptation always involves both (re-) interpretation and the (re-) creation; this has been called both appropriation and salvaging... Third, seen from the perspective of its *process of reception*, adaptation is a form of intertextuality: we experience adaptations (as adaptations) as palimpsest through our memory of other works that resonate through repetition with variation. (Hutcheon 7-8)

By distinguishing the different processes of transformation in an adaptation (both the process of creation and reception) allows adaptations to be studied as a “formal entity or product” (Hutcheon 7). This entails examining adaptations away from the source text for its individuality instead of evaluating a text through fidelity discourse. Fidelity discourse is the almost automatic comparison one makes between an “original” source like a novel or short story and an adaptation in this case a film adaptation. Fidelity discourse maintains that the “original” text is better in comparison with the adaptation because it was first. Another way to see adaptations and its parent text is as a child. The parent influences a child but does not define it. Hutcheon shares André Bazin’s belief of adaptation’s independent nature from its source text.

...adaptation is aesthetically justified, independent of its pedagogical social value, because the adapted work to a certain extent exists apart from what is wrongly called its ‘style’, in a confusion of this term with the word form. (Bazin 25-6)

In other words, film adaptation exists independent of its source text just by being in a different form from the original text. Change is inevitable and required; therefore film adaptations should not be seen negatively for its nature. The best way to evaluate adaptations as successful or unsuccessful is not through fidelity discourse, but as Hutcheon shows us adaptations should be evaluated “in terms of lack of the creativity and skill to make the text one’s own and thus autonomous” (Hutcheon 20). As French semiotics, post-structuralists and the reader response movement have illustrated, a text is a kaleidoscope of various citations that may or may not be acknowledged.

...texts are said to be mosaics of citations that are visible and invisible, heard and silent; they are always already written and read. So, too, are adaptations, but with the added proviso that they are also acknowledged as adaptations *of specific texts*. Often, the audience will recognize that a work is an adaptation of more than one specific text. (Hutcheon 21)

One must identify the texts that inhabit a text in order to be able to relate to it. An example of this is the use of the female gaze used in both Andrew Davies’ 1995 BBC production of *Pride and Prejudice* and Sharon Maguire’s *Bridget Jones Diary* (2001). We must also remember that while Fielding’s *Bridget Jones Diary* is acknowledged, Jane Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice* is not.

Adaptation, like evolution, is a transgenerational phenomenon...Stories do get retold in different ways in new material and cultural environments; like genes, they adapt to those new environments *by virtue of* mutation in their ‘offspring’ or their adaptations. And the fittest do more than survive; they flourish. (Hutcheon 32)

Film adaptations exist for the same reason that literature exists... to tell a story. The difference between the two is how they tell that story.

According to Francesco Casetti, film adaptations have become an increasingly profitable “mode of expression” as the search for new and original material intensifies (Casetti 81). Adaptations are very popular because they have a ready-made market. The advantages to use texts are not simply acquired by the adaptation; with its ready-made audience, but the adapted text also acquires a new fan base which in turn increases sales. In essence it is a win-win situation. As Linda Hutcheon discusses, there are many reasons for the use of ready-made materials (such as novels, plays, comics, videogames) by adapters.

Of course, there is a wide range of reasons why adapters might choose a particular story and then transcode it into particular medium or genre. As noted earlier, their aim might well be to economically and artistically supplant the prior works. They are just as likely to want to contest the aesthetic or politic; values of the adapted text as to pay homage. This, of course, is one of the reasons why the rhetoric of “fidelity” is less than adequate to discuss the process of adaptation. Whatever the motive, from the adapter’s perspective, adaptation is an act of appropriating or salvaging, and this is always a double process of interpreting and then creating something new. (Hutcheon 20)

Comic books, novels, plays and poems have been common sources for films since the beginning of cinema. As Barbara Tupa Lupac shows in *Nineteenth Century Women at the Movies: Adapting Classic Women’s Fiction to Film*, literature has always been film’s

greatest influence and source. The first literature to film adaptation was Georges Méliès' *A Trip to the Moon* (1902), and since then the relationship between literature and film has only grown stronger (Lupac 1). But as critics such as Robert Stam and Brian McFarlane have argued, not all adaptations will be considered successful nor all novels thought adaptable. At the root of a successful film adaptation (both economically and aesthetically) we find what Stam defines as "fidelity discourse" (Stam 2). In his introduction to *Literature and Film: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Adaptation*, Robert Stam recounts the history of film adaptation theory and criticism in which he explains that fidelity discourse has from the beginning plagued the discussions of film adaptation theory. Fidelity discourse focuses on the "faithfulness" of the adaptation to the source or "original" text. Even though it has been acknowledged that faithfulness to a text is not completely possible it has been the greatest challenge that film adaptations have faced through time.

Fidelity criticism depends on a notion of the text as having and rendering up to the (intelligent) reader a single, correct "meaning" which the film-maker has either adhered to or in some sense violated or tampered with. There will often be a distinction between faithful to the "letter," an approach which the more sophisticated writer may suggest is no way to ensure a "successful" adaptation, and to the "spirit" or "essence" of the work. The latter is of course very much more difficult to determine since it involves not merely a parallelism between novel and film but between two or more readings of a novel, since any given film version is able only to aim at reproducing the film-maker's reading of the original and to hope

that it will coincide with that of many other readers/viewers. Since such coincidence is unlikely, the fidelity approach seems a doomed enterprise and fidelity criticism unilluminating. (McFarlane 8-9)

Robert Stam also provocatively asserts that an adaptation is in some ways condemned from the beginning of its creation from a fidelity discourse point of view because it is perceived as “uncreative,” if the original text is adhered to, or as a “shameful betrayal of the original,” if it chooses to depart from the original text (8). He goes on to claim that “Complete originality is neither possible nor even desirable” (9). Stam’s claim is certain because film is a multi-track medium in which each track depends on one another to form a cohesive text. When an audience views a film there are many elements that are to be considered like soundtrack, sound, picture, script, and so forth. As Hutcheon explains, films’ multi-track nature is why the medium of film is so attractive for different levels of conveying meaning and “expand the possibilities of perception... In a multitrack medium, everything can convey a point of view: camera angles, focal length, music, mise-en-scène, performance, or costume” (Hutcheon 43-55). On the other hand, a novel is a single track medium that depends upon the text and the reader, and not on sound or pictures. A text, be it a novel or a film, cannot be original because it is influenced by a context and cannot be divorced from it. But it is almost impossible not to think of adaptations in terms of fidelity to a source because there is a “preconception” in our perception that a film adaptation must adhere to the source text and we find ourselves unable to be completely unbiased when judging a film adaptation. When one sees a film adaptation as a text, then it is easier to have a more unbiased view of it and to examine it from distinct and alternate points of view. Furthermore, a film adaptation is intrinsically

different from the “original” text because of the changes in media. As Robert Stam insightfully points out,

The shift, in adaptation, from a single track, uniquely verbal medium such as the novel to a multitrack medium like film, which can play not only with words (written and spoken) but also with music, sound effects, and moving photographic images, explains the unlikelihood, and I would suggest even the *undesirability*, of literal fidelity...A filmic adaptation is *automatically* different and original due to the change in medium. (Stam 17, emphasis original)

This change in medium not only makes adaptation different from its source text, but, as Brian McFarlane also points out, it makes fidelity criticism “a doomed enterprise” and “unilluminating.” But however doomed the question of fidelity cannot be so quickly dismissed because we frequently set adaptations against the standard of the original text. For those of us who have read a work on which a film adaptation is based before hand the comparison is inescapable. Yet fidelity discourse does represent a trap which privileges the written word over the moving picture so that those wishing to understand the medium of film would do better to rely on other methods of evaluating adaptations.

Francesco Casetti offers one such method in which he suggests we view adaptation as a “symbolic construction” (Casetti 82). Casetti sees adaptations more objectively and as independent works of art:

Within this perspective adaptation is no longer seen as a work repeating another work, nor as an expressive intention that juxtaposes itself to another expressive intention...what we are dealing with is the

*reappearance, in another discursive field, of an element (a plot, a theme, a character, etc.) that has previously appeared elsewhere. (82, emphasis original)*

Considering film adaptations from Casetti's perspective as "reappearance," we are no longer bound by fidelity discourse and can examine adaptations for the unique qualities that make them a new work of art. A film as a text itself will not be bound by its predecessor. As Wolfgang Iser reveals in his essay "Indeterminacy and the Reader's Response in Prose Fiction," a text "...can never be given final definitions" (Iser, *Indeterminacy* 9). The reader will fill in what Iser calls "gaps" with his or her own meanings and experiences. The creators of film adaptations are readers first and give a new definition of the text to be adapted by "filling in the gaps" that they feel necessary to address. Films as texts are not bound to only one meaning and therefore can be re-interpreted by others.

If texts actually possessed only the meaning brought to light by interpretation, then there would remain very little else for the reader. He could only take it or leave it. (*Indeterminacy* 3)

One can then see that a film as a text does have room for the reader, in this case the audience, to enter into a dialog with the film to eliminate indeterminacy and re-create the text. The audience of a film adaptation becomes the second reader of the adapted text. The audience becomes an important part of the film, not only as consumer, but also as a "giver of meaning." As Iser further reveals, in the place between reader and text there occurs a negotiation of sorts where the reader tries to assimilate the text through analysis, or through criticism if the text is somehow incompatible with the reader's value system or

beliefs. In essence the viewer tries to find meaning within the text being consumed, in this case the film, to “fill the gaps” with the knowledge they already possess. As Iser claims, the text is a description of the world that surrounds us which is re-organized in an unfamiliar manner, and so we, the reader, can understand the text through our own understanding of the world (*Indeterminacy* 7). Since the world that is described by the text is described in an unfamiliar manner “the intention of a literary text can never be completely identified with our experience. Instead, it presents reactions to and attitudes toward the world we live in, and it is these reactions and attitudes that constitute the reality of the literary text” (*Indeterminacy* 7). The text will not have a determined and exact meaning because the reader will assimilate the text the best way he or she can. Assimilation is the key to eliminating indeterminacy created by the “gaps” left by the text. “These gaps give the reader a chance to build his own bridges, relating the different aspects of the object which have thus far been revealed to him. It is quite impossible for the text itself to fill the gaps” (*Indeterminacy* 9). The text needs the reader, the audience, to fill in the gaps that have been left. These gaps are not to be considered defects, Iser adds; these gaps are where meaning is created and where there can be originality. In the voyage of eliminating indeterminacy and re-creating the text there is a key interaction between the text and reader that Iser attempts to explain through psychoanalytic research in communication.

Iser explains in the second chapter of his book (“Interaction between Text and Reader”) that there is a similarity between the communication between two people and the reader-text relationship. He uses R.D. Laing’s findings in communication to explain further. Laing states that our views of others are interpretations not perceptions. Iser



explains Laing's point as, "We have experience of one another insofar as we know one another's conduct; but we have no experience of how others experience us" (Iser, *Interaction Between* 31-2). Two people interacting are unable to understand clearly how others view them because we make a preconceived notion of their view of us and build our view or image upon what we think they see. "In all our interpersonal relations we build upon this 'no-thing' for we react as if we knew how our partners experienced us; we continually form views, and then act as if our views were realities" (*Interaction Between* 32). In other words our "interpersonal relations" come from "no-thing" for we invent what we are based on the incorrect assumption of what others see. What we show the world is merely our attempt to "fill the gaps" from our inability to be able to experience how others experience us.

The situations and conventions regulate the manner in which gaps are filled, but the gaps in turn arise out of the inexperienceability and, consequently, function as a basic inducement to communication. Similarly, it is the gaps, the fundamental asymmetry between text and reader, that give rise to communication in the reading process; the lack of a common situation in the reading process; the lack of a common situation and a common frame of reference corresponds to the "no-thing," which brings about the interaction between persons. (*Interaction between* 33)

These gaps or indeterminacy is what makes communication between the reader and text possible. The gaps left by the text calls upon the reader to be filled with his or her own experiences, "what is said only appears to take on significance as a reference to what is not said; it is the implications and not the statements that give shape and weight to the

meaning” (*Interaction Between* 34), therefore indeterminacy is what gives the reader the space to communicate with the text.

The importance of the relationship between intertext-text and intertext-reader is also pointed out by Julie Sanders. Her vision of these relationships closely follows Iser in his notion of the impact that the recognition of other texts and the reader’s “preconception” hold over the adaptation. She uses T.S. Eliot’s “Tradition and the Individual Talent” to study this phenomenon.

The relationship between intertexts and the referential process alters in significance when the appropriation extends beyond fragmentary allusion to a more sustained reworking and revision. If readers are to be alert to the comparative and contrastive relationships that Eliot regarded as crucial to the aesthetic process it goes almost without saying that the texts cited or reworked need to be well known. They need to serve as part of a shared community of knowledge, both for the interrelationships and interplay to be identifiable and these in turn to have the required impact on their relationship. (Sanders 97)

Eliminating indeterminacy is an essential part of the reader-text exchange, but it is not without its rules. As Jauss insightfully explains, filling the gaps has regulations “exercised *by* the text, it is not *in* the text” (*Interaction Between* 33). The reader can only fill the gaps “*in relation*” (*Interaction Between* 34) to the text. In other words, those gaps are to be filled with an idea that correlates with the text.

This discussion of the correlation of ideas in a text is not a new one. Critics for a long time have examined this phenomenon of authorization. An example of this

discussion of authorization and the regulations of “filling the gaps” is Harriet Margolis’ article “Jane Culture: What does the name ‘Jane Austen’ authorize?” Margolis sets herself apart from other critics who believe that the “harlequinization” of some of Jane Austen’s does a disservice to Jane Austen’s cultural capital. Contrary to Deborah Kaplan’s belief that somehow “harlequinization” is a means to “mass-market” Jane Austen adaptations for monetary gain, Margolis asks how this process of “harlequinization” is possible in the first place. The *harlequinization*<sup>1</sup> of Jane Austen’s works is only possible because the Harlequin novels and Austen’s works *do* have a great many things in common. Harlequin novels and related popular genre fiction have been criticized for being formulaic, reinforcing patriarchal values by focusing on heterosexual characters and “appealing only to an unintelligent readership incapable of appreciating better writing” (Margolis 24). This stereotype is carried over to film adaptations that are said to be “harlequinized.” Rather than seeing *harlequinization* as a negative development in adaptations, I see it as a manner in which to “fill the gaps” so to speak and eliminate indeterminacy.

Novel to film adaptations go through a number of different filters: the novel’s original and subsequent readers and critics, the film’s director, production company, its actors, etc., until it reaches the final filter, the film’s audience. The different changes that the novel undergoes before it reaches a film audience are immense, but the greatest

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<sup>1</sup> The term “harlequinization” was coined by Deborah Kaplan in her article “Mass Marketing Jane Austen” in *Jane Austen in Hollywood*. “By *harlequinization* I mean that, like the mass-market romance, the focus is on a hero and heroine’s courtship at the expense of other characters and other experiences, which are sketchily represented... The mass-market romance suggests that familiarity breeds content....Clothes, too, are of interest, not only as a means of bringing attention to the bodies of the hero and the heroine but as objects of desire in their own right--another reminder of this highly commercial form” (Kaplan 178).

actualization occurs in the audience or receptor of the text, the audience of the film adaptation.

Part of the critic's and audience's dilemma with film adaptations and fidelity discourse is that members of the audience who have read a novel first feel an attachment to the story and have previously envisioned the characters and settings based on their previously acquired knowledge. A significant number of them can then be disappointed when the adaptation hasn't captured the essence of the novel that they captured through their own reading and re-creation of the text. As Imelda Whelehan indicates,

In any case, the potential cinema audience of even the most widely read classic will be largely made up of individuals who haven't read the text, and any critical consideration of an adaptation's reception might benefit from recognizing some of the practical realities involved in producing a commercially successful film--such as pruning culturally anachronistic features, trimming sophisticated narrative strategies into a recognizable popular film genre which is, in turn, an adaptation of other films, with intertextual links with its contemporary filmic counterparts. (Whelehan 4)

Hans Robert Jauss explains how the receptor of a text is essential and active in re-creating a text. A text is not merely the author or the work, but depends on the audience/receptor to produce meaning. As he points out, "In the triangle of author, work, and public the last part is no passive part, no chain of mere reactions..." (Jauss 1551). Therefore, one should take into account the role of the audience, the producers, actors, director, etc. as active participants in the process of giving the film a context in which they can both give and find meaning.

As Jauss explains, once the text is received by the receptor it is interpreted and thus the text is changed, hence adaptations are a manifestation of the changes in the culture and society in which it was created. The reading or viewing of a text is not merely reception of a text, but the building of context and history.

The perspective of the aesthetics of reception mediates between passive reception and active understanding, experience formative of norms, and new production. If the history of literature is viewed in this way within the horizon of a dialogue between its aesthetics and its historical aspects is also continually mediated. Thus the thread from the past appearance to the present experience of literature, which historicism had cut out is tied back together. (Jauss 1551)

As the receptor/audience changes so too will the re-creating of the text. The historical and cultural space in which the reader is at the moment will impact the re-creation or re-reading of the text. The reader's cultural and historical context doesn't eliminate the text's own context but enters in a dialogue where indeterminacy in the text can be eliminated. In this exchange or dialogue is where the real adventure of discovery occurs in which the reader becomes an active participant with the past and present within the context of the text. "...the reappropriation of past works occurs simultaneously with the perpetual mediation of past and present art and of traditional evaluation and current literary attempts" (Jauss 1552). As the receptor/audience changes, this generates an anachronism in which we see our times reflected upon others. A text cannot be simply explained by a rigid set of parameters,<sup>2</sup> such as fidelity discourse. The importance of the

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<sup>2</sup> Fredric Jameson also makes a reference to the intertextual dynamic in *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act*, "...texts come before us as the always-already-read; we apprehend

text is no longer held by the strict parameters, but by the process in which this re-reading or re-creation of the text can or does occur.

It is important to understand the essential re-writing of a text that the reader performs when reading a text because this is where the conflict with fidelity discourse occurs. Iser elucidates the function of what he calls the “implied reader” and what her/his role is in the re-creation of the text. The active reader (the reader that participates actively in an exchange of ideas with the narrator and story) emerges through the spaces left by the author, implied author, and narrator out in the open for the interpretation.

It is in the unwritten part of the book that the reader has his place... The necessity for these different perspectives indicates that the story itself does not reveal direct evidence as to its meaning, so that the factual reality depicted does not represent a total reality. It can only become total through the *manner* in which it is observed. Thus, the narrator's commentary, with its often ingenious provocation of the reader, has the effect of an almost independent action running parallel to the story itself. (Iser, *Implied* 776)

In the case of well known books, most of the time in the case of classic novel film adaptations; the viewer has read the original text before hand. In the case of novel to film adaptations the reader has difficulty accepting someone else's vision or re-writing of the text. But what happens in the case that the film viewer has not encountered the “original text”? What if the viewer encounters the film *before* the novel? What is the “original”

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them through sedimented layers of previous interpretations, or--if the text is brand-new-- through the sedimented reading habits and categories developed by those inherited interpretive traditions. This presupposition then dictates the use of a method (which I have elsewhere termed the ‘meta-commentary’) according to which our object of study is less the text itself than interpretations through which we attempt to confront and to appropriate it. Interpretation is here construed as an essentially allegorical act, which consists in rewriting a given text in terms of a particular interpretive master code” (Jameson 1937).

text in this case, the film or the novel? The answer is not a simple or trivial one. In the case of the reader that encounters the film *before* the novel, the reverse can likely happen. As previously discussed, the reader of the adaptation compares the “original” text to the adaptation in which their readings and expectations for the most part fall short. The reader of the adaptation who encounters it before the novel will likely be disappointed in their reading of the novel. But the reader can also see a film adaptation and use it as a point of reference to understand the “original” text better. The adaptation, thus, can and is used as a way of bridging understanding and relating to a text in a way that the reader/audience can relate to.

The “original” text sets particular expectations in the reader that will influence the reader’s judgment of the later texts. As Wolfgang Iser clearly shows us, the reader judges a text as he or she reads and has two main reactions: reflection or criticism. This reflection or criticism is very much connected to the reader’s experience, “either the literary world seems fantastic, because it contradicts our own experience, or it seems trivial, because it merely echoes our own” (*Indeterminacy* 7). The reader’s reactions, either reflection or criticism, is the manner in which the reader is able to eliminate indeterminacy. The process to eliminate indeterminacy by the reader is more important than which text was read *before* the other, be it the novel/film or film/novel. In either scenario, the reader finds him or herself in an exchange with the text that is characterized by the intertextual exchange to find deeper meaning

Since the first appearance of the term, “intertextuality” has been problematic for its abstraction. Heinrich F. Plett explores the complexities of this term by mapping how it has been used through different theoretical discourses. Plett starts off by defining the term

as “a text between other texts” and opens the inherent complexities of the intertext. Since the intertext exists in between other texts it can only be found in the “actual communicative process” (Plett 6). This view of the intertext being found in the “communicative process” was also discussed by Wolfgang Iser as he used Laing’s exploration of communication to explain how indeterminacy and eliminating indeterminacy is an essential element in discourse.

We can therefore understand that the text by itself has no innovative readings and depends on the reader to make them through the space (or gaps) that the text has left. The text warrants the reader to be an active participant for it to acquire new life and new meaning. It is only when the reader is able to actively participate in re-creating the text that it will become “real” and meaningful. Wolfgang Iser agrees and explains that,

This would, of course, be impossible if the text itself was not, to some degree, indeterminate, leaving room for the change of vision... it is only when the reader is given the chance to participate actively that he will regard the text, whose intention he himself has helped compose, as real. For we generally tend to regard things that we have made ourselves as being real. And so it can be said that indeterminacy is the fundamental precondition for reader participation. (*Implied* 10)

Furthermore, film adaptations, as texts, have gaps left by their creators so that the viewer can participate and make it their own. But herein lies the crux of the matter: the director has re-created *his/her* reading of the novel and this can be in conflict with the viewer’s re-creation of the novel. The film viewer is then dispossessed of their reading and made a part of someone else’s. As Deidre E. Pribram shows in her essay “Spectatorship and



Subjectivity” in *A Companion to Film Theory*, the film spectator sees this new reading (which may or may not coincide with their own reading) as “phantasy, in which other objects or representations act as temporary replacements or equivalences” (Pribram 148). The spectatorship of a film is an essential part of reading a film because it directly influences the viewer’s experience and the reader-text interaction taking place in the viewing experience. Spectatorship and subjectivity have become an important part of film theory, specifically since the rise of the feminist approaches.

Feminist film theory, greatly influenced by psychoanalytic theory, was pioneered by Laura Mulvey’s article “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema.” Mulvey explores the techniques used in cinema to bring pleasure to the viewer. As Mulvey demonstrates films use the “socially established interpretation of sexual differences which controls images, erotic ways of looking and spectacle” (2182). The purpose of her analysis of the visual pleasure is to “destroy it” (2183). But unlike Mulvey’s, my analysis of the long standing techniques of visual pleasure (such as the voyeuristic point of view, erotic segmentation of the body, the bearer of the gaze, the male gaze, the female gaze), strives to look deeper into how these different techniques have been used to attract a largely female audience as well as the intertextual relationship between audience/reader and the text/film.

Visual pleasure is born from what Freud first described as “making other people as objects, subjecting them to a controlling and curious gaze” (Mulvey 2184). Scopophilia<sup>3</sup> accounts for the pleasure of viewing film. However, Mulvey notes that film creates a dichotomy between the female, who is subjugated to the passive role, and the male, who is delegated the active role in film. Using Budd Boetticher, Mulvey explains

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<sup>3</sup> Freud’s term for objectifying human beings with the gaze is scopophilia, which Mulvey appropriates to mean “the pleasure in looking” (2184).

that the main importance of the female character is how she affects the male characters. She is of “no importance” unto herself; she is only important as to what she makes happen. The female figure is the catalyst that causes disorder in an ordered world. The female figure in her passive role is there only to be displayed and desired.

The determining male gaze projects its fantasy onto the female figure, which is styled accordingly. In their exhibitionist role women are simultaneously looked at and displayed, with their appearance coded for strong visual and erotic impact so that they can be said to connote *to-be-looked-at-ness*. (Mulvey 2186)

The female figure in her *to-be-looked-at-ness* becomes both an erotic object for the characters involved in the narrative as well as the audience. The male figure on the other hand cannot bear the gaze or the “burden of sexual objectification” associated with the gaze because he is the active component in the “division of labour” (2187). The burden of objectification belongs solely to the female figure, creating a “fetishistic scopophilia, [which] builds up the physical beauty of the object transforming it into something satisfying in itself” (2188). Cinema uses the scopophilic instinct to exploit the female *to-be-looked-at-ness* and builds it into the spectacle itself (2191-2). This exploitation of the female figure does not account for the female viewing public and their process of identification. As Diedre E. Pribram shows in her essay “Spectatorship and Subjectivity,” the assumption that the audience is “normatively male” discounts the women who enjoy and experience pleasure in viewing television and film. Mulvey’s explanation of the identification process excludes these women and their pleasure. But films targeting a largely female audience also use similar techniques in a different manner to provoke

visual pleasure. Jane Austen film adaptations target a largely female and/or academic audience. In the *Pride and Prejudice* film adaptations, studied in detail further on in this study, we can find the different techniques to achieve visual pleasure that Mulvey explains can exclude the female from identification. But as Laura Mulvey clarifies in her article “Afterthoughts on ‘Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema’ inspired by King Vidor’s *Duel of the Sun* (1946),” women can be a part of this identification process and find pleasure. She points out that although she still stands by her essay “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema” she wants to address the female that does identify with the male hero in the Western melodrama. Mulvey maintains that the female spectator “...may find herself secretly, unconsciously almost, enjoying the freedom of action and control over the diegetic world that identification with the hero provides” (Mulvey, *Afterthoughts* 29). In the case of the women who identify with the *active* point of view, they do so because films allow them to rediscover a lost aspect of their sexuality is lost in the phallic phase of psychological development as explained by Freud. In the phallic stage women are disturbed by their lack of the phallus and can no longer identify with the active point of view. After this stage women are forever shifting between active and passive, and suffer of “trans-sex identification,” which becomes second nature (Mulvey, *Afterthoughts* 31-3). Therefore, since women are accustomed to this “trans-sex identification” we can identify with both the active and passive point of view and form of identification. Since the female spectator is caught in the “oscillation of identification,” she can also use and derive visual pleasure from the same techniques that are used to attract the male audience, such as the scopophilic gaze.

Pribram proposes that the spectator is a reader of a text that “has the potential to interpret, construct, or meaningfully produce the text from one of several positions in relation to it” (Pribram 155). This view of film overlaps with Wolfgang Iser and Hans Robert Jauss’ elaboration of the reader-text dynamic. However, they (Pribram, Iser and Jauss) fail to explicate a key aspect of the interaction between reader and text, which is pleasure.

Mulvey’s exploration of the fetishistic scopophilia accounts for the pleasure found in film, but Teresa de Lauretis goes even further, explaining the pleasure that can be found in the narrative itself. De Lauretis begins by asserting “Sadism demands a story,”<sup>4</sup> meaning that in order for there to be a narrative there needs to be something wrong that needs to be fixed. She later appropriates Robert Scholes’ explanation of the analogy between sex and narrative to point out that there is an essential pleasure that is derived from narrative. The narrative needs two willing participants (the reader and the author) to be co-conspirators in the act of attaining pleasure. The author has to prolong the climax of the narrative to keep the reader interested and desirous, but once the author reaches the pinnacle of the narrative the end is not far behind. In essence the author has sadistic intentions of denying pleasurable release to the willing submissive reader in order to make the reader more apt to be fulfilled (de Lauretis 108).

The pleasure of film viewing cannot be reduced to the fetishistic scopophilia involved in viewing or the pleasure that is found in the narrative only. I would suggest that pleasure can also be found in the re-creation of the text as we try to eliminate indeterminacy. In this case, film adaptations such as Jane Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice* are an example of how they can fulfill such pleasures in the re-creation of successful

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<sup>4</sup> Mulvey’s term (“Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema, 2188)

films both: economically and aesthetically. To reach this pleasure one should be aware of the intricacies that are involved in constructing these novel-to-film adaptations because they inevitably have an impact on the way we find (or not) pleasure.

For instance, in order to fit an extensive text such as a novel into a film there often needs to be a shortening of the material. The shortening of the text sometimes can be an inhibitor to the audiences' pleasure in the text, even though these changes are necessary. As Linda Seger suggests in her book *The Art of Adaptation: Turning Fact and Fiction into Film*, when an adaptation is made the directors, producers, and screenwriters need to cut some of the themes or characters because of time constraints. "The best films also have strong themes, but in a film the theme serves the story. It's there to reinforce and dimensionalize the story the story, not to replace it. In a novel, the story often serves the theme" (Seger 14).

Further on Seger claims that the best adaptations have been novels with a strong story to tell and a theme that supports it. A novel-to-film adaptation, specifically, is difficult because of time restrictions and calls for condensation.

The nature of condensing often involves losing material. Condensing often includes losing subplots, combining or cutting characters, leaving out several of the many themes that might be contained in along novel, and finding within the material the beginning, middle, and end of a dramatic story line. (3)

This is particularly important due to the audience's reaction to the remaking of well known novels that have indeed been drastically changed or have departed from the

“original” text instead of making it a “transposition.”<sup>5</sup> Film genres must be considered for the conventions of these genres influence the form an adaptation will take and also define the film’s target audience. For our purposes the most relevant film genres are historical films, women’s films (a.k.a. chick flicks), and Bollywood films.

A historical film is a broad term for films that take place in the past, sometimes confused with its sub-genres, the period film or the costume drama. *The Complete Film Dictionary* defines historical films as,

a film purporting to deal with a historical period and the actual events of that period, though the treatment of characters may be highly fictional and great liberties might be taken with the events themselves....such films often create what appears to be authentic depiction of the daily life of the people. (Konigsberg 176)

The difference between period films is that the period which it is trying to re-create has its own style and appearance, not necessarily a distant time. An example of a period film is *A River Runs through It* (1992) directed by Robert Redford or *Pleasantville* (1998) directed by Gary Ross. These films can be contrasted with films such as *Pearl Harbor* (2001), directed by Michael Bay, or *Titanic* (1997), directed by James Cameron. In the former the characters are fictional, but the film strives to depict a certain time period. In the latter we find a more sensationalistic view of the past, the past is a means to showcase an action.

The other historical film sub-genre that is important to explore is the costume drama. As the name implies, costuming is the most important and highly emphasized

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<sup>5</sup> Geoffrey Wagner uses this term to mean a work that has been “given directly on the screen with a minimum of apparent interference” (qtd. in McFarlane 10).

feature of the film. Robert Z. Leonard's (1940) film *Pride and Prejudice* starring Greer Garson and Laurence Olivier is an example of a costume drama. The emphasis of this film is the elaborate costuming and the star quality. It's more about Hollywood glamour and the star power behind the pairing of the two main actors: Garson and Olivier. Another type of historical film sub-genre is known as the heritage film, which highlights the setting (location) of the film ("Heritage Film"). Two films that have been studied as "heritage films" are BBC's 1995 mini-series *Pride and Prejudice* directed by Simon Langston starring Jennifer Ehle and Colin Firth; and 2005's *Pride and Prejudice* directed by Joe Wright starring Keira Knightley and Matthew Macfayden. Both of these films are known for their use of beautiful landscapes and surroundings.<sup>6</sup>

At the other end of the spectrum and in contrast to period films, there lie contemporary films. The contemporary films discussed later in this study are categorized in different genres. One of the better known genres is women's films, popularly known as chick flicks. In *The Complete Film Dictionary* women's films are defined thus:

A film produced by Hollywood, especially in the 1930's and 1940's, and directed largely toward a female audience. Such films, which featured well-known actresses, were normally melodramas with a plot dealing with romance, family, or some kind of conflict between self-assertion and self-sacrifice that led to much suffering. ("Women's Film" 463)

The label "the women's film" implies that these films are about women and their lives, and that they target a female audience. Since Austen novels are about women they also target a female audience, even though they attract male viewers. One of the first films to be named or dubbed as a chick flick was Sharon Maguire's (2001) *Bridget Jones's Diary*

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<sup>6</sup> See articles by H. Elisabeth Ellington, Carol M. Dole, and Mary M. Chan.

starring Renée Zellweger and Colin Firth. Andrew Black's *Pride and Prejudice* (2003) is also categorized as a chick flick because of the stylization of the film.

While *Bride and Prejudice* directed by Gurinder Chadha is also considered a chick flick, it is more readily categorized and studied as a Bollywood-style film. This term is loosely used to denote any film produced or made in Bombay (McHodgkins), but this definition does not encompass the array of characteristics inherent in a true Bollywood film. Angelique Melitta McHodgkins demonstrates that a Bollywood film is more than just the setting; it is a "masala formula," an "amalgamation of multiple film genres converging in one film. So it isn't surprising to see drama, comedy, action adventure, and romance in one film, mixed with obligatory song-dance sequences" (McHodgkins 20-22).

These are a few of the lenses through which these film adaptations have been re-read, re-evaluated and re-discovered. The theories briefly discussed promote a textual reading of the films as a species of intertext that lives in the space between the filmic "utterance" and the process of eliminating indeterminacy. Films as texts bring forth an amalgamation of lens from which they could be explored, but the true importance is that they are viewed as independent texts in the space between the source text, Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) and the audiences who re-create the text.



## Chapter 2: Period Films

Many critics and film buffs suggest there cannot be a true period film because moviemakers unfailingly reflect their own times in any reconstruction of the past. A period film is hard to define because there are certain elements that distinguish the type of movie. Even though it is difficult to distinguish each type from another, what *does* distinguish them is the points that are highlighted or emphasized in a period film. We have to ask ourselves whether the film emphasizes the costuming (the costume drama), the scenery (the heritage film), depiction of war (the war film), or historical accurateness (the historical film). But these subcategories are subjective because the classification of film genres is fairly recent, as Sarah Berry-Flint indicates, noting that classification can be particularly helpful for an audience:

Genres offer prospective consumers a way to choose between films and help indicate the kind of audience for whom a particular movie was made...Genres are part of film production and reception around the world, and although many Hollywood genres are internationally recognized, they always have culturally specific meanings. (Berry-Flint 25-6)

When speaking of period films we hear about subgenres such as the costume drama, heritage film, biopic, etc. What these terms have in common is that they refer to films that try to maintain the spirit of the time they are trying to embody. The criticism of these films has tended to focus for the most part on fidelity. For instance, the Online Film Encyclopedia defines a historical film as one "...composed of dramatic feature film in which the primary plot is based on actual historical events, or in which an imagined plot unfolds in such a way that actual historical events are central and intrinsic to this story"

(Historical Films). Under the genre of historical films there are various sub-genres: the topical or period film, the heritage film, the costume drama, etc. The topical film, better known as the period film, is characterized for its centralization of a “particular incident or focus on a specific period” (The Topical Film). The importance of the period film is its portrayal of a specific place in time.

The heritage film has a more problematic definition for film scholars because it is associated with other sub-genres. Some scholars, as the Film Encyclopedia indicates, see the plot of the heritage film as having a common “plot engine” which is the *Bildungsroman* (Education of the Hero). The heritage film is considered by many to be more of a British genre because of the popular use of “...heritage landmarks, such as Oxbridge colleges and National Trust Properties” (Heritage Films).

The costume drama is distinguished from the other sub-genres because what is important in films of this sub-genre is the costuming used by the actors and actresses rather than historical accuracy. “Its plot is most often based on a fictional literary source, and it does not depend on actual historical events as its main focus or framing material” (Costume Drama). The 1940 adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice* directed by Robert Z. Leonard is classified as a costume drama because of its deviation from the “original text.” Sue Parril reminds us that there are several texts involved in the making of Leonard’s *Pride and Prejudice*, including Helen Jerome’s (1935-6) stage adaptation, Jane Austen’s novel, the script written by Huxley-Murfin, and the film itself (Parril 50). Parril explains that the film was also influenced by a film genre very popular at the time: the screwball comedy. The emphasis on the costuming in the film was influenced by the use of the *Gone with the Wind* (1941) costumes belonging to the studio in order to lower costs and

also to display Hollywood glamour. The use of these costumes placed the movie in US Civil War America instead of the Victorian Period of Helen Jerome's play. As Kenneth Turan observes in his history of Leonard's *Pride and Prejudice* (1940):

In its infinite wisdom the studio felt that the actual fashions of the early nineteenth century, what one writer who knows more about such things than I do called "the more restrained, classical lines of the Directoire and Empire styles," were not very much fun. So Adrian, the legendary MGM costume director, gave everyone the more swaggering clothes of three or four decades later. (Turan)

But, as mentioned earlier, texts are influenced by their times and different contexts (social, cultural, economic, racial, etc.), and will ultimately be a reflection of their time. In Leonard's *Pride and Prejudice*, Elizabeth Bennet is portrayed as a middle-class woman who doesn't *need* to marry for money while Mr. Darcy is a wealthy aristocrat who has to change his view of class structure. The women of the film are placed to reflect the growing 1940's consumer culture. As soon as the movie begins the audience is subjected to seeing the Bennet women shopping for bonnets and lace, which by most standards is frivolous especially in the wake of the Great Depression. As Liora Briosh points out in her arresting article "Consuming Women: the Representation of Women in the 1940 Adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice*," by placing the women in this first scene inside the store and the men (Mr. Darcy and Mr. Bingley) outside, but seen through the window of the shop, the scene gives us a double perspective: the women are both economic subjects and sexual objects. Being inside the shop buying things to make themselves attractive they become "objects of display, for the male characters and the

camera's gaze" (Briosh 148). But it also subjectifies them because they are after all window-shopping for husbands, seen across the street and discussed from a monetary point of view: Mr. Darcy and Mr. Bingley are attractive because they have money. The women's overplayed obsession with trinkets and luxuries lends what Briosh describes as a "grotesque quality" to the women who buy frivolously in times when there is an increasing economic need. "The women's grotesque qualities are related to the film's representation of their relationship to money and men" (Briosh 150).

In Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) we see that "an excessive interest in acquiring things" is morally wrong and satirized (Briosh 150). An example of this is Mrs. Bennet's obsession with getting Lydia wedding clothes, which is contrasted with Elizabeth who doesn't care if her clothes are dirty after a long walk. Briosh, aware of the implications of the socio-economic statement meant by showing women as money hungry, also notes that the film's aesthetics of costume drama reinforces the "grotesque quality" of the women in the film. The costume drama relies on the costumes themselves to add the air of sophistication, glamour and spectacle that other genre films lack. In the case of this film beauty is everything and beauty means money.

Because Hollywood has a commercial stake in promoting consumption, it represents it in positive terms, more positively than does Jane Austen. Moreover, the classical Hollywood narrative depends on ideals of glamour which encourage consumption...Whereas the novel asserts that physical attraction is not dependent on constructed elements of femininity such as dress, the film, and especially so because it is a costume drama, relies

heavily on dress in order to generate glamorous images of femininity (150-1).

During the Depression era there was a shift in women's roles as the breadwinners of the family because the jobs that were affected by the economic depression were mainly higher paying and positioning than those usually held by women. There was public debate and media backlash to this, claiming that women were taking away men's jobs. This change in the role of women created a "pin money hypothesis," which is seen in the underlying context of Leonard's *Pride and Prejudice*.

The widely popular "pin money hypothesis" asserted that married women needed money only in order to indulge frivolous feminine desires and that they therefore had no right to take jobs away from men who needed to support their families. The "feminine" desire to consume trinkets and frivolous goods, it was assumed, threatened men's ability to earn wages necessary to support their families (Brish 154).

This view of women's selfish and divisive relationship to money is similar to the portrayal of women in Leonard's *Pride and Prejudice*, where the Bennet women frivolously shop for bonnets and lace. This film cannot be disassociated from the time the screenplay was written, which is between the end of the Depression and the beginning of World War II, even though production started in 1940 and the film was released later that year. As Kenneth Turan explains in his article "*Pride and Prejudice: An Informal History of the Garson-Olivier Motion Picture*" the making of the film started four years before it was ever filmed in 1936 when MGM bought the rights for Helen Jerome's play *Pride and Prejudice: a Sentimental Comedy in three Acts*. The company hired Victor Heerman and

Sarah Y. Mason to write the screenplay but were later replaced by Aldous Huxley and Jane Murfin. The key point of it is that the screenplay was based on the Broadway play by Helen Jerome from 1935 and not on Austen's novel. The ideologies concerning women and marriage are those found in the post-Depression Era. The women in this film are threatening to men because they represent what men feared women who had jobs would do: spend money on luxuries instead of necessities. Even though this film cannot be separated from its historical context, it does attempt to recall the spirit of the times in which the novel was written. We find that some themes are timeless such as laughter, marriage, and family and can be discussed or portrayed without much variation through time periods. In the spirit of re-reading films as texts with their own contexts I will be discussing the Robert Z. Leonard's *Pride and Prejudice* (1940) starring Laurence Olivier and Greer Garson; BBC's 1995 mini-series *Pride and Prejudice* starring Colin Firth and Jennifer Ehle; and 2005's *Pride and Prejudice* directed by Joe Wright and starring Keira Knightley and Matthew Macfadyen in this chapter. The re-telling of an old tale always brings changes of views because there are inevitable variations of points of view from time to time, not to mention from person to person. I have found that even though the texts studied in this chapter come from different periods of time and portray different time periods, they clash and coincide in some important characteristics which in the end re-create the texts.

Part of making an adaptation, as previously discussed in Chapter 1, is a selection or refocusing of themes, characters and plots which some feel can "damage" or "compromise" the original text, but is nevertheless unavoidable. It is in these changes that creation can occur as the text is re-created. As Francesco Casetti indicates, in his

essay “Adaptations and Mis-adaptations: Film, Literature, and Social Discourse,” literature and film are both “modes of expressions” in which a person will add their own views and perspectives. Our enjoyment in reading a novel is not the same as in watching a film because our imaginations paint the characters to our own liking when we are reading a novel. But when we watch a film we are not allowed the same liberty, as we are shown someone else’s view of the same characters, someone else’s interpretation of events and so on. Casetti argues that we should see adaptations differently than just comparing text a to text b, but rather we should see adaptation as a “reappearance” of a text that has appeared before somewhere else.

Within this perspective adaptation is no longer seen as a work repeating another work, nor as an expressive intention that juxtaposes itself to another expressive intention. We are no longer confronted with re- reading or re- writing: rather, what we are dealing with is the *reappearance, in another discursive field, of an element (a plot, a theme, a character, etc.) that has previously appeared elsewhere*. A reappearance is a new discursive event that locates itself in a certain time and space in society, one that, at the same time, carries within itself the memory of an earlier discursive event. Within this reappearance, what matters is the development of a new communicative situation, more than simply the similarity or dissimilarity between the later and earlier events. Otherwise said, what matters is the new role and place that the later event takes on within the discursive field, more than the abstract faithfulness that it can claim with respect to the source text. (Casetti 82)

If we were to explore adaptations following Casetti's definition of a "reappearance" of text then we have to see the changes in the text as a change in discourse. In seeing the changes in the text as a change in discourse we explore more than just the changes *inside* the text itself but have also to examine the *outside*, such as the culture and receptor. Each adaptation therefore explores different sides of the original text in order to re-interpret, re-define and re-create the original text that does pertain to the original but is also distinct from it. Hans Robert Jauss theorizes that "[t]he new literary work is received and judged against the background of other works and art as well as against the background of the everyday experience of life" (Jauss 1564). This "experience of everyday life" changes through time so that the audience will inevitably change. It is therefore not surprising that in these three period films we see very different versions of interpreting the characters by the screenwriters.

One of the most interesting changes in the re-interpretation or re-creation of character is Mr. Darcy. Lisa Hopkins explores the changes in Mr. Darcy's characteristics and the way in which the BBC's 1995 mini-series *Pride and Prejudice* utilizes the female gaze and fetishizes<sup>7</sup> the body of the actor (Colin Firth) in "Mr. Darcy's Body: Privileging the Female Gaze." Hopkins examines the choice of point of view and camera angles used in *Pride and Prejudice* (1995) because the film shows that the female gaze is purposely attracted. She adds that all of the publicity done for Colin Firth before and after he played the role of Mr. Darcy suggests that the popularity of the mini-series had more to do with

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<sup>7</sup> Ray Browne's definition of the fetish is useful because it is in simplified terms that are applicable to many such genres: "A fetish is an item possessing some sacred, magical-usually dark-power... To a degree beyond the icon, the fetish carries the taint of the off- color, an abnormal attachment, a 'closet' devotion..." (Browne 1) In the case of film we study the fetishizing of the body as it is in some cases "dismembered" by the camera and at the same time venerated by the reader. See Laura Mulvey 2181-92.



Firth's sex appeal than the screenplay. In other words the film exploits Colin Firth's sex appeal by adding scenes that draw the female gaze and dehumanize him.

In her essay "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" Laura Mulvey argues that "In a world ordered by sexual imbalance, pleasure in looking has been split between active/male and passive/female" (Mulvey 2186). The male gaze is engaged in objectifying the female form and eroticized through the "to-be-looked-at-ness" formed through strategies for staging the male gaze. This "fetishistic scopophilia"<sup>8</sup> uses the physical attractiveness of the "object" to provoke and/or pervert desire. Consequently, the voyeuristic nature of film is juxtaposed with the latently sadistic nature of narrative. Just as voyeurism demands an object to be looked at, "sadism demands a story" (Mulvey 2188).

Narrative practices are like "making love" according to Teresa de Lauretis in "Desire in Narrative." The writer has the sadistic pleasure of prolonging and baiting the reader until the eventual climax. And as Mulvey noted, a story needs action, for something to happen or change in order for it to exist. The reader and the writer are co-conspirators in the act of pleasure. The authors must tease and ensure sufficient foreplay while denying release but admitting no lasting impediments to a "marriage of true minds." In essence the author has the sadistic intentions of delaying release to the willing but submissive reader (de Lauretis 108). "According to the principles of the ruling ideology and the psychical structures that back it up, the male figure cannot bear the burden of the sexual objectification. Man is reluctant to gaze at his exhibitionist like" (Mulvey 2187). This opens a discussion about how female spectators (subjected to

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<sup>8</sup> The term scopophilia was first coined by Sigmund Freud, as the pleasure of looking. Mulvey explains that for Freud, scopophilia is developed early in childhood development but later as the ego is formed "continues to exist as the erotic basis for pleasure in looking at another person as object" (Mulvey 2184).

identify with the male gaze in film) experience the objectification of the female form. Different studies related to the male gaze in feminist theory have examined the ways in which the reader and the writer of a text, in this case film, attract the feminine gaze. In what is called “the chick-flick” genre the target audience is predominantly female (as the name suggests) and therefore the gaze has to be attracted differently. In the case of *Pride and Prejudice* (1995) Hopkins enumerates the different camera ploys to distinguish between the arrogant Mr. Darcy and the “reformed-by-love” Mr. Darcy, drawing attention to the added scenes that attract the female gaze “unashamedly” as in the bath scene and the lake scene, scenes that have nothing to do with Austen’s narration and everything to do with admiring Firth’s physique. Firth’s body is placed in the passive/feminine role of having the *to-be-looked-at-ness* to and for the audience and at the same time the character is in the active/male role of objectifying Elizabeth Bennet.

Feminism has had a profound impact on film theory, but as E. Deidre Pribram illustrates

As it is unrealistic to assume that mainstream cinema was going to cease to be either mainstream or dominant, it made more sense to attempt to appropriate such forms in ways that benefited women. This entailed exploring other, more productive ways in which popular narrative cinema might provide its audiences with pleasures. (Pribram 151)

Even though feminism has shown how the dominant forms of discourse in film have objectified the female figure it has not been able to change mainstream film completely. But the impact that it has had has been in the redeployment of conventional devices, such

as the use of the male gaze to attract the female gaze. Just as there is pleasure in looking, there is also pleasure in being looked at.

An example of how the male gaze attracts the female gaze can be seen in the bathroom scene in the (1995) *Pride and Prejudice* mini-series. The scene begins with a close shot as Mr. Darcy bathes in a copper tub. His face is bold and tense looking as if he was thinking deeply about something. This shot is followed by a full shot that shows a man servant coming in with a large copper pot to rinse him, the water splashing upon his head and back. He is presumably naked, but we don't see it. We are left to imagine his body as he bathes. This shot serves to tantalize with the absence of the body. Afterwards he leans back with a sigh. The scene changes and we see Elizabeth in a medium shot walking, also deep in thought as she looks down pensively while she plays with a fallen branch until she sees a dog at the entrance to the grounds of Netherfield. She smiles at the dog; the dog barks and runs away. Elizabeth runs after the dog as if it had spoken a playful challenge. The scene cuts back to Darcy in the bathroom as he lifts up from the tub and the man servant covers him with a robe, evoking nudity *without actually showing it*. The restraint in showing Colin Firth's nude body (other than ratings and television airing restrictions) comes from the sadistic nature of the narrative or text. As Roland Barthes explicates in his seminal work, *The Pleasure of the Text*, pleasure is found in the possibility of nudity and not in the actual nudity.

The pleasure of the text is not the pleasure of the corporeal striptease or of the narrative suspense. In these cases, there is no tear, no edges: a gradual unveiling: the entire excitation takes refuge in the *hope* of seeing the

sexual organ (schoolboy's dream) or in knowing the end of the story (novelistic satisfaction). (Barthes 10)

Next Darcy walks towards the window to get a towel in a full shot. The window is in the middle of the frame. We then get a close shot as he looks down out the window. He is then shot from the outside through the window as he visibly swallows air. The next shot is from within the bathroom to show Darcy intently gazing at Elizabeth with the dog in the middle of frame playing with a stick. Cut back to Darcy looking down to where Elizabeth plays with the dog. He is internally framed by the window as the scene ends. In essence what we see is Darcy bestowing upon Elizabeth the male gaze, while the viewer in turn gazes upon Darcy objectifying his figure, therefore employing the female gaze. What is important in this scene is Darcy's reaction to gazing at Elizabeth; Elizabeth herself is not the center of importance in this scene. She is there to be looked at, not to look.

In this adaptation Hopkins suggests that "It is really only with Mr. Darcy that changes have been made, and as a general rule, they all tend in the same direction: to focus on his feelings, his desires, and his emotional and social development" (Hopkins 115). The emphasis on Mr. Darcy's development is in contrast to Elizabeth Bennet's lack of true development through the narration. Elizabeth Bennet's character never really changes even though in Austen's novel she is the character that most develops. Her true development occurs when Mr. Darcy is away and since in the adaptation there is rarely a moment without Darcy, it has been short changed. This adaptation, Hopkins points out, is about Darcy's voyage and development.

Furthermore, Hopkins asserts that in Austen film adaptations the gaze between hero and heroine is highly exploited. The fetishistic gaze is used for the heroes and heroines to show what is inside them instead of using voice over. It is also true that by leaving the attraction unspoken it makes the gaze more sensually charged.

In the world of romance in general women authors delighted in creating male characters who crave the love of the heroines with an intensity which, we may fear, real men rarely experience. Perhaps the deepest appeal of *Pride and Prejudice* lies in the extent to which it has exploited the medium of television to lend physical actuality to that fantasy. What we want to see, I think, is not just Darcy in the abstract: it is Darcy looking--particularly at Elizabeth but also, on other occasions, at images which have been contextualized as being poignantly redolent of her absence. These looks too can signify his need. And we look back in silent collusion, because it is in that need that we most want to believe.

(120)

The narrative in the BBC's mini-series conforms quite well to the original Austen text, but the camera-pen goes where Austen did not: into Darcy's psyche. His development and growth are at the center of the story of the film, he may not be the center of the dialogue or storyline, but he is the center of the camera's eye. There are several scenes where we see Mr. Darcy displayed for our voracious gazes: the bathroom scene, the fencing scene, and the lake scene being the most prominently discussed because they are *not* in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*. These scenes not only

objectify Darcy, but also give us a look into his character or psyche and at the same times give us a romantic (I would even suggest Byronic) view of Darcy. “From the bath scenes onwards, Darcy looking at Elizabeth becomes a recurrent and compelling image, used both to provide a crucial insight into his character and to build up a powerful erotic charge, of which he is clearly the center” (Hopkins 114).

The erotic charge that the audience receives is mediated through the sexed gaze. During the invented lake scene we can better perceive the erotic charge in the gaze. The scene starts with a long shot. We see a man riding a white horse from a distance until we perceive Mr. Darcy in a full shot approaching the camera and looking beyond it until a cut shows him in a medium shot. This shot is followed by a glimpse of Pemberley obscured by trees to his left. He looks before him once again giving his back to Pemberley in a medium shot shows him breathing deeply and looking to his left and back until he charges ahead, riding until he reaches the lake. He gets off the horse, takes off his hat and gloves in what seems to be a tantalizing striptease for the viewer. There is a cut to Darcy’s housekeeper, the Gardiners and Elizabeth walking through a corridor and into a hall full of portraits. Elizabeth is seen in a full shot until she is detained by a portrait and is seen in a close shot. The scene cuts back to Darcy taking his riding jacket off and walking towards the lake and sitting down to remove his boots. The shot is cut back to Elizabeth in a close shot looking at the portrait of Darcy and then to Darcy’s portrait in a medium shot. The camera once again cuts back to Darcy in a close shot and then it becomes a full shot as the camera zooms out and then zooms in to another close shot of Darcy until he jumps into the lake. We are then treated to an underwater shot of the dive, and Darcy swimming in dark waters. The scene goes back to Elizabeth walking outside

the grounds away from a pond but towards the camera in a medium shot until she is out of the frame. The scene cuts back to Darcy carrying his clothes after his dip in the lake approaching the camera in a medium shot until he goes out of the frame. The camera follows his retreating back in a full shot as he walks towards Pemberley. His groom and horse follow until they separate. Darcy walks towards the bushes and trees that obscured the path towards Pemberley. He walks downhill directly towards a lake very near the mansion seen in a full shot. The scene cuts back to Elizabeth in a full shot going downhill looking behind her where Pemberley stands. It cuts back to a medium shot of Darcy looking down and then in front. The camera goes back to Elizabeth's surprised face in a close shot. The scene functions as visual foreplay. In the last shot as the characters see each other it is a fulfilled wish for the characters and the viewers. As Elizabeth tours Pemberley she is reminded of the man she rejected and whom she has been forced to re-evaluate. As Jane Austen wrote Elizabeth falls in love with Mr. Darcy once she saw Pemberley, his home. Pemberley becomes a concrete reflection of Mr. Darcy. As her thoughts are filled with Mr. Darcy, Mr. Darcy appears to the viewer as he presumably rides towards Pemberley, to her. As we see Mr. Darcy vigorously riding toward Pemberley we are reminded of his physicality, which he demonstrates after Elizabeth's first rejection. His love of nature, as shown in the care for the outdoors of Pemberley and his dive into the pond later on, shows that Elizabeth and he have some common ground and are not so mismatched as we, the audience, have thought they were. By piecing together the parallel shot of the characters the viewers understand that they are thinking about each other, wishing to see the other until in the end of the scene they are finally together.

As Cheryl L. Nixon's article "Balancing the Courtship Hero: Masculine Emotional Display in Film Adaptations of Austen's Novels," illustrates, a student, after having watched the 1995 BBC adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice*, exclaimed that even though the scene was not Jane Austen's it did serve her purpose as it further develops Darcy's character. "Darcy's swim provides a dramatic visual symbol of his emotional rebirth, as he forsakes pride and moves towards a more generous love of Elizabeth" (Nixon 22). By adding this scene we are no longer just privy to Elizabeth's journey, but we are more importantly made part of Darcy's journey. Nixon notes that in Austen film adaptations the male characters are enhanced by their added physicality and their emotional sensitivity. She adds that the adaptations use a visual vocabulary "to express what is essentially an emotional redefinition of each character" (Nixon 24). Therefore, Darcy's swim at the lake serves a dual purpose: to attract the female gaze of the audience by displaying Colin Firth's sex appeal, and to use these visual cues to show to the viewers the character's emotional growth.

This scene is not essentially about Elizabeth Bennet even though she does appear in the intercutting shots, but they are more about the demonstration of Darcy's feelings and development (Hopkins 115). Budd Boetticher explains that "What counts is what the heroine provokes, or rather what she represents. She is the one, or rather the love or fear she inspires in the hero, or else the concern he feels for her, who makes him act the way he does. In herself the woman has not the slightest importance" (Qtd. in Mulvey, *Visual* 2186). There is more about his feelings and his journey than there is about Elizabeth's journey into self-discovery. "Darcy's physical actions speak a twentieth-century emotional vocabulary. The visual nature of this new vocabulary presents perhaps the



most radical revision of Austen's text: the visual text escapes Austen's verbal control and encourages her audience to interpret it" (Nixon 24).

The before mentioned scenes show the increasing demand for Darcy, and the audience's need to fill the gaps that Austen left in his characterization. To support this one can refer to the sequels to *Pride and Prejudice* (not written by Jane Austen). One example of these sequels is *Darcy's Story* by Janet Aymelr. This also indicates that there is an increasingly higher demand on Darcy as a character and for the reader/viewer to see the reasons for Elizabeth Bennet's falling in love with him. Slowly but surely we can detect the increasing need for a new type of romantic hero. This new developing male hero is known as the "deconstructed male" further explored by Linda Singer's essay "We Still Need the Eggs: Hollywood's Love Fetishes for the Eighties."

In this essay Singer explores the contemporary development of the new male hero developed in the 1980's. Singer maintains that what she calls the "deconstructed male," developed in eighties movies like Woody Allen's *Annie Hall*, deviate from the classic male hero, but still reinforce the sado-masochistic erotic relationship. This "deconstructed male" is therefore a "love fetish" used as a device to show that emotional vulnerability and awkwardness is endearing, and exploits the "love object" who is unfailingly waiting, ready and willing to be further objectified by the male hero (Singer 21). This "deconstructed male" is the antithesis of the traditional Hollywood hero and is more attractive for his faults than his accomplishments.

In the traditional Hollywood scenario, men (usually of the strong silent variety, men of accomplishment, prowess, power or wealth), find their love objects ready, willing, and, in fact, waiting, if not for their

sexual advances, then at least for their amorous gestures. This optimistic portrayal of female availability and accessibility greatly decomplicates the process of coupling. The activity of mating is often portrayed as a game, but the joy is in the chase and the obstacles to consummation tend to exist externally rather than as dynamics internal to the lovers themselves. Obstacles to love are usually of the situationally star-crossed variety. (Singer 23)

Women in these movies are portrayed as "cinematic phantasms," as they have no other extension of life other than as the male character's object of desire. The "new man" is a "deconstructed male" as he goes against this typical gender stereotype.

The deconstructed man is a bundle of idiosyncrasies and mannerisms. One common fetish or convention of this new cinematic genre is its painstaking attention to the portrayal of its male protagonists' foibles and ineptitudes. (25)

The male hero in this instance is neurotic to the point of driving the object of his affection away. These males are the subjects of development and the women are the objects of their obsessions. Even though in the BBC's *Pride and Prejudice*'s Mr. Darcy does not fit entirely within this description, the film does show an increased movement in characterization of this type of male hero which culminates in Joe Wright's 2005 *Pride and Prejudice*. Cheryl Nixon praises the modernization that has occurred in the portrayal of Austen male characters in film.

...the recent film adaptations of Austen are successful because they, quite literally, "flesh out" her male characters... While the success of the

current adaptations reveals a timeless love of Austen, they also reveal what we, the late twentieth-century audience, do not like about Austen--or at least what the filmmaker predicts the average filmgoer will not like about Austen. Most tellingly, it is what Austen's heroines fall in love with that we do not like: the male hero. (Nixon 23)

The 1995 mini-series was not to be the end of Mr. Darcy's make over into the new male. Ten years later Mr. Darcy went through another transformation. Joe Wright's *Pride and Prejudice* (2005) starring Matthew Macfayden, and Keira Knightley further develops Mr. Darcy as a new man, bearing a close resemblance to the "deconstructed male" of the 1980's. A perfect example of the change in Darcy's character is shown in the second proposal scene. In this second marriage proposal Darcy appears disheveled, having apparently just gotten out of bed, and sees Elizabeth who is also in her nightgown, walking out doors, he stutters while saying "I love you." This stuttering seems out of character because if Mr. Darcy is anything it is decided and unwavering. His manner of proposal is unsure, as if Elizabeth's first rejection has shaken his confidence and self-assurance. And even though it is quite possible for this to happen to any man in real life, it is not in Mr. Darcy's character to be so. As Austen's Elizabeth herself says "A man who has once been refused! How could I ever be foolish enough to expect a renewal of his love? Is there one among the sex, who would not protest against such a weakness as a second proposal to the same woman? There is no indignity so abhorrent to their feelings!" (Austen 341). The narrator in *Pride and Prejudice* tells us that in Darcy's second proposal he "expressed himself on the occasion as sensibly and as warmly as a man violently in love can be supposed to do" (Austen 366). But that is not what we see

in Joe Wright's 2005 adaptation. Matthew Macfadyen portrays Mr. Darcy in this scene as a man who has not slept at all and who is practically being tortured rather than being filled with happiness by Elizabeth's rather awkward declaration on changed feelings. This Mr. Darcy resembles more the "deconstructed male" of the 1980's than the Mr. Darcy of 1813 showing the modernization of the male hero and a need for more "sensibility" rather than "sense."

A clue into the changes in Mr. Darcy and the neglect in showing Elizabeth Bennet's journey into discovery is explored in George Lellis and H. Philip Bolton's essay "Pride but No Prejudice." The difficulty in re-creating Elizabeth's transformation from the original text to film is that her transformation is wholly internal, according to them:

Her point of view dominates the narrative, and the reader enjoys her wit and sense of irony and fun... We come to understand her fault of judging people too quickly and thereby participate in her interior adventure. Upon such participation in the inner life of a character much of the power of the novel depends. Such participation is an effect difficult to achieve in celluloid. Darcy's pride is easy to demonstrate visually. His clothing may display his wealth. His gestures may display his gentility. His posture and facial expression may display his vanity. But Lizzy's complementary fault--her prejudice--is internalized, subtle, and difficult to dramatize. A novelist can display fairly easily by detailing her thoughts; a filmmaker (unless he resorts to obtrusive devices, like the voice-over) has far more limited access to the judgmental processes of a character like Elizabeth Bennet...But there is no visual means to present Lizzy's intellectualism,

idealism, morality, spiritualism--in short, her inner life. (Lellis 45-6)

But Elizabeth Bennet's inner life and change can be mapped through her laughter. Laughter and wit are a very important part of the original text for laughter shows the inner differences in characters. "Laughter allows useful defensive transformations of pain into pleasure; it records the freedom and power of a kind of wit closely allied with intelligence. Its dangers are equally clear: it evades discrimination" (Spacks 74).

"I dearly love a laugh": The Problems and Limits of Laughter

Even though masculinity is an important part of the changes made in these adaptations it is not the only departure from the original text. Another character that has gone through change is Elizabeth Bennet. Laughter and beauty seem to be the changes prevalent in the film adaptations. Lizzy's laughter is an important part of the characterization in Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, but Lizzy isn't the only one who loves a good laugh. In "Laughing at Mr. Darcy: Wit and Sexuality in *Pride and Prejudice*," Elvira Casal points out that *Pride and Prejudice* is both a celebration of laughter and at the same time shows the limits of laughter. By laughing at Darcy, Elizabeth is undermining Darcy's "social and intellectual superiority." At the same time laughter serves as a means for her (and us) to discover the limitations of laughter. In the scene where Miss Bingley, Mr. Darcy, and Elizabeth are reunited in Mr. Bingley's parlor we see exactly how important laughter is and a hint of the reason why Darcy is enchanted by Elizabeth. In this scene Miss Bingley and Elizabeth walk around the room because Miss Bingley wants to capture Mr. Darcy's attention and to strike a distinction between Elizabeth and herself. When Elizabeth suggests to Miss Bingley that they laugh at Mr.

Darcy for his impudent comment Miss Bingley states that Mr. Darcy is not to be laughed at. It is at this point that Elizabeth states that she “dearly love[s] a laugh,” therefore acknowledging that she doesn’t hold Mr. Darcy above being made fun of, undercutting his superiority. She is neither intimidated by him nor does she hold him in awe as so many others around him do. I suspect that for someone who is accustomed to being admired and awed, Elizabeth’s response is refreshing because she looks beyond the materialistic and social trappings and into the man. I would go so far as to suggest that Elizabeth’s wit and even dislike of him make him like *her* all the more. There is nothing so challenging or intoxicating as wanting what you can’t have. Elizabeth Bennet can’t be bought unlike Miss Bingley.

Patricia Meyer Spacks, in her essay “Austen’s Laughter,” suggests that laughter for Elizabeth and Mr. Bennet is about survival, a defense mechanism that helps them deal with their difficulties. Mr. Bennet is first seen in the novel as a moral compass until the reader understands that his laughter has caused great damage to his family. Mr. Bennet’s laughter helps him survive his disastrous marriage to a woman with whom he has nothing in common. Instead of trying to help his wife and daughters he merely laughs at their follies. Mr. Bennet’s laughter is tied to his irresponsibility. Elizabeth, her father’s favorite, uses laughter in the same way he does until she can no longer laugh her difficulties away. A clear example of Elizabeth’s use of laughter for self-preservation is the instance when she turns Darcy’s refusal to dance into a joke. Darcy’s rejection was humiliating and discomforting. The only manner in which she could save her pride was to turn the whole incident into a joke and laugh at Darcy thus gaining sympathy from her neighbors. As Elizabeth goes on her journey in self-discovery her use of laughter as a

coping mechanism isn't sufficient to hide her pain. After discovering that Mr. Darcy was a good, honorable man, and falling in love with him, Elizabeth couldn't use laughter to hide the pain of her mistake.

No longer does laughter provide an adequate defense against painful feeling, given Elizabeth's new emotions. By her intelligence and wit she has dominated most situations; now she can only wait, trying to 'make her feelings appear what they are not,' trying to laugh no longer tells any truth about her beyond truth of her effort to conceal. Even when Darcy proposes once more, elevating Elizabeth at once to happiness, she finds it necessary to restrain herself--this time, to restrain her comic impulse...If it is good for Darcy to learn to be laughed at, it is also good for Elizabeth to learn to check herself. Laughter can become dangerous self-indulgence. (Spacks 73-4)

Laughter is a double-edged sword that in the wrong hands can be dangerous to others as well as us. In *Pride and Prejudice* laughter has a clear position according to Spacks. Looking at laughter from a historical point of view we can understand even more why laughter is seen as transgression and subversion. Elizabeth's laughter not only challenges Mr. Darcy, but also the social structure that he represents. Nothing bears as much speculation as a woman's laughter, especially if it is at the cost of a man. In many ways laughter has the same stigma of vulgarity today as it did in Austen's time. As readers we are attracted to Elizabeth's *joie de vivre* and wit because in her own way she is bucking the system.

Many of Austen's contemporaries saw laughter--either men or women--as vulgar. Because laughter was connected to irreverence towards authority and lack of proper self-control, even gentlemen were discouraged from laughing. Female laughter in particular was associated with folly on the one hand or misplaced aggressiveness on the other...Wit implies the ability to be critical...female chastity was presumed to be dependent on the woman's respect for male authority. (Casal 16)

Elizabeth not only defies society in her laughter, but also challenges the status quo by flaunting her wit. As to the link between laughter and chastity it isn't surprising that the character who laughs most is "irreverent towards authority and [is] lack[ing] of self-control" (Casal 16). Lydia, who also "dearly love[s] a laugh," shows Elizabeth and the reader the limitations of laughter. Laughing Lydia has found her greatest joke when she elopes with Mr. Wickham. Her great joke is all about sexual gratification and transgressing the role of women of the time. Her laughter is in juxtaposition with Elizabeth's, while Elizabeth's wit comes from the ability to be critical and intelligent Lydia's laughter stems from lack of self-control and impropriety. But Elizabeth's laughter does point to a latent sexuality that intrigues Mr. Darcy and that influences their exchanges through the novel. Jillian Heydt-Stevenson suggests that laughter "embodies... and provid[es] an outlet for both her hostility and perhaps her attraction to [Mr. Darcy]" (Heydt-Stevenson 81). This point is most apparent when Elizabeth's laughter is compared to that of Miss Caroline Bingley. Miss Bingley laughs to condescend to people or to point out their deficiencies while Elizabeth uses laughter as a way to connect with people. In the simplest of terms Miss Bingley laughs *at* people while Elizabeth laughs *with* them.



The association of laughter and community is first seen at the ball at Lucas Lodge. In this scene Elizabeth Bennet has been rejected by Mr. Darcy, but she recounts the episode so that the community will join in what is an embarrassing episode and laugh with her. This is something that Darcy seems not to be aware of in the beginning but as he spends more time with Elizabeth he is more inclined to smile if not laugh with her. As the novel progresses Mr. Darcy smiles and shows his wit trying to join Elizabeth in a middle ground where humor is concerned. Wit in the end is what bonds them.

In Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* film adaptations laughter is an important part of how Elizabeth's character shines and attracts the viewer. Just as Darcy is attractive to the viewer because he is handsome and magnetic, Elizabeth attracts Darcy and the viewer because of her wit and laughter. In the 1995 mini-series Jennifer Ehle shows a smiling and refined laughter that goes with the period that it tries to represent. In Joe Wright's *Pride and Prejudice* (2005) we see a laughing Elizabeth with Keira Knightley, but she is very different from the Elizabeth we are used to.

In Joe Wright's *Pride and Prejudice* we see a different side of Elizabeth because it is more developed: independence. After being snubbed by Mr. Darcy she faces him during an uncomfortable moment when Mrs. Bennet is trying to show off Jane to Mr. Bingley. The scene ends with Mr. Darcy asking Elizabeth what the food of love is. Elizabeth replies with much playfulness and smiling that it is dancing. This scene is an example of how, in Elvira Casal's terms, laughter challenges the status quo and at the same time Elizabeth is letting him know she doesn't care that he didn't want to dance with her because she was only "tolerable" to him. In this way Elizabeth both salvages her pride and challenges Darcy's authority. It is in her exit that we see her independence from

the group in general. She is unlike her mother, her sister or the men in the group. Just as the introductory sequence has placed her outside of her family this scene places her outside the social circle that she leaves. Knightley's laughter seems more exuberant and has more *joie de vivre* than her two predecessors: even though she is beautiful she is more like the girl next door. Catherine Stewart-Beer claims that Keira Knightley's portrayal of Elizabeth depicts her as more youthful and immature than other film adaptations due to the actress' age being the same as the character she portrays. In Wright's *Pride and Prejudice* Elizabeth Bennet shows her immaturity and youth by "disdain[ing]...self-important authority figures...There lingers a sense of a solitary and deep yet childlike nature beneath her veneer of pertly poised womanhood" (Stewart-Beer).

But laughter is not the only form in which we are shown Elizabeth's internal struggle with her feelings for Mr. Darcy in Joe Wright's *Pride and Prejudice*. Throughout this film the audience is guided by the narrating lens of the camera in a voyeuristic position as it takes us under the covers with Jane and Elizabeth Bennet after the first ball where they meet the Bingleys and Mr. Darcy or into Mr. and Mrs. Bennet's bedroom once Jane is engaged with Mr. Bingley. The camera takes Elizabeth's position as narrator and therefore is skewed by her prejudiced eye. Rachel Gollay demonstrates that, "The audience gains both a socializing view of the characters and a more intimate and flirtatious type of omniscience, as the viewer can only peek through windows for as long as the camera will hold its position" (Gollay).

An example of this is Elizabeth's visit to Pemberley. This scene has very much to do with Elizabeth Bennet's sensual and sexual awakening as well as the transformation of her feelings towards Mr. Darcy. The first statue that Elizabeth Bennet encounters is a

statue of a woman with her eyes almost completely blinded by her veil, just as Elizabeth has been blind up to this point in her animosity towards Mr. Darcy. After this juxtaposition the camera slowly turns back to a wide awake Elizabeth. As Elizabeth explores the art room we find her visually exploring and caressing the nude statues until one bust specifically catches her eye. We see the bust from behind so that we watch Elizabeth's reaction to the bust before we actually see the bust itself. Lizzie stares at the bust yearningly and melancholically. The camera is turned so that we can finally view Mr. Darcy's bust in all its glory. It is at this moment that we find that Elizabeth's feelings towards Mr. Darcy have changed and have been literally and metaphorically turned. We are witnessing the narrator's turn through the camera's turn and Elizabeth's simultaneous rearrangement of thoughts and feelings towards Mr. Darcy. It is also interesting to observe that here the bust is bearing the objectifying female gaze there to bring pleasure to Elizabeth: the bust and not the man is being objectified. As Laura Mulvey suggests, man cannot simply be the bearer of the gaze; the only way to be the bearer of the gaze is by using the gaze first. The male can be objectified only as he is in turn objectifying a female. At this point Elizabeth's purely physical reaction is to sigh over the bust. One can see that her sensuality and sexuality have been awakened by Mr. Darcy. At the end of this scene Elizabeth is asked her opinion of Mr. Darcy's handsomeness to which she agrees and is left with a tearful look in her eyes.

Elizabeth's laughter becomes an outer reflection of her emotional and rational self that cannot be easily accessed in film. But just as laughter shows Elizabeth's interiority, it also shows the interiority of other characters, mainly Mr. Bennet. The patriarch of the Bennet family not only endorses Elizabeth, but prides himself on her behavior. Mr.

Bennet's main targets of ridicule are Mrs. Bennet and the neighbors. While Jane Austen's Mr. Bennet shows his contempt, (for his family and friends), he lacks this detachment and maliciousness in Joe Wright's adaptation. He and Mrs. Bennet undergo a reconstruction in their emotional sensitivity, which explains the lack of the original characters' asperity or crassness.

The change in emotional sensitivity that underlines this film is seen in various characters. Mrs. Bennet, who is the worst sort of mother that any of the Austen heroines have (Benson 122), is seen in this film crying over Lydia's departure, saying, "There is nothing as bad as parting with one's children. One seems so forlorn without them" (*Pride and Prejudice* 2005). We also see Mr. Bennet trying to console Mary after the horrible scene at the ball at Mr. Bingley's which is highly out of character for Austen's Mr. Bennet because Mr. Bennet above all else is a careless parent when it concerns his three younger daughters. As Barbara K. Seeber demonstrates in "A Bennet Utopia: Adapting the Father in *Pride and Prejudice*," film adaptations of Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) such as Wright's *Pride and Prejudice* emphasize the role of family as a supportive agent to the Elizabeth/Darcy relationship instead of the main reason for its forbiddenness. A ploy used to change the role of the family has mainly to do with the role of the father.

In Austen's novel we see a distant father who has clearly favored his eldest daughters and who uses his sharp cutting tongue against the rest of the family. Mr. Bennet is the cause of his family's financial predicament once he dies. Even though he makes penetrating observations about others' behaviors he cannot be trusted, because he lacks insight into his own conduct and the way in which it affects others. Mr. Bennet is

described as “calm[ly] unconcern[ed]” (Austen 77) about Mr. Collins’ marriage proposal to Elizabeth and her rejection of it. His only concern is to be left alone in his study to read, and nothing else. He doesn’t care about the consequences of the rejection of the suit. Therefore, the director’s choice to portray (or show) a Mr. Bennet that appeases a crying Mary at the Netherfield Ball, as we see in Wright’s *Pride and Prejudice* is hardly the Mr. Bennet found in Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), but it still serves the overlying theme of the importance of family. Mr. Bennet is also left without the responsibility of his family’s precarious finances in claiming that the property had been “entailed” when he inherited it, and thus he is no longer an uncaring father responsible for leaving his family destitute.

Filmic treatments of Austen’s novels tend to remove the patriarchs from direct responsibility for the poverty of women and, thus, remove a key point in Austen’s novels. In the films women are protected by the family structure, whereas in the novel women’s economic disenfranchisement happens precisely through the patriarchal family system. (Seeber [no pagination])

This change of roles in the “patriarchal family system” of the films speaks to a twenty-first century’s view of nineteenth-century values. As Imelda Staehelin explains in *Adaptations: From Text to Screen, Screen to Text*, “social differences are inevitably ideologically reconstructed in our own image more often than with reference to values of the past...” (13). Therefore the values and theme of family presented in Wright’s *Pride and Prejudice* (2005) can be said to be the twenty-first century’s idealization of the patriarchal system of the past by imposing its own ideal of family values.

Since the prevailing theme of Wright's film adaptation is family it also includes marriage. The first sentence in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) uses ironic wit to point out the main theme and plot of the story, which is marriage. "It is a truth universally acknowledged that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife" (Austen 3). Marriage is the center of the family, and as such the Bennets are shown as an example of a good marriage to reinforce the image of a good, caring family, and therefore serve the family theme that the adaptation emphasizes. Unlike Joe Wright's film adaptation, Austen's novel shows that Mr. and Mrs. Bennet's marriage was the product of desire, and not about a fond regard for each other. Their marriage serves to show Elizabeth, and the audience, what a marriage should not be.

Had Elizabeth's opinion been all drawn from her own family, she could not have formed a very pleasing picture of conjugal felicity or domestic comfort. Her father, captivated by youth and beauty, and that appearance of good humour, which youth and beauty generally give, had very early in their marriage put an end to all affection for her. Respect, esteem, and confidence, had vanished for ever; and all his views of domestic happiness were overthrown...To his wife he was very otherwise indebted, then as her ignorance and folly had contributed to his amusement. (Austen 159)

Mr. and Mrs. Bennet's marriage is also seen as the example of the kind of marriage that awaits Lydia with Mr. Wickham in the future. Not only that, but Mr. and Mrs. Bennet are the reason for Mr. Darcy's contempt for Elizabeth and his involvement in Mr. Bingley's premature departure from Netherfield.

In Joe Wright's *Pride and Prejudice* (2005) we see a very different marital relationship between Mr. and Mrs. Bennet. Mr. Bennet (played by Donald Sutherland) is seen as a kind and humorous father and husband who will use his wit to make fun of but not intentionally hurt others with his remarks. Thus his relationship with Mrs. Bennet is more caring. Mr. Bennet does not abdicate his responsibility of finding suitable husbands for his daughters as seen in his attendance to the first assembly and introducing Mrs. Bennet and his daughters to Mr. Bingley. As Barbara K. Seeber notes, "When the family eavesdrops on Bingley's proposal to Jane, and Lady Catherine's interrogation of Elizabeth, the camera includes Mr. Bennet" (Seeber [no pagination]). During various scenes in the film we find Mr. and Mrs. Bennet together as a team sharing laughter (Seeber [no pagination]). Mr. Bennet is shown to be a more active participant in his family's life than Austen's character to show a more concerned and sensitive father. Elizabeth's family is less of an impediment for her relationship with Mr. Darcy.

As for Mrs. Bennet we see a sweet looking mother, played by Brenda Blethyn, who only wants what is best for her daughters and cares not what she must do. This portrayal of Mrs. Bennet is very different from Austen's Mrs. Bennet. In Mary Margaret Benson's article "Mothers, Substitute Mothers, and Daughters in the Novels of Jane Austen," Benson shows that,

Austen's representations of mother/daughter relationships also reflect her views of marriage and the family as a whole. The existing families in the novels are, in general, inadequate, and thus we have the plots, which work towards ideal family situations in the ultimate marriages of the heroines. Unlike their parents, the heroines and their husbands are joined in

companionate marriages--and, in many cases, marriages of true equals--  
and will in turn create loving moral families. (Benson [no pagination])

The heroines will find family felicity with the heroes that they have not found in their own home growing up. Their childhood has served as instruction of what *not* to do. Mrs. Bennet gets the honor of being considered “the worst mother a heroine could have” (Benson). Mrs. Bennet is the worst of all the mothers in Austen novels for her shallowness, negative influence and naked greed. She is incapable of truly guiding her daughters. She is also incapable of tolerating difference, as she shows little understanding or wish to understand Elizabeth or Mr. Bennet.

Aunt Gardiner is the only character who can show Elizabeth and Jane what a loving mother really is so that they can follow her example. She is Elizabeth and Jane’s substitute mother. Aunt Gardiner “represents the visible ideal family life, so far from the life of the Bennets” (Benson). In the instance of Joe Wright’s *Pride and Prejudice* (2005) the Gardiners appear, but they are almost superfluous. They engineer Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy’s encounter at Pemberley. The role of the Gardiners is not essential in the film because Mr. and Mrs. Bennet have a loving relationship and are caring parents; therefore there is no need for surrogates.

The changes made in characterization are just one example of how directors and screenwriters have contemporized Jane Austen, even when these adaptations are considered period or heritage films. These three adaptations--Robert Z. Leonard’s *Pride and Prejudice* (1940), Andrew Davies’ *Pride and Prejudice* (1995), and Joe Wright’s *Pride and Prejudice* (2005)--“focus on a specific period” of time, which places them in the period film genre, but they differ from each other not only in the times in which they



were produced, but also in the periods they represent. Just as one cannot dismiss Jane Austen's socio-economic and cultural context when examining *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), one cannot divorce film adaptations from the contexts within which they are produced. Furthermore, one cannot separate the reception of the novel (by directors, screenwriters, the audience, etc.) when it comes to film adaptation and we must remember that adapters are readers first and then they become re-creators. Period films have much to do with a sense of nostalgia and fondly looking at the past, as well as leaving our own imprint, our own take on it. But one can also avow that period films are also a device of preservation and of making sure that our past lives on.

### Chapter 3: Contemporary Adaptations

This chapter addresses film adaptations of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* that have been set in the contemporary time period, that is to say the twentieth or twenty-first centuries. Gurinder Chadha's *Bride and Prejudice* is set in present day Amritsar and Goa (India), London, and Los Angeles. The least known of the three films is *Pride and Prejudice* (2003) directed by Andrew Black. This indie film is set in a University campus, Las Vegas, Los Angeles and England. The last but not least of the three films that I will be exploring in this chapter is Sharon Maguire's *Bridget Jones's Diary*. This film is based on Helen Fielding's *Bridget Jones's Diary*, which is a re-writing of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* and takes place in England. Although these films have in common a contemporary time period, they greatly differ in the targeted audience and offer an expansive range of views in re-creating Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*. As indicated before, genres are a helpful categorization that are not definite and are used to clarify the target audience, and so they are "categorized with reference to a culturally familiar rubric" (Berry-Flint 25). That is to say that each country or culturally diverse peoples will have a different definition for each genre. Contemporizing a Regency period novel to modern times is one way in which directors "infuse" a plot with innovation so that it is more approachable for the audience. Noting that we contemporize the past because we no longer completely relate to it, Whelan insightfully points out the extremes that this contemporization can take:

We look back to the past as travelers on a journey look back to the way they have come. If we modernize those staging-posts along our journey to our own way of thinking, it is in a sense of admitting they are no longer

appropriate or relevant in their original form to speak to us of the twentieth century. If we slavishly endeavor to recreate them as we think they might have appeared in their own time we produce a fake antique.

(Qtd. Whelehan 12)

Instead of creating a “fake antique” the following directors such as *Bridget Jones’s Diary*’s Sharon Maguire; *Bride and Prejudice*’s Gurinder Chadha; and *Pride and Prejudice*’s Andrew Black have decided to re-create *Pride and Prejudice* for contemporary times and situations. In these film adaptations we can trace the cultural critique more easily than those Period films that strive to present us with a “fake antique.” In Period films their critique of contemporary society is masked in the past, whereas in the film adaptations used in this chapter their critique on contemporary society is more blatant.

In order to better understand the adaptations examined in this chapter it is helpful to categorize and explore them through the theoretical framework Thomas Leitch uses to investigate film adaptation. Leitch founds his work on the types or modes of adaptations based on the work of Dudley Andrew, Kamilla Elliott and Gérard Genette for a more comprehensive and inclusive understanding of film adaptations. These types or modes of adaptations can be found in various ways in the same film: one does not exclude another. The most pertinent types of adaptations for the films of this chapter are analogue, colonization and revision.

The analogue can be summarized in one word: invocation. As Leitch explains in great detail, Sharon Maguire’s film *Bridget Jones’s Diary* is an adaptation of Helen Fielding’s *Bridget Jones’s Diary* (1998) and *not* a direct adaptation of Jane Austen’s

*Pride and Prejudice* (1813). In these circumstances one can see that both Sharon Maguire and Helen Fielding's *Bridget Jones's Diary* invoke Austen's work, but do not mean to adapt it.

Both Fielding's novel and Maguire's film invoke Austen's characters, along with their world and their story, in such discontinuous, even episodic, terms that they are more properly considered analogues than adaptations. (Leitch 114)

The analogue in this sense is more than a revision of a text, but a completely different version that makes a reference to another in acknowledgement of its present relevance. We must also remember that Helen Fielding's *Bridget Jones's Diary* (1998) is also a work greatly influenced by the chick-lit and chick-flick genres that exploded in the late 90s due to novels such as Candace Bushnell's *Sex and the City*, which later became an acclaimed television series, and films like *Thelma and Louise* (1991) directed by Ridley Scott. Helen Fielding's novel as well as its film adaptation is a product of its culture and even the theories that surround it such as the increasing attention to intertextuality. In this sense we can see what Gérard Genette means in describing intertextuality as “‘the actual presence of one text with another’ via quotation, plagiarism or allusion” (Qtd. Leitch 94).

An example of this is when Bridget is walking contentedly smoking a cigarette and a billboard in the upper right side of the screen unobtrusively flashes “.....lbs. ....cigarettes all post-coital” which is a quotation from Fielding's novel of one of Bridget's journal entries. The meaning is quite clear: Bridget has just “shagged” her boss Daniel Clever and has abandoned her pursuit of self-perfection.

In this analogy we see that the character of Bridget Jones in Sharon Maguire's film is far from Jane Austen's Lizzy Bennet or even Helen Fielding's own Bridget Jones as she is made to be far more vulnerable, but the film maintains the spirit of the works it invokes. When a novel is contemporized it not only validates the value system of the "original" text, but also changes the values to which a contemporary audience cannot relate. Contemporizing a text is a way to eliminate indeterminacy by filling the gaps of time. "Gender, class and other social differences are inevitably ideologically reconstructed in our own image more often than with reference to values of the past" (Whelehan 13). By setting an adaptation of a Regency period novel in a contemporary time frame we are creating a dichotomy of values.

But we can also see in Sharon Maguire's *Bridget Jones's Diary* the use of what Gérard Genette calls hypertextuality, meaning, "any relationship uniting a text B (which I shall call the hypertext) to an earlier text A (I shall of course call it the hypotext), upon which it is grafted in a manner that is not that of commentary" (Qtd. Leitch 94). As Wolfgang Iser asserts, the relationship between text A and text B is only found when the reader has knowledge of them both. In this sense Maguire's film relies on the viewer's knowledge of popular culture.

In *Bridget Jones's Diary* directed by Sharon Maguire and *Pride and Prejudice* (2003) directed by Andrew Black we can explore the complexities of intertextuality in a different manner than that which has been seen in *Bride and Prejudice*. Both of these films not only use Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, but also blatantly use many other texts and sources such as the gossip columns as a foundation of information (in the case of *Bridget Jones's Diary*, which started as a newspaper column), or the *Pink Bible* a self-

help book on dating created for the film by Andrew Black, which is also integrated into the DVD of the film.

Sharon Maguire's *Bridget Jones's Diary* (2001) relies on the viewer's knowledge of popular culture and of the novel that it adapts in order to get the inside jokes, so to speak, and at the same time to eliminate the indeterminacy that it has left in order for the viewer to attain a connection with the text. In Maguire's *Bridget Jones's Diary* (2001) the audience reconnects with Helen Fielding's lovable character Bridget, introduced in Fielding's newspaper columns and later turned into a book in 1996. The original Bridget Jones character is a woman who is insecure about herself: in a job that doesn't fulfill her, and tragedy of tragedies is in her early thirties and hitherto unmarried.

She is constantly trying to better herself, but consistently fails as we can see through her unstable weight loss and gain, her alcohol consumption, and smoking habits. She is also an avid consumer of pop culture and this is reflected in her diary entries.

There are two important encounters with pop culture that directly influence Sharon Maguire's film. The first takes place as Bridget is consumed with Austen fever as she avidly watches BBC's 1995 *Pride and Prejudice* starring Colin Firth and Jennifer Ehle. Here the importance of Colin Firth as Mr. Darcy is pointed out, as well as his being ingrained to the popular collective as *The Mr. Darcy*. The second encounter with pop culture is the appearance of Hugh Grant as Daniel Clever. When Bridget opens her newspaper and sees an article about Colin Firth and Jennifer Ehle she writes, "Feel disorientated and worried, for surely Mr. Darcy would never do anything so vain and frivolous as to be an actor and yet Mr. Darcy *is* an actor. Hmmm. All v. confusing" (Fielding 216). Bridget is disoriented because she has confused Colin Firth, the actor,

with Mr. Darcy, the character he plays in the BBC mini-series. Sharon Maguire, then playing on Firth's popularity as Mr. Darcy, directs Firth as Mark Darcy in her adaptation of Fielding's novel.

The second instance that invokes pop culture knowledge is when in Fielding's *Bridget Jones's Diary* (1996) Richard Finch, Bridget's boss in *Good Afternoon!* mentions Hugh Grant and his much publicized scandal at being arrested for soliciting a prostitute when at the time he was in a relationship with actress/ model Elizabeth Hurley. Richard Finch in a brainstorming meeting says,

"Come on! Come on!" he was saying, holding up his fists like a boxer.

"I'm thinking a Hugh Grant. I'm thinking Elizabeth Hurley. I'm thinking how come two months on they're still together. I'm thinking how come he gets away with it. That's it! How does a man with a girlfriend with looks like Elizabeth Hurley have a blow job from a prostitute on a public highway and get away with it? What happened to hell hath no fury?"

(Fielding 171)

Sharon Maguire responds to this in casting Hugh Grant as the villain of the piece, Daniel Clever. In the film Bridget is listing her undesirable traits for a boyfriend "alcoholics, workaholics, commitment-phobics, peeping toms, megalomaniacs, emotional fuckwits or perverts. And specially the man who embodies them all..." (*Bridget Jones's Diary*). At this point we see an elevator opening its doors to present Hugh Grant smiling devilishly handsome as we hear Aretha Franklin's "Respect," and then he is presented as Daniel Clever, Bridget's boss. Having Hugh Grant play Daniel Clever serves to eliminate indeterminacy in the audience as he or she is reminded of the scandal and to show how

Bridget will err in judgment if she is with him, and at the same time re-enforces our view of him after his scandal. If what Bridget says isn't sufficient proof of his character, Hugh Grant's scandal has already established him as a "bad boy." Sharon Maguire responds to this by casting Hugh Grant as the villain and Mr. Wickham's analogue, Daniel Clever.

By casting Hugh Grant as Daniel Clever and Colin Firth as Mark Darcy Sharon Maguire "attempt[s] to inspire the visual responses of the reading audience" (Whelehan 4). The choice to use Colin Firth as Mark Darcy plays with the intertextual and double-coding used and referenced in the novel. As Mireia Araguay and Gemma López insightfully point out in their article "Inf(l)ecting *Pride and Prejudice*: Dialogism, Intertextuality and Adaptation":

We would argue that in their insistence on casting Firth--who had become inseparable, in the collective imaginary, from his role as Mr. Darcy--novelist and co-scriptwriter Fielding and Sharon Maguire were trying to (playfully) make a point about the Imaginary nature of the mythical male hero and the completion of his promises. (Araguay and López 213-4)

Furthermore, the casting of Colin Firth as Mark Darcy will make the audience that has seen the BBC 1995 *Pride and Prejudice* mini-series recall the "new man" that Firth plays, which is far from Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*. The choice to cast Hugh Grant and Colin Firth in this film serves as an intertextual element because it activates the group imaginary of modern day heroes and villains. Colin Firth's rendition of Mr. Darcy has caused much discussion, specifically for the way he is used in the mini-series to attract the female gaze. Araguay and López explain that the audience is drawn to Firth in



a scopophilic gaze as he in turn captures Elizabeth's gaze showing vulnerability and a connection to her that we don't find in Austen's novel.

This promotes the female spectator's sympathy towards a hero who embodies a masculinity which differs greatly from that of Austen's Darcy. While the nineteenth-century character remains mostly distant and impenetrable, Colin Firth's 'new man' Darcy is allowed to express weakness, doubts and emotions which late twentieth century constructed as desirable in a man and which would have been unthinkable in Austen's milieu, the basis of which was an Enlightenment reason-based understanding of masculinity which valued emotional restraint, rather than the new 'cult of sensibility' which favoured the physical display of emotions. (207)

The audience's female gaze works as a device for the male to bear the scopophilic gaze as he himself is using that gaze on a character. It lends the character a sympathetic air without unmanning him. This "new man," possessing sensitivity and capable of emotional struggle, is part of contemporizing the BBC mini-series as well as influencing Austen film adaptations. It is no surprise that in the *Bridget Jones's Diary's* film there is a resurgence of this "new man" that is found in the BBC mini-series since it (the mini-series) is what most influences Helen Fielding's novel *Bridget Jones's Diary* (1999).

In *Bridget Jones's Diary* we see a continuation of the "new man" in Colin Firth's portrayal of Mark Darcy. In this film we can appreciate the way in which the various sources of information (i.e. Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*; Helen Fielding's *Bridget Jones's Diary*; gossip columns, pop culture, etc.) intertwine to create an intertextual

understanding of a text with texts that are *outside* to create a new and *independent* text. In Helen Fielding's novel we can find a clear example of how an author/writer can contemporize and reconstruct ideologies. This novel is thus further changed in its film adaptation. In this contemporary adaptation of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* we can see a re-structuration of ideologies such as "the myth of self-perfection" (Marsh 53), friends as substitutes for families; self-love, and the value of family friends.

Kelly A. Marsh's article, "Contextualizing Bridget Jones," points out how the main character, Bridget Jones, doesn't betray the feminist point of view, as many critics believe, but rather shows us how the "American myth of self-perfection" is just that; a myth. The myth of self-perfection is explored thoroughly in self-help books like the ever popular *Men are from Mars Women are from Venus* (1992) by John Gray and others that Bridget Jones reads to "catch" a husband. In the beginning of her diary we see how she makes a list of things to do and not to do. As the diary entries progress she writes her progressions and transgressions according to that initial list. She never punishes herself for not following her list, but usually comes up with excuses for them from the logical to the supernatural. As Kelly A. Marsh points out, "Bridget's voice is authentic because it reveals what we all know but rarely face and perhaps never face with such high spirits: control is a myth, and the experience of being forced into mutually dependent relationships is authentic" (Marsh 53). Marsh agrees that complete control of one's life isn't achievable. It is because of this that Bridget relies on her friends for support and advice. It is through her listening to her friend's advice and her own opinion that she achieves a more balanced relationship with Daniel Clever.

After having slept with Daniel, Bridget notices how distant he is towards her and is apprehensive about her so-called-relationship. Since Bridget doesn't know what she should do she asks her friends' advice:

The unanimous initial verdict was, "Bastard fuckwittage."

Interestingly, however, Jude introduced the concept of Boy Time-- as introduced in the film *Clueless*: namely five days ("seven," I interjected) during which new relationship is left hanging in after sex does not seem agonizing lifetime to males of species, but normal cooling-down period in which to gather emotions, before proceeding. Daniel, argued Jude, was bound to be anxious about work situation, etc., etc., so give him a chance, be friendly and flirty: so as to reassure him that you trust him and are not going to become needy or fly off the handle.

At this Sharon practically spat into the shaved Parmesan and said it was inhuman to leave a woman hanging in air for two weekends after sex and an appalling breach of confidence and I should tell him what I think of him. Hmmm. Anyway. Going to have another little sleep. (Fielding 60)

Even though it is the novel to which Marsh is referring in her article, her comments can be easily applied to Sharon Maguire's film as well. Bridget, played by Renée Zellweger, frequently meets with her friends Tom, Shazzer (Sharon) and Jude to chat about their crisis or to seek advice on their everyday problems. An example of this is the scene after Bridget fakes talking to the famous scholar and critic F.R. Leavis on the phone when in reality she is speaking to Jude. Daniel Clever, her boss, acts amazed because F.R. Leavis had died in 1978. Soon after this faux pas she meets with her friends. Shazzer says "Tell

them to shove fucking Leavis into their fucking asses.” Jude tells Bridget “I’d fire you Bridget.” Tom asks Bridget, “Is that Daniel chap as handsome as ever?” To which Bridget answers, “God yes,” Tom continues, “Then a good blow job should do the trick.”  
(*Bridget Jones’s Diary*)

This scene shows how her friends have become her support system and how they try to lift up her spirits. The scene in which her friends give her advice is for the launch party for *Kafka’s Motorbike*. As the advice is given the scene is cut so that we can see Bridget preparing herself for that night and practicing what her friends tell her. Later as she is at the launch we see her applying her friends’ advice. In the end it is because she follows their advice that she goes out with Clever. This is not to say that their relationship, Bridget and her friends, is perfect, but no relationship is. Just as friendships or relationships are not perfect, the self is not perfect and cannot be made into perfection. In fact, perfection is seen as an undesirable goal. An example that we can find in the text is when Bridget finally reaches her goal weight of 119 pounds only to be told that she looks tired and that she was more fun when she was 130-odd pounds and drank.

In the entry made on Tuesday April 25<sup>th</sup> Bridget is at Jude’s for a party after she has lost the last seven pounds to reach her goal; has stopped smoking and drinking when afterwards Tom tells her that she was better before her change.

It was only 11:30. Maybe I should do something, like, well, er... mending? Inner poise. The phone rang. It was Tom.

“Are you all right?”

“Yes. I feel great. Why?”

“You just seem, well, flat tonight. Everyone said you weren’t your usual self.”

“No, I was fine. Did you see how thin I am?” Silence.

“Tom?”

“I think you looked better before hon.”

Now I feel empty and bewildered--as a rug has been pulled from under my feet. Eighteen years--wasted...Eighteen years of sacrifice and endeavor--for what? Eighteen years and the result is “tired and flat.” I feel like a scientist who discovers that his life’s work has been a total mistake.

(Fielding 92-3)

In the film we get the reaffirmation of Bridget being perfect the way she is in a different manner and by someone unexpected, Mark Darcy. The scene starts as Bridget is leaving the dinner to which she was invited by her friends Magda and Jeremy with other “smug married couples” where she is reunited with Mark Darcy and his girlfriend Natasha Glenville. One of the “smug married” men named Cosmo asks her personal questions to which she replies in an embarrassed manner. Mark follows Bridget. Mark is coming down the stairs and stops at the top as Bridget puts on her coat near the door. Mark speaks to her.

“I very much enjoyed your Lewisham fire report, by the way.”

“Thank you.”

Mark comes down the stairs and approaches Bridget. She faces him.

He addresses her once again. “Yeah, well. It didn’t work out with Daniel Clever?”

“No it didn’t.”

“I’m delighted to hear it.”

“Look, are you and Cosmo in this together? I mean, you seem to go out of your way to try to make me feel like a complete idiot every time I see you, and you really needn’t bother. I already feel like an idiot most of the time anyway with or without a fireman’s pole.”

Bridget nods as reinforcement of her statement as the doorbell buzzes. We see a closer look of Mark Darcy faintly smiling and looking down. She smiles as she tells him that her taxi has arrived and says goodbye. Mark is now serious as he speaks to her again.

“Look, um...I’m sorry if I’ve been...”

“What?”

“I don’t think you’re an idiot at all. I mean, there are elements of the ridiculous about you. Your mother is pretty interesting. And you really are an appallingly bad public speaker. And you tend to let whatever’s in your head come out of your mouth without much consideration of the consequences. I realized that when I met you at the turkey curry buffet that I was unforgivably rude and wearing a reindeer jumper that my mother had given me the day before. But the thing is, um, what I’m trying to say very inarticulately is... that, um...in fact perhaps, despite appearances... I like you very much.”

“Ah. Apart from the smoking, the drinking and the vulgar mother and the verbal diarrhea.”

“No. I like you very much...just as you are.” (*Bridget Jones’s Diary*)

Bridget's face is focused in a medium shot looking perplexed by Darcy's statement. It is a shock to her that he likes her just as she is when *she* doesn't like herself that way.

The scene renders the myth of self-perfection as an unnecessary goal. In essence, she is perfect in her imperfections and her family and friends love her for them not in spite of them. This is also true of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) because even though Jane and Elizabeth have several handicaps that would prevent them from marrying a fine man they are set apart from the rest of their family and thus in the end that distinction from them allows them to find true love. Laughter as mentioned before in Chapter 2: Period Films is a very important part of Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) so it is no surprise that laughter is expressed in different manners across different genres of film.

The study of Sharon Maguire's *Bridget Jones's Diary* for the most part has centered on its intertextual relationship with Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* and BBC's 1995 miniseries *Pride and Prejudice* starring Colin Firth and Jennifer Ehle. *Bridget Jones's Diary* has left an undeniable mark within Austen film adaptations as well as the chick lit genre for it is said to have influenced series like *Sex and the City*, as well as other film adaptations such as Andrew Black's *Pride and Prejudice*. While both Austen and Fielding define what an accomplished woman is, the unvoiced factor that they both feel an accomplished woman should have is a sense of humor, to laugh at others as well as ourselves. Even though the character Bridget Jones doesn't resemble Elizabeth Bennet in her wit or her brains, she speaks to women around the world who feel as though they lack wit and brains or feel inadequate in some way. Bridget isn't Elizabeth, but hopes to be her when she grows up.

In Gurinder Chadha's *Bride and Prejudice* (2004), a Bollywood-style adaptation of Austen's novel, laughter and other emotions are transmitted through song and dance. Chadha's film fits one of Leitch's types of adaptation, namely colonization. Leitch compares this approach to Elliott's ventriloquist concept.

Colonizing adaptations, like ventriloquists, see progenitor texts as vessels to be filled with new meanings. Any new content is fair game, whether it develops meanings implicit in the earlier text amounts to an ideological critique of that text, or goes off in another direction entirely. (Leitch 109)

Gurinder Chadha's *Bride and Prejudice* falls under this category by taking Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, which does criticize societal conventions through its wit, and turns it into a Bollywood-style adaptation that studies the cultural clash between East and West. According to Leitch this film received mixed reviews from American and Indian reviewers because this version was less threatening to the "Austen establishment" that had already been saturated with BBC adaptations while others felt that it was a "considerably shorter Indian Austen that stuck much more closely to the events of its source novel, might mark an unhealthy step toward the American colonization of Bollywood" (Leitch 109-10). In this case one must look deeper into the classification of the film and ask what this film colonizing is, Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* or the Bollywood film as some reviewers believe?

Gurinder Chadha set *Bride and Prejudice* in different locations going from east to west. The story of Elizabeth Bennet and Mr. Darcy becomes that of Lalita Bakshi and Will Darcy. Even though the film has been promoted as a Bollywood film or a Hollywood film the truth is that it is both and neither. This film as Suchitra Mathur



insightfully points out is a hybrid, an “upcoming genre of South Asian cross-over cinema,” with a “contemporary globalized (post?) coloniality in its narrative scope” (Mathur [no pagination]). Sandip Roy-Chowdhury also notes that Gurinder Chadha stated in an interview that *Bride and Prejudice* is “a British film made with a nod to Bollywood. And it’s meant to introduce this new film language to suburban audiences the world over” (Roy-Chowdhury). Linda Troost and Sayre Greenfield add that *Bride and Prejudice* is a “Bollywood inspired British film,” and an appropriation of Jane Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice* to reflect “particular modern cultural positions” (Troost; *Appropriation*). Cheryl A. Wilson also adds that Gurinder Chadha describes the film as a “multi-national, multi-cultural crowd pleaser that touches on American imperialism, the way the west looks at India and what people regard as backward or progressive. In a populist, entertaining movie, the drama is questioning the audience’s Eurocentric attitude” (Qtd. Wilson 324). As Mathur agrees the film exists on a third plane that is neither Hollywood nor Bollywood and is more a product of post-colonial theory born out of the need to eliminate indeterminacy to identify within a globalized culture. Ira Konigsberg also points out in his definition of “genre”:

At the same time, genre films alter and develop as the culture changes, reflecting shifts in attitudes of a particular era to traditional character types and values...genre films often evoke some aspect of our cultural heritage by presenting mythic patterns of character and action endemic to our country’s [the United States] history, patterns that embody the nation’s moral values and moral conflicts. (Konigsberg 164)

As the world we live in becomes smaller and smaller through the advances in communication, there are inevitable cultural changes. We live in a world where cultural exchange is a part of everyday life. *Bride and Prejudice* is a testimony of that exchange of culture, values, and even genres. When assessing *Bride and Prejudice* as a post-colonial hybrid it has little to do with the production or the aesthetics of the film and much to do with the “moral values and moral conflicts” that Konigsberg refers to, which are represented in the film. It also has to do with the targeted audience and the text itself. Seen from an ideological and character analysis point of view we find that there is little British influence and representation, which goes against characterizing the film as a typical British film, even though Chadha is a British-born Asian who has never resided in India.

In the beginning of the film we are introduced to the Bakshi family, who live in modern day Amritsar; the Bingley family, who are NRI's (non-residential Indians) living in London; the Lamba family also residing in present day Amritsar; Will Darcy an American who lives in Los Angeles, California. As the film develops we meet Mr. Kohli a non-residential Indian living in Los Angeles, California; and Johnny Wickham who is English and resides in London. We find a wide range of Indians represented in culture and cultural dynamics, but there is noticeable lack of British influence in these cultural dynamics—the only British character is the villain of the piece. Even the Americans have more representation than the English as we are introduced to Mrs. Darcy, Georgiana Darcy and Darcy's girlfriend Anne. The only vestige of India's long history with England is the English language inherited through the years of the English colonial domination. It

is the English language already adopted by English colonialism, Surbhi Malik explains, which makes Indians in the United States an important part of the model minority.

In the case of Gurinder Chadha's *Bride and Prejudice* we can perceive it as a post-colonial response towards the Romantic and Regency Period novel in attempting to challenge the imperialistic West. This Bollywood-type film portrays an exchange of cultures, and in a way exposes American audiences to a stereotyping view of Indian culture, through which the film also explores gender roles, consumerism, and cultural expectations. Chadha describes her original intention of was "... making a Bollywood-style Hindi movie that somehow interacted wholeheartedly with another cultural tradition..." (Qtd. McHodgkins 20). In an article "The Art of Writing and Making Films: *Bride and Prejudice*: A Bollywood Musical," Gurinder Chadha reveals that she had wanted to do a "British Bollywood extravaganza which combined [her] love of Bollywood and American musicals" in 1997, but had not been able to complete the project due to financing. It was later in 2001 that a friend in Pathe Films (Cameron McCracken) asked her if she wanted to make a musical. In *Bride and Prejudice* she wanted to take the theme of first impressions and look at it from a different angle, that of cultural first impressions (Brookes). Labeling *Bride and Prejudice* as a Bollywood film becomes problematic in the sense of defining what exactly a Bollywood film is. As Angelique Melitta McHodgkins points out in her Master's thesis *Indian Filmmakers and the Nineteenth Century Novel: Rewriting the English Canon through Film*, Bollywood films are much more than their Bombay production and more about the values they promote and the manner in which they are promoted (i.e. the style, genre, filmic devices,

etc.) Bollywood films, as a genre, are identified with what is called a *masala* film. For this study "Bollywood film is synonymously used in reference to the *masala*<sup>9</sup> film.

Bollywood films are known throughout the world for their extravagant song and dance numbers, even in melodramas, a generic mixture unheard of in Hollywood. Western audiences sometimes have difficulty accepting and/or believing in these types of films because they ask the audience to suspend their sense of reality, not understanding that Bollywood is a general name or denomination that does not include all of India's film industries. Generally speaking Bollywood film label or as a genre is referred to a film known as a "*masala* film in Hindi," *masala* means a mixture of spices, but in this context it alludes to the mixture of genres that inhabit one film (McHodgkins 20-2).

*Masala* refers to the amalgamation of multiple film genres converging in one film. So it isn't surprising to see drama, comedy, action adventure, and romance in one film, mixed with obligatory song-and-dance sequences. (22)

Using this definition of a "*masala* film," we can observe that *Bride and Prejudice* doesn't qualify as such even though it is a romantic comedy with the "obligatory sing-and-dance sequence" (22). Not only that, but as Angelique Melitta McHodgkins concurs, Chadha takes an "anti-imperialist" and "anti-Western" art form such as the Bollywood film and makes a film that goes against these principles. I believe that *Bride and Prejudice* should be qualified or studied more as a hybrid of the Hollywood musical and a Bollywood "*masala*" style of film, although the stylization of the film better reflects the style of the Hollywood film rather than the "*masala*" film. The film is clearly influenced by both

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<sup>9</sup> The term *masala* means a "mixture of spices," which translates into film as a mixture of cinematic devices such as song and dance routines in the middle of a dramatic moment of a film. In essence a *masala* film is a mixture of genres that is very different to what Western cultures are accustomed to watching.

genres, but it is neither. In *Bride and Prejudice* we can find little filmic influence or quotations of Bollywood films, but instead we find quotations from films Hollywood musicals such as *Grease* (1978) and *The Sound of Music* (1965), which Chadha describes as having influenced her youth. As indicated before, genres are a helpful categorization that is not by any means definite and is used to clarify the target audience with a “culturally familiar rubric” (Berry-Flint 25). In *The Complete Film Dictionary*, Ira Konigsberg helpfully defines a genre as:

A group of films having recognizably similar plots, character types, setting, filmic techniques, and themes...The creative filmmaker relies upon conventions but also infuses his or her own vision into the work. It is the infusion of the innovative within the familiar that invokes the special pleasure we feel for genre film. (Konigsberg 164)

This “infusion of the innovative” that Konigsberg mentions is what Jauss refers to as eliminating indeterminacy and making an appropriation of the text and creating a new text that is independent from the “original.” Through this definition therefore we find *Bride and Prejudice* in the position of a genre film that has been altered to create its new place in between two distinct genres. It is neither Hollywood nor Bollywood but lays on what Suchitra Mathur calls a “third plane” which corresponds to the film’s hybridism.

A typical Hollywood production is known for its star-quality productions and for the values it promotes such as consumerism, individualism, and the American Dream. And even though *Bride and Prejudice* did not have a big budget it does however promote consumerism, individualism, the American dream, and casts of Bollywood star actresses such as Aishwarya Rai who plays Lalita Bakshi and Namrata Shirodkar who plays Jaya

Bakshi. These factors account for the film's hybridity and for the criticism that Gurinder Chadha has received. Gurinder Chadha, an NRI herself who has never lived in India, projects her Western ideologies through her film. As Angelique Melitta McHodgkins insightfully points out about Chadha's choices in making her adaptation of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*:

But for all her attempts at showing the real India to Western audiences and dismissing unfounded stereotypes people often have about India, Chadha does more to promote Western cultural values than she does to build up India, and Bollywood, against the misguided perceptions often associated with it. And in the process of doing so, she undermines the tradition of Bollywood, her own pro-Indian stance, and discredits Lalita's sanctimonious place as the defender of all things Indian, as she too, leaves India behind and marries the Anglo-American Will Darcy. (McHodgkins 28)

While *Bride and Prejudice* on the surface seems to be promoting family values, anti-consumerism, and anti-imperialism, these are undercut by the characters' final choice in mates. From the very beginning of the film the female characters that are portrayed choose mates with Western cultural backgrounds: they are either American, English or NRI's. The choices of men with ethnic Indian backgrounds are two NRI men: Mr. Kohli and Mr. Bingley.

As McHodgkins points out the film starts off with the marriage of an NRI (non-resident Indian) to one of Lalita's friends referred to as the bride. This arranged marriage indicates the central plot, theme and outcome of the film. Lalita Bakshi played by

Aishwarya Rai is the only female character who has any misgivings about leaving India and who disdains those who do not see India's wonders and value. But she eagerly dreams of being an "overseas bride dressed in white" (*Bride and Prejudice*). All of the brides presented in the film marry and move to the United States and England, therefore staying in India is not part of the "happily ever after," not even for the anti-imperialist and anti-Western Lalita. Furthermore, Will Darcy is the hero of the film in the end and attracts her by showing her how he lives in L.A. with an expensive ride in a helicopter, spending their time sightseeing and traveling.

Surbhi Malik's article "'UK is finished; India's too corrupt; Anyone can become an Amrikan': Interrogating Itineraries of Power in *Bend It like Beckham* and *Bride and Prejudice*" strives to prove that Chadha's films show the United States as a liberating space where there is no racism "engendering hope and possibility for the South Asian diasporic subject" (Malik 79). While Malik asserts that *Bend It like Beckham* and *Bride and Prejudice* show that the only place in which the characters will have a free space unhindered by racism is by going West, they also show that this space is very limited and has its own pitfalls.

The films *Bend It like Beckham* and *Bride and Prejudice* join the American "imperialist ideologies" inherited by their British ancestry by "limiting the rhetoric of Asian America success to the economic sphere" as we can see in the figure of Mr. Kohli in Chadha's *Bride and Prejudice*. (Malik 80) Mr. Kohli's success is only economic and has nothing to do with cultural capital so even though he has reached economic success he is denied complete entrance to the cultural sphere. In the song "There's No Life

without Wife” we see that he is laughed at by the sisters and the audience for his attitudes, which in the end can only be changed or transformed in marriage.

While critics like Surbhi Malik and Angelique Melitta McHodgkins credit Kohli's quick transformation to the fact that he is in the United States, what McHodgkins posits is that this transformation has occurred after he is married and has finally acquired cultural capital through his marriage to Chandra Lamba who as a part of the diasporic community is afforded the “economies of knowledge” i.e. cultural capital, which he had previously lacked. In Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) there is no such redemption for Mr. Collins (Kohli's analogue), a figure of ridicule because of the hypocrisy he embodies. As Mary M. Chan explicates, Mr. Collins has a specific function within Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* not just as a fool, but as in many film adaptations, as a “critical lightning rod, a grotesquely satiric parody of polite society in general and clergymen specifically” (Chan). Even though there have been many film adaptations of *Pride and Prejudice* Chan finds the most undesirable of all the Mr. Collins's is Mr. Kohli, not because of his appearance, but because of his inherent hypocrisy. Even though Mr. Kohli has embraced modern values he wants a wife who doesn't share those values. He later further demonstrates his hypocrisy when talking to Mr. Darcy in the Bakshi household by saying that “these Indians” don't know how to treat guests, and when Lalita asks him if he is no longer an Indian he replies that he has a green card. He is looking for an Indian wife, but he speaks as if he were better than his countrymen. Mr. Kohli is a hybrid of Eastern and Western culture and as such is open to be critiqued by both. He isn't accepted in either culture.



The filmmakers have retained many characteristics of Austen's Collins, including his social awkwardness, his inability to dance, his habit of noting how much things cost, and his awareness of status. But this Collins is also a product of a movie that is invested in an ideology of optimistic globalization and multiculturalism. The film's politics open up an additional avenue to mock the Collins character. As Troost and Greenfield note, Mr. Kohli "combines the worst aspect of American and Indian attitudes--the materialism of one and the sexism of the other." (Chan)

An example of Mr. Kohli's embodiment of the worst of traits of both cultures is the dining room scene just after his arrival at the Bakshi residence. Mr. Kohli eats with his mouth open and goes into a full description of the house he has bought in the Los Angeles Valley saying that it is "da bomb," but that the Indian women have lost their values and (horror of horrors!) have become lesbians. This shows his materialistic values and his narrow mindedness. So he then says that he may be "hip, rich and wise, but as they say there's no life without wife." As McHodgkins posits, Mr. Kohli wants a wife with values he has long forgotten or never really had access to. But Mr. Kohli is not the only male without access to cultural capital. The men in the film are redeemed by the women's influence. An example of this is how Will Darcy changes before our eyes from a pompous American with a condescending attitude towards what he deems an inferior country to a man more open to different cultures as he takes Lalita to a Mexican restaurant and even gives dressing in Indian attire another chance for Kohli's LA wedding to please Lalita: he looks quite comfortable in it the second time around. In the end we see Will Darcy openly joining the festivities of Balraj Bingley's wedding by

playing the drums, comfortable in his place as a participant not only in the wedding but in the culture he once rejected. Will Darcy in this musical tidbit is integrated to the musical aspect of the Bollywood-like film, in essence making him part of the cultural mix.

We can observe how a musical with sing-and-dance routines can be integrated to further the plot to adapt Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1830) as the crucial moments occur during balls in which music and dancing are the main form of entertainment. In *Bride and Prejudice* music is used as a way to engage in courtship. The first encounter between Jaya Bakshi and Balraj and Kiran Bingley (in Austen characters they would be Jane Bennet, Mr. Bingley and Miss Caroline Bingley) happens the first night of the wedding ceremony. In this scene Jaya and Bingley, Lalita and Will first meet during a song and dance number. Later when Johnny Wickham first appears Lalita is on the beach strumming a guitar where Will Darcy is also present and mesmerized by her. As Wickham comes out of the water entranced by the melody, Lalita is in the role of singing mermaid calling the men towards her. During the dream sequence of "There's No Life without Wife" Lalita dreams of being "an overseas bride dressed in white" with Johnny Wickham, but instead of Wickham unveiling her it is Darcy who unveils her. To Lalita's horror she dreams of Darcy marrying her, signaling the underlying attraction between them. Once Darcy is openly courting Lalita he takes her to a Mexican restaurant where mariachi is being played and the first thing she observes is the music. Later in mid-courtship we also get a song and dance number called me "Take me to Love" in which we are granted glimpses of their courtship and their developing relationship. The scene ends with another dream-like sequence as Will and Lalita walk on the beach, surfers joining the song as well as a church choir which magically dissolves into thin air as the

song finishes. These dream-like sequences, a staple of both the classic Hollywood musical and Bollywood, express the internal and emotional development of the characters almost like a voice-over. In essence the songs go where the audience cannot, into the characters' thoughts.

In Andrew Black's *Pride and Prejudice* (2003) the filmmakers also use dream sequences to show the audience their thoughts and/or emotional upheavals. Andrew Black's *Pride and Prejudice* (2003) is the story of graduate student/teaching assistant and aspiring writer Lizzy Bennet and her four housemates: Jane, her perfect Argentinean best friend and roommate; Lydia, is the boy-obsessed landlord; Kitty, Lydia's sister and follower in everything; and Mary, the most awkward of all the housemates. A review by the Film Atheist explains that the story is moved to LDS (Latter Day Saints) students attending Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah as the protagonists of the story. But there are two versions of this film. The first version of the film was shown to small groups and had overt Mormon references, but they were cut from the second version to make it more appropriate for a non-Mormon audience. On the DVD both versions exist but the first version is cleverly hidden in the Select Scene menu. In his critique the Film Atheist points out that Black's *Pride and Prejudice* (2003) was done a disservice in not explaining the character's collective behavior.

Initially titled *Pride and Prejudice: A Latter Day Comedy* for wide release, "A Latter Day Comedy" was lopped off, and minor cuts were made throughout to remove direct references to the Mormon faith. So, we're shown a religious service that is atypical for most of America, and then no explanation of what it is or why these people all go to it. Wearing

its colors proudly would have helped in numerous areas including explaining the weird guy who keeps hitting on our heroine (he's a recently returned missionary, but that is no longer explained), and making it clear why everyone has the same, conservative moral principles. (Film Atheist)

On the other hand gee-15 comments on the IMDB website that setting the story in a largely Mormon community of Provo, Utah isn't a stretch to the society which Jane Austen describes in her book.

Movie watchers with no understanding of the Mormon culture never get a chance to realize how similar the culture of a modern Mormon university is to the 19<sup>th</sup> century world of Jane Austen because the filmmakers don't take the time or trouble to point out those similarities...the average viewer never gets to appreciate the irony of characters like Lydia, Kitty and Collins because he or she isn't shown how that behavior is at odds with the teachings AND culture of the LDS church. (gee-15)

This film is a departure from Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, and yet it isn't that far away from it. The film is not a mere contemporary take on *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), but a merging of two cultures and of two texts to make a new one, much like the way in which Neoclassical artists imitated classical art to create new works of art. Thomas Leitch compares neoclassic imitation to Kamilla Elliot's "de(re) composing concept" which she defines as "film and novel" decompose, merge, and form a new composition at 'underground' levels of reading. The adaptation is a composite of textual and filmic signs merging and audience consciousness together with other cultural narratives and often leads to confusion as to which is novel and which is film" (Qtd.

Leitch 103). Based on this Leitch recognizes that neoclassic imitation had its birth in the writings of Alexander Pope and John Dryden, and other satirists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Imitation in neoclassicism relies upon the conviction that “history is cyclic, not linear” (Leitch 104). In essence, the past is prologue and therefore its examination and re-evaluation can inform the present.

As an example of a neoclassic imitation Leitch uses Amy Heckerling’s *Clueless* (1995). Even though Austen’s character Emma, from the novel of the same name, is satirized, Austen’s work is not. Austen’s novel isn’t even acknowledged in this film. “This surprise and delight in the resemblance between two disparate cultures, a perspective that illuminates then both, is the defining pleasure of neoclassic imitation” (Leitch 105).

It is in this last point Leitch makes that we can find Andrew’s *Black Pride and Prejudice* as it sees the “resemblance between two disparate cultures” that in the end “illuminate[s] them both,” by recapturing the past and making it present. Unlike Leitch’s example *Clueless*, Black’s *Pride and Prejudice* acknowledges its source novel from the very beginning. Other than its title, at the end of the opening credits the screenwriters are acknowledged and underneath it reads “Based on the novel by Jane Austen” and in the final credits she is also acknowledged as one of the screenwriters. The main character, Lizzy Bennet utters “It is a truth universally acknowledged that a girl of a certain age and in a certain situation in life must be in want of a husband.” Austen’s famous first line has been re-contextualized.

By having Lizzy’s voice utter this sentence she is being set as narrator of the story as being aligned with Jane Austen’s voice. As Leitch explains, for Austen novels it is

easier to compensate for the loss of the author's wit because her characters have been created in a way in which it is plausible for them to speak as she does. Austen's novels have been known for their use of free indirect speech to access the inner thoughts of her characters. We are privy to Elizabeth's thoughts as she feels them, specially her antagonism towards Mr. Darcy and by doing so the reader is also complicit in the crime of prejudice against him and cannot fault Elizabeth for it. In film free indirect speech is used most popularly by voice over and *mise-en-scène*. An example of the use of *mise-en-scène* to show the character's thoughts is Lizzy's introduction of her housemates. We get a view of what happens in her day from the time she wakes up until she goes to her second job in a bookstore where she meets Will Darcy. During the course of this particular day she is hearing a lecture on Jane Austen from what we can see from the blackboard behind her professor. Later on in the story she is seen teaching Jane Austen to her students.

A technique used for the quest of fidelity is to imbed Jane Austen as part of the context of the story. For further cues of fidelity in the film to its source novel different passages from Austen's novel appear as quotations. Andrew Black, the film's director, comments:

[The] quotations from the novel we thought it would be a nice tribute to the novel to use them. To comment on the scenes that are going to follow them since we departed quite radically from the novel in many ways. We stayed true to the story largely and most of the characters (Black).

Leitch explains that the use of textual cues such as imbedded texts and Jane Austen's picture at the end of the film are a way to invoke the canons of literature.

This displacement of fidelity to a particular literary text by self validation through textualized appeals to literary associations—from the physical look of the original text to a testimonial from the author— becomes in other adaptations a more generalized, but equally textualized appeal to the canons of literature itself. (Leitch, *Traditions* 160)

Black's *Pride and Prejudice* (2003) doesn't look towards fidelity, but instead towards reverence to Austen's novel. The changes made in the storyline of Black's *Pride and Prejudice* (2003) are to bring Austen's work to a new audience, but the quotations and citations within the film also show an exaltation and the need to preserve Austen and her original work. After all Austen is credited as the primary writer of a screenplay composed 186 years after her death. By contemporizing Austen, the film acknowledges *Pride and Prejudice*'s relevance while paying homage to the novel's status as a classic by quoting from it. But this is a double-edged sword because by using the Austen text it is also trying to elevate itself relying on the viewer's knowledge of Austen's status in the literary canon. The search for quality in a film calls to a specific elitist audience, while in the case of Andrew Black's film, contemporizing Jane Austen's novel opens it to a new audience facilitating its reading of that text. In other words *Pride and Prejudice* (2003) tries to open a new audience and at the same time give the audience that already knows the original text a glimpse of it and have a renewed relationship with it. In essence, one who knows the text can "get the joke." An example of an inside joke within the film is the radio station that the girls listen to on their way to church is 181.3, 1813 being the year that Austen published *Pride and Prejudice* (Wikipedia). The quotations of these texts strive not for fidelity but rather to borrow on and re-invest Austen's considerable

cultural capital. At each opportunity the filmmakers have chosen to remind us who the first screenwriter really was: Jane Austen. In the DVD's director commentaries Andrew Black and Jason Fawler express their wish to still be associated with Austen's work even though they took the liberty of changing the storyline radically.

But *Pride and Prejudice* (2003) not only uses the images and quoted lines from Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, it also refers to and uses *The Pink Bible*, a self-help book for women hunting husbands. This book was created for the film as an extra on the film's DVD when used on a computer. The book's complete title is *The Pink Bible: How to Bring your Man to His Knees!* The DVD presents it as an excerpt from the real book, which was written by Maren M. Jesep. Producer Jason Faller laughingly describes *The Pink Bible* as a "manifestation of pure evil which I think it's made its way to the hands of a lot of young girls who probably following its advice is perhaps my great regret. I just hope that nothing bad happens because of it." (Black) The existence of this self-help book traces its ancestry to Helen Fielding's *Bridget Jones's Diary*. As Kelly A. Marsh explains in her essay "Contextualizing Bridget Jones," the main character of Helen Fielding's novel *Bridget Jones's Diary* represents modern women who have societal and cultural pressures to change "without reference to her own qualities or qualifications" (Marsh 57). In Andrew Black's *Pride and Prejudice* we see Kitty and Lydia constantly referring to *The Pink Bible* for information about how to "hunt" a husband. These scenes evoke a scene from Sharon Maguire's *Bridget Jones's Diary*.

The scene opens as Chaka Khan's song "I'm Every Woman" is playing and Bridget Jones throws away an empty vodka bottle, a book titled *What Men Want*, a pack of cigarettes, the book, *Ever Wanted to Know How Men Think? Well Now You Can!*, an



empty wine bottle, and *How to Make Men Want what They don't Think they Want*. She replaces those books with self-help books: *Getting back that Pride*, *How to Get What You Want and Want What You Have*, *Life Without Men*, *Women Who Love Men are Mad*. The scene changes to Bridget in the gym on an exercise bicycle, then to a page of want ads, while someone, presumably Bridget, circles the ads for television career opportunities. The scene cuts back to Bridget on the bicycle and then falling as she gets off of it. The next scene yields a smiling Bridget with a self-confidence that she had before lacked when she was in the relationship with Clever. This is a mise-en-scène of Bridget's rise to self-confidence and recuperation from Clever's ill treatment.

In a sense Lydia, who is very much like Bridget in her obsession with men, is a nod towards *Bridget Jones's Diary* as well as acknowledging the film's relevance. Lydia's obsession backfires when she elopes with Jack Wickham and later finds out he was wanted by the law for three counts of bigamy and nine counts of illegal gambling in the state of Nevada. She who once obsessed about men does not marry and becomes instead the author of a self-help book called *Looking Good for Me and My Girlfriends*. Unlike Bridget's quest for self-perfection to find a boyfriend, an unnecessary change because she is perfect in her imperfection, Lydia does change and her change has nothing to do with a husband. She becomes an advocate for women, who like her, had been on the "hunt" for a husband. Lydia had followed the teachings of a society that dictates that "a girl of a certain age and in a certain situation in life must be in want of a husband." In the end she has learned a lesson and became more like Elizabeth in wanting something different from life that may or may not include marriage.

It is not a coincidence that both *Bridget Jones's Diary* (2001) and *Pride and Prejudice* (2003) share the use of self-help books. Both films have a common background within the Chick Lit genre. For the most part Chick Lit consists of books *for* women *by* women. Jennifer Mary Woolston studies Andrew Black's *Pride and Prejudice* (2003) from a Chick Lit point of view. Woolston explains that *Pride and Prejudice* (2003) comes from a distinct place in Austenmania. The film is set apart from Austenmania and takes its place by using the Chick Lit genre. Its stronghold is that it is an adaptation created for a female-centered audience.

Rather than standing as an Austentatious *non sequitur* amidst the larger collection of cinematic re-workings, Black's *Pride and Prejudice* uses its Chick Lit backdrop to realign the underlying motifs of female connection, agency, and expressions of desire that appealed to Austen's readers, returning to the core issue of feminine self-discovery via a very relevant series of stylistic decisions. (Woolston)

The stylistic decisions that Woolston points to include the color scheme used throughout the film, consisting of bright colors and pastels. Andrew Black and his wife Anne K. Black, the set designer as well as screenwriter, chose to use a 60's retro style for the film (Black). The color scheme used in the film is familiar to readers of the Chick Lit genre. The themes that are touched upon in Chick Lit are the same themes that are explored in Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) such as "self-discovery, introspection and personal growth" (Woolston). Woolston adds that,

Moreover, the continued popular appeal of Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* revolves, at least in part, around the way in which the text portrays the

socio-economic pressures, the personal desires, and the romantic proclivities of its central female characters. In a very real way, what is old is still new, as modern women continue to face varied forms of opposition and oppression from the dominant, and perhaps continually pervasive, patriarchy--a condition Chick Lit explores. (Woolston)

It seems that almost two hundred years after the publication of Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* the same problems still plague women. Just as Linda Hutcheon explains, we find comfort in the repetition of themes in film, "adaptation is repetition, but repetition without replication" (Hutcheon 7).

There is no doubt that Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) as well as its film adaptations are part of the Chick Lit genre because it is by a woman and for women, but more than that they deal with many themes that concern women to this day. The film adaptations highlight certain themes, be it self-perfection (*Bridget Jones's Diary*), multiculturalism (*Bride and Prejudice*), or socio-economic pressures (*Pride and Prejudice: A Latter Day Comedy*). The changes made to Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* are the reason we see the film adaptations, because instead of detracting from the original text, they enhance it.

## Conclusion

“In one hundred and ninety-three years of wear, tear and academic assaults,  
not to mention countless adaptations, *Pride and Prejudice* has  
remained unchanged, except that Darcy now looks like Colin Firth.”

Jennifer Cruise

*Flirting with Pride & Prejudice: Fresh Perspectives on the Original Chick Lit Masterpiece*

From their birth, film adaptations have been arguably seen as parasitic creatures (as noted by Robert Stam and Brian McFarlane, who give a historical account of the development of film adaptation theory) that feed off their host text, in this case, the novel. Film adaptation theory strives to study film adaptations as works influenced by other works, but which do not function as parasites. This study views film adaptations as being influenced by more than just the novel, but for its intertextual relationship with other sources. Film theory has for the most part studied adaptations from a literary point of view, as Imelda Whelehan points out in her book *Adaptations: From Text to Screen, Screen to Text*, an approach that tends to focus on the original book as the model with which the film should be compared. When one studies film adaptation for its intertextual process and product it opens the study of adaptations to broader horizons. The point of the matter is that if critics refrain from resorting to fidelity discourse, the study of adaptations can be an open and arguably a more objective study.

In the search for a more open comprehension of film adaptation as an independent text, I have used the works of Reader Response theorists Wolfgang Iser and Hans Robert Jauss. These theorists focus on the text as being a re-creating by the readers' understanding of outside experiences and texts. In film adaptation theory, as Linda

Hutcheon points out in her book *A Theory of Adaptation*, what is most important is not the source text, but what has been done to the source text to make it new. In other words, what is most important in film adaptation is the intertextual relationship with the original text and the way in which the film adaptation becomes a new and original text. But this study has striven to demonstrate that this is a false assumption because film adaptations are what Francesco Casetti calls a “reappearance” of another text (Casetti 82). Instead of focusing on the “fidelity discourse” that has followed many film adaptation studies, it is most productive to study them for the relationship between the original text and the new text born from it as “reappearance,” a text that is related but nevertheless independent from the source novel.

The changes *inside* the text (the film adaptation) explore those changes that occur *outside* the text, such as culture and receptor. Once we examine the changes or additions to film adaptations we can appreciate the real flaws of “fidelity discourse.” However, it is virtually impossible completely to divorce one’s self from “fidelity discourse.” Many times it is the barometer with which we measure the worth of adaptations, but Stam rightly argues that it is a disservice to the study of adaptations only to measure adaptations through “fidelity discourse”:

A fundamental unfairness plagues “fidelity” discourse, reflected in a differential and even prejudiced application of the very concept, depending on **which** art is being considered. It is adaptation in the cinema, particularly of novels, that has been especially castigated and held to an absurdly rigorous standard of “fidelity.” (Stam 15, emphasis his)

Thomas Leitch concurs with Robert Stam on the futility of “fidelity discourse” and exposes it as one of twelve fallacies that persist in adaptation theory. “Fidelity is the most appropriate criterion to use in analyzing adaptations” (Leitch 161). This fallacy is the most prevalent and continuously used when it comes to film adaptation theory. Likewise, many theorists (McFarlane, Stam, Hutcheon and others) also take the position that fidelity discourse is a futile way of studying film adaptations. Brian McFarlane traces the birth of adaptation theory and finds that it has been plagued by fidelity discourse from the very beginning but clarifies his position by declaring that “Fidelity is obviously very desirable in marriage; but with film adaptations I suspect playing around is more effective” (McFarlane, “It Wasn’t” 6). McFarlane then adds that a film adaptation should be judged on its merits as a film and then later as a product of adaptation. In essence a film adaptation should be seen from its intertextual properties.

The ideal seems to me to be, on the one hand, bold and intelligent and, on the other, determined to make something both connected to its precursor and new in itself. The film has the right to be judged as a film; then, one of the many things it also is an adaptation (it is also the product of a particular industrial system, a genre film, part of a tradition of national filmmaking, etc.). That is, the precursor literary work is only an aspect of the film’s intertextuality, of more or less importance according to the viewer’s acquaintance with the antecedent work. (“It Wasn’t” 9)

Film adaptation study, seen from this point of view, is broadened. It is more important to appreciate the complexities of the intertextual exchanges among a film adaptation, its source text and other contexts and traditions that contribute to the production of a film. A

challenge for filmmakers of novel-to-film adaptations is how to transfer a character's inner thoughts from the page onto film. This challenge is part of a long debate within film adaptation theory. As Thomas Leitch explains, another of the recurring fallacies within adaptation theory is that "Novels create more complex characters than movies because they offer more immediate and complete access to characters' psychological states" (Leitch 158). In this exploration of the externalization of psychological states, Leitch uses Wolfgang Iser's studies of the "gaps" or "blanks" as the spaces left for the reader to leave their mark in the text. But Leitch proposes that Iser left a gap of his own in his theory by not considering the "necessity of gaps not as an inevitable corollary of a given story's incompleteness, but at the very basis of its appeal" (158). These gaps are there to provide pleasure to the reader and are necessary for the pleasure of any text. Furthermore, the techniques used to delve into a character's psyche during a film provide the gaps provoke and delight audiences. "Film character achieves complexity by its own emphasis on incomplete knowledge, by its conscious play with the limits of physical, external medium imposes upon it" (159). Complexity of psyche is not monopolized by any specific media because it is achieved through "the subtlety, maturity and fullness of the pattern that emerges from thoughts and actions specified or inferred" (159). Linda Hutcheon concurs with Leitch about the complexities of psyche expressed in film. Voice-over is not the only manner in which a filmmaker can express a character's thoughts or emotions. The soundtrack used in a film can help enhance or even develop a character's psyche.

Soundtracks in movies therefore enhance and direct audience response to characters and action, as they do in videogames, in which music also emerges with sound effects both to underscore and create emotional

reactions. Film sound can be used to connect inner and outer states in a less explicit way than do camera actions. (Hutcheon 41)

An example of how a soundtrack can and does influence an audience is the famous shower scene in Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho* (1960). The sound of a casaba melon being stabbed and the piercing note is as much a part of cinema history as Hitchcock himself. The sound in this particular scene enhances the audience's tension, taking the unknowing audience by surprise at the same time that the character is caught by surprise and is stabbed to death. Another example can be found in many popular films such as *Just like Heaven* (2005) directed by Mark Waters starring Mark Ruffalo and Reese Witherspoon. One scene contains a montage of what is happening to the characters after Elizabeth (Reese Witherspoon) has awakened from her three-month coma. The montage depicts David's (Mark Ruffalo) feelings of loss since Elizabeth has woken up and doesn't remember him. The song "Colors" by Amos Lee plays in the background to enhance David's sense of loss and Elizabeth's sense that she is missing something or that something is not right. But sound is not the only external device that can be used in film to show interiority externally.

Hutcheon also adds that external actions are also a reflection of inner thoughts. As she explains,

External appearances are made to mirror inner truths. In other words, visual and aural correlatives for interior events can be created, and in fact film has at its command many techniques that verbal texts do not. The power of the close-up, for example, to create psychological intimacy is so



obvious (think too of Ingmar Bergman's films) that directors can use it for powerful and revealing interior ironies. (Hutcheon 58-9)

An example of the external as reflection of the internal is discussed in Chapter 2 of this study in a discussion of Joe Wright's *Pride and Prejudice* (2005) as Elizabeth Bennet, played by Keira Knightly, looks at a marble bust of Mr. Darcy longingly in a close-up shot and the camera turns just as Elizabeth's feelings for Mr. Darcy have changed after his letter. Another interesting example is illustrated in Chapter 3 of this study in the discussion of the song and dance sequences in Gurinder Chadha's *Bride and Prejudice* and Andrew Black's *Pride and Prejudice* (2003).

In Chapter 1: I provided a theoretical lens to examine the different intertextual relationships between Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* and its film adaptations. An important part of this study concerns not how the film adaptations relate to Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, but rather how they re-write the past according to the present, and how this past is influenced by other Austen film adaptations. In Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* the author limits herself to tell the story of a small community of five to six families in England, whereas in Gurinder Chadha's film adaptation *Bride and Prejudice* it becomes an international affair. In *Bride and Prejudice* the characters are not confined to just one country (India), but also travel to London, England and Los Angeles, California. The characters in this film adaptation represent the places and cultures from where they come, making this film a multi-cultural re-vision of Austen's work.

A film does not simply work upon the book it ostensibly adapts. As Linda Hutcheon clarifies,

For the reader, spectator, or listener, adaptation *as adaptation* is unavoidably a kind of intertextuality *if the receiver is acquainted with the adapted text*. It is an ongoing ideological process, as Mikhail Bakhtin would have said, in which we compare the work we already know with the one we are experiencing. By stressing their relation of individual works to other works and to an entire cultural system, French semiotic and post-structuralist theorizing of intertextuality has been important in its challenges of dominant post-Romantic notions of originality, uniqueness, and autonomy. Instead, texts are said to be mosaics of citations that are visible and invisible, heard and silent; they are always already written and read. So, too, are adaptations, but with the added proviso that they are also acknowledged as adaptations *of specific texts*. Often, the audience will recognize that a work is an adaptation of more than one specific text. (Hutcheon 21)

Two appropriate examples that have been extensively discussed beforehand in Chapter 3 of this study are Sharon Maguire's *Bridget Jones's Diary* (2001) and Andrew Black's *Pride and Prejudice* (2003). Both of these films are a part of each other and a part of the film adaptations that were filmed before them. They are adaptations of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) as well as earlier film adaptations of this novel. This is not to say that all of the films discussed in this study do not adapt different texts within them but that these two films have a more obvious intertextual relationship with other texts.

In Chapter 1, I demonstrated the futility of fidelity discourse as a theoretical and evaluative lens. Instead of using the original text as a means to diminish the new text, the

original text should be used to seek the differences and study those differences independently from the original text. In Chapter 2, I used the period films *Pride and Prejudice* by Robert Z. Leonard (1940), BBC's 1995 mini-series *Pride and Prejudice*, and Joe Wright's (2005) *Pride and Prejudice* to demonstrate how period films do not copy the original text as one would suppose. Period films are rather a reflection of their own times. I used the films *Bridget Jones's Diary* (2000) by Sharon Maguire, Andrew Black's (2003) *Pride and Prejudice*, and Gurinder Chadha's (2004) *Bride and Prejudice* in my third chapter to demonstrate how contemporary films also embody the time in which they were filmed.

But this study is just a small contribution in the field of film adaptations for there are gaps to be filled by others in the search for more knowledge within this field. My suggestions for further studies are those insufficiently explored branches of film adaptation studies such as the reception of the audience that encounters the film adaptation before reading the original novel. What is the original text in this case? And how does the audience (reader) respond to both the film adaptation and its "original text"? These questions have not been extensively addressed in the building of film theory, but have been addressed in the study of literature. As we have seen, the relationship of literature and film is complex, controversial and problematic, but there are countless benefits to such a study.

Film adaptation theory is a fairly new area of study that holds great promise. Once we can overcome our prejudice against film adaptations, we can see them as rich fountains of understanding and meaning. The intertextual relationship between a text (be it the novel or the film) with the audience is what keeps these texts alive. Film and

literature have a common bond in their audience, as audiences buy the book or the movie ticket the truth of the matter is that they find pleasure in the company of their beloved characters and plots.

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