Austen on the Screen

The Harlequinization of Emma *and* Sense & Sensibility

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Introduction

> Jane Austen as one of the mothers of the Harlequin or Silhouette novel? This genealogy should amuse many of Austen's admirers, who know her novels to be much more culturally and linguistically complex than the mass-market romance. And yet, recent popular representations reveal a distinct trend: the harlequinization of Jane Austen's novels. If Austen is one of the ancestors of the paperback romance, recent films of her work are now the heirs of this popular form. (Kaplan 178)

In her essay "Mass Marketing Jane Austen: Men, Women, and Courtship in Two of the Recent Films" Deborah Kaplan argues that due to the popularity and mass-production of romance novels, Jane Austen's bibliography tends to be harlequinized. With the term harlequinization Kaplan means the following: "[...] 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" (Kaplan 178). Fans of these romance novels, often published by Harlequin Enterprises, apparently see Austen as one of the genre's ancestors. These fans must focus their attention then wholly on the 'romantic' aspect of an Austen novel. This would mean all the interaction between the heroine and her hero and the heroine's thoughts on him. Moreover, as the quotation of Kaplan tells us, it would mean that the modern reader sees all other characters as mere accessories to the plot.

Furthermore, Deborah Kaplan explains how she found a guideline for writing romance novels which had Mr Darcy listed as an ideal romance hero. According to the guideline a romance hero is "self-assured, masterful, hot-tempered, capable of violence, passion, and tenderness" (Kaplan 177). Also, "the hero and heroine's plot should begin in the first chapter" and the plot "necessitate[s] an unswerving attention to the hero's and

heroine's desire for one another and a tendency to represent those desires in unsurprising, even clichéd ways" (Kaplan 178). The last feature of a harlequinized version of an Austen novel is that the hero and heroine should both be "good-looking and sexy". Since physical appearance is so important, love at first sight is "understandable and appropriate" (Kaplan 178). Popular mass-marketed romance novels are usually written according to a standard formula. I would like to take a look at how this trend of formulaic writing/plots in romance novels could be translated to the screen in the latest 'round' of Austen adaptations, namely O'Hanlon's 2009 *Emma* series and Alexander's 2008 *Sense & Sensibility* series.

What interests me most is perhaps best explained by Penny Gay in "*Sense and Sensibility* in a postfeminist world: sisterhood is still powerful":

> The thematic shaping in film of Austen's stories of families and courtship: that is, that each shift in cultural history will draw from the novels the emphases that readers of that time naturally look for in them. Their images of the nation, of the family, of gender behaviour, courtship and sexual desire, will be delineated according to contemporary agendas – whether intellectual, political, or commercial. (Gay 90)

Gay argues that with time thematic changes are simply inevitable. Since popular culture seems to have embraced this harlequinizing of Austen, Brontë and others; we must also look for this in the screen adaptations. (Kaplan)

I would like to see if there is a difference in thematic choices between the 90's adaptations and the most recent wave of adaptations from '08 and '09. Furthermore, I would like to research how theories on the current popularity of the romantic genre and consequently the so-called 'harlequinization' of Jane Austen are represented in screen adaptations of Austen's work. I would like to argue that the recent adaptations of *Emma* and

Sense & Sensibility show a tendency toward a simplified version of Austen's novels in contrast to their earlier screen adaptations from the 90's; which at least attempted to preserve the complexity of an Austen novel.

In the first chapter I shall take a look at the complexity of the original works and then show the difficulty of adapting these to the screen for a mass-targeted audience. In the second chapter I will elaborate on what the '90's films and 00's series offer the audience; showing what is deleted and inserted in the films and series. Then I shall try to explain these deletions and insertions with regard to this new concept of the harlequinization of Austen. I will focus on a comparison between the 1995 *Sense and Sensibility* and the 2008 BBC series. For *Emma*, I will look at the 1996 A&E/ITV film, the 1996 Miramax film and the 2009 BBC series. Each adaptation will have its own chapter.

Chapter 1

The object of this thesis is to establish whether the latest Austen film and television adaptations are all more focused on the romance aspect of Austen´s novels than the nineties adaptations. Therefore, a closer look needs to be taken at the novels themselves. *Emma* and *Sense and Sensibility* will be shown each to have other important themes than the love and marriage theme. Not only do these novels have multiple thematic layers but also the linguistic genius of Austen needs to be taken into account. The use of free indirect speech increases in the later Austen novels and proves to be difficult to translate into dialogue in the films and series. Also, irony is embedded in both novels: because how can, or should it even, be rendered on the screen? The novels shall be discussed in the order of their publication.

1.1 *Sense and Sensibility*

Starting off with Austen's first published novel, *Sense and Sensibility* is perhaps the most dramatic of the three novels I intend to discuss in this thesis in terms of its thematic contents; in her essay "*Emma*: Word Games and Secret Histories" Linda Bree noted that the earlier Austen novels "offered their melodramatic moments: the tale of seduction and desertion of two generations of women in *Sense and Sensibility* […]" (Bree 135). In light of the novel´s adaptability into a screen production, emphasis will be laid on the thematic issues rather than narrative style, though some remarks shall be made on the representation of Austen's use of free indirect discourse and irony in a dramatic medium.

"Sense" and "Sensibility"

The main theme in *Sense and Sensibility* is the difference between the sisters Elinor's and Marianne's conduct. In the end it is Elinor's self-restraint that is rewarded. First, after losing their husband and father, the Dashwood women have to leave their home, Norland Park, and move into a considerably smaller cottage. Here, their loss is doubled; the four females experience both the emotional loss of a family member and the material loss of their home. As Marianna walks before the house, she bids her farewell in the following affective monologue:

> 'Dear, dear Norland!' said Marianne, as she wandered alone before the house, on the last evening of their being there; 'when shall I cease to regret you? –when learn to feel a home elsewhere? –O happy house! Could you know what I suffer in now viewing you from this spot, from whence perhaps I may view you no more!' (25)

Through this lament of Marianne's, the reader also learns more of her character. It is a display of the characteristic attributed to her by author and reader, at the start of the novel that is, and Marianne's sensibility is showing. Not only did Austen choose to demonstrate a sentimental speech of Marianne's; it is also telling that she did not opt for a farewell by Elinor. Elinor at that moment lost, at least from her side, more than her younger sister at that time did. Elinor had to leave Edward Ferrars behind as well. To Marianne's disappointment for the sentiment being less than love, Elinor is known to say the following "that I think very highly of him-that I greatly esteem, that I like him" (19). Since Elinor is in doubt of a return of affection of Edward, she is aware that she should speak of him as a friend and nothing more.

Then, as the novel progresses, loss of communication between Elinor and Marianne starts to develop when they, at first, fail to understand each other's behaviour in society and toward the men in their lives. This is due to the title's characteristic traits of "sense" attributed to Elinor and "sensibility" for Marianne. George E. Haggerty compares the two characteristics to Hume´s terms of "ideas" and "impressions":

> Marianne, in other words, exists in a world of what Hume calls "impressions", and Elinor in a world of "ideas". "All the perceptions of the human mind," Hume says, "resolve themselves into two distinct kinds, which I shall call IMPRESSIONS and IDEAS …. Those perceptions, which enter with most force and violence, we may name *impressions*; and under this name I comprehend all our sensations, passions and emotions, as they make their first appearance in the soul. By ideas I mean the faint images of these in thinking and reasoning…. Every one of himself will readily perceive the difference betwixt feeling and thinking." (Haggerty 224)

Marianne, therefore, lives according to her feelings; she acts as she feels. This results, for instance, in the notorious scene where Marianne and Willoughby run off in their carriage and, as it is later revealed, visit Combe Magna, the estate Willoughby stands to inherit from his aunt Mrs Smith. The impropriety of visiting the estate, with Mrs Smith currently residing, and Marianne being only accompanied by Willoughby is addressed by a perplexed Elinor: "I am afraid," replied Elinor, "that the pleasantness of an employment does not always evince its propriety" (66) and after a reply by Marianne: "But, my dear Marianne, as it has already exposed you to some impertinent remarks, do you not now begin to doubt the discretion of your own conduct?" (66).

Marianne is equally astonished by Elinor's behaviour where Edward Ferrars is concerned. After the Dashwoods have had time to settle into their new cottage, Marianne expects Edward to visit Elinor. What she finds out, however, is that Elinor does not expect him to come to their new residence. This again shows their incapability of understanding each other's motives and intentions.

Lastly, there is the sisters' behaviour with regard to their possible husbands. Burdened with the secret of Lucy's and Edward's engagement and unable to confide in her family, Elinor fails to communicate on this subject to her sister for most of the novel. Where Marianne openly laments the loss of Willoughby, which eventually results in illness and, she says, possible "self-destruction" (339), Elinor chooses to put on a brave face, as it were, acting as if nothing is troubling her mind. Her mind, as the reader knows, is her own true sanctuary where she can let all her anxieties and fears loose. Greenfield argues that:

> She [Elinor] uses secrecy as a way of protecting her deepest feelings and shielding those closest to her. She understands the nature of her emotions and therefore hides them even from herself. Language has become for Elinor a means to execute this disguise and mask her inner self with a surface of sociability. Marianne uses language merely to express what she feels. (Greenfield 224)

In the end, however, Elinor does get to marry Edward. Elinor is Austen's ideal mediator between "sense" and "sensibility" (Morgan). Morgan argues that: "Elinor has […] emerged as the moral center of *Sense and Sensibility*, having both deep affections and the willingness to control the desires of her own heart for the sake of the people she loves" (Morgan 191). Elinor knows that telling her mother and sister about Edward's secret engagement would only cause them pain and therefore hides this knowledge from them.

Marianne, however, acts selfishly by not being able to control her disappointment in love. Her self-inflicted illness is the climax of her selfishness. The Palmers have to leave their own estate, because Marianne's illness might infect the new-born baby. The possibility of Marianne's death is, of course, a horrible thought for her family and even Colonel Brandon. Therefore, Marianne has lost her love Willoughby forever and has to settle for the "silent and grave", "old bachelor" Colonel Brandon (32). Marianne admits to Elinor, after being able to think about her own conduct, that she should have acted as Elinor did (338).

Deception

In *Sense and Sensibility* four characters are the main deceivers of the story. There is the most obvious one, Willoughby, who serves as the main antagonist of the story in seducing Marianne and deceiving the other Dashwoods as well. As a character, he is physically hardly in the novel; only three instances appear when he is present in flesh and blood, first there is his introduction and, basically, the episode of Marianne falling in love. Then there is his cold rejection of Marianne at a party in London, where Elinor observes his behaviour:

> He could not then avoid it, but her [Marianne's] touch seemed painful to him, and he held her hand only for a moment. During this time he was evidently struggling for composure. Elinor watched his countenance, and saw its expression becoming more tranquil. After a moment's pause, he spoke with calmness. (170)

Clearly upset over finding Marianne at the party, Willoughby nonetheless makes it clear that he wishes to no longer remain acquainted with the Dashwoods. Lastly, Willoughby presents himself again when he tries to win Elinor's sympathy vote, as it were, when he tries to explain his conduct towards Marianne. Here, his role is no longer the antagonist, at that time adopted by Lucy Steele, and not even a deceiver. He comes clean and purges himself of his

sins by relating his story to the most rational and morally most steadfast character, Elinor, who eventually finds herself feeling for Willoughby and his fate:

> Willoughby, in spite of all his faults, excited a degree of commiseration for the sufferings produced by them, which made her think of him as now separated for ever from her family with a tenderness, a regret, rather in proportion, as she soon acknowledged within herself, to his wishes than to his merits. (326)

This is also due to the manner in which Willoughby's story is told to her, which makes Elinor feel sympathy for him, for the man is a "person of uncommon attraction – that open, affectionate, and lively manner" (326); even though she ought not to feel any pity for him after his maltreatment of two women. And, truly Austenesque, Willoughby is the first of the antagonists (George Wickham in *Pride and Prejudice*, Henry Crawford in *Mansfield Park*) who must dread a future in which he has found fortune but lost the love and respect of the one person who could have redeemed him.

Another character who is an obvious antagonist and in this role deceives many characters until the very end of the story is Miss Lucy Steele. However open she may seem toward Elinor in admitting and confiding in her about her four-year engagement to Edward Ferrars, she tries to deceive Elinor in faking true attachment to him. In the end, it is the "coxcomb" (142) Robert Ferrars whom she marries.

Finally, the two other deceptive characters in *Sense and Sensibilty* are Edward Ferrars and Elinor Dashwood. Elinor's heroism stems from the burden of knowing Edward engaged to another and from having to keep this knowledge a secret. This does not reduce her esteem and love for Edward; it rather makes her feel more for the man, because of his resolution to stay with a woman he bound himself to years ago. As stated before, Elinor, for

most of the novel, does not show her true feelings about Edward to others. Not only does she deceive her family but also Lucy Steele. Elinor tries to convince Lucy, too, that she only sees Edward as a friend. Whereas Marianne only speaks as she feels, Elinor uses language and "social forms to keep her mind and heart free while sparing her acquaintance the pain those free opinions must sometimes produce" (Morgan 202). These social forms provide Elinor protection in enabling her to politely decline to satisfy Lucy's questions and change the subject when she fears it might provoke both her and Lucy too much (144).

Edward Ferrars could be characterized as an honourable Willoughby. He is painfully aware of his improper conduct, but at the same time does nothing to change his position. Is his love for Elinor then not so strong? He has ample opportunity to explain his situation to Elinor and when visiting Barton Cottage, he lies to Marianne and Elinor about the hair in his ring. Finally, Edward only proposes to Elinor after receiving the freeing letter of Lucy Steele, who has attached herself to his brother. This characterizes him perhaps as a steadfast and conscientious person toward Lucy; but also establishes him as a character much like Willoughby in his treatment of Elinor.

1.2 *Emma*

Published in 1815, *Emma* was received with mixed reviews by critics and in Austen's lifetime no second edition was published (Bree 134). Several other authors in Austen's age commented on the book that "there is no story whatever" (Bree 135). This was not necessarily seen as a negative comment; Maria Edgeworth meant that she found the novel to be realistic in its depiction of the characters and therefore the novel "does not require the adventitious aids of mystery and adventure" (LeFaye 2004: 231 in Bree 135). Comparing *Emma* to previously published *Sense and Sensibility* there are indeed few melodramatic antics to be found. Only Frank Churchill's treatment of Emma could be considered as devious, and Emma's own behaviour toward Frank might be devious as well. She fancies herself in love with him, knowing deep down that that sentiment is not at play with him. Again, two themes shall be discussed and for *Emma* they are deception, like *Sense and Sensibility*, and self-knowledge.

Deception and Self-knowledge

Rather than the outward deception of others, *Emma* deals more with the deception of the self. For the greater part of the novel, Emma deceives herself into thinking that she is in no need of a husband. Emma eventually admits to herself after "very little quiet reflection" (329) that she does not feel anything close to love for Frank.

However, Emma at that point still believes Frank to be in love with her and hopes that she could "keep him from an absolute declaration" (329). If she had observed Frank's behaviour more closely, then she might have seen what Mr Knightley observes: "He began

to suspect him of some double dealing in his pursuit of Emma. That Emma was his object appeared indisputable" (360). Emma believes nothing of Mr Knightley's suspicions of an attachment between Frank and Jane Fairfax, an orphan and niece of Miss Bates, and is merely amused by Knightley's suspicions (36).

The seriousness of Frank Churchill's own deception of Emma is, therefore, slightly lessened. Again, Austen does not create simply a villainous fiend, but a character whose moral conduct is certainly questionable, on the one hand, and a man sincerely in love with Jane Fairfax, on the other hand, as well. Austen repeatedly misleads the reader where Frank is concerned. A second reading of the novel is necessary to retrace all the steps of Frank Churchill, who has not only deceived Emma but also the reader. In David H. Bell's article "Fun with Frank and Jane: Austen on Detective Fiction" he states that *Emma* is Austen's form of a detective novel with regard to the puzzle that is Frank Churchill and Jane Fairfax's love: "Austen's 'deceptive cunning' begins shortly after the novel opens. We learn early on that Frank has never been to Highbury and that he fails to come even after his father's marriage. Instead he writes a [letter]" (Bell). Bell tries to establish when and where Frank and Jane have met and, especially, where Austen planted all the clues to the mystery. So, where Maria Edgeworth thought there was no mystery at all, Bell argues that it is in fact a detective story. Since Frank is the central pawn in Bell's detective argument, it is safe to say that Frank is the most ambiguous character. Is he truly out to deceive Emma as, for instance, a John Willoughby has done, or is it simply because he does not recognize the impropriety of the flirtation? For Emma it is surely the latter. Her lack of worldly experience beyond Hartfield and Highbury shows when she involves herself with Frank. However, by putting Frank in the same category as other villainous characters from Austen's novels, Lynda A. Hall does see Churchill as a purposely deceptive man:

> It is Jane Fairfax's story rather than Emma's, however, that exposes the grim reality of life for many women of the nineteenth century: the attractive and accomplished but penniless young woman is *not* rescued by a good man. She marries a man who in Austen's other novels would have been rewarded by a mindless flirt (Lydia Bennet) or an adulteress (Maria Rushworth). (Hall)

Emma is considered to be a coming of age novel. In agreement with nearly all other Austen's heroines, Emma Woodhouse has to overcome some personal flaws and 'see the light' before being rewarded with marriage with the hero of the story. Emma is "handsome, clever, and rich, with a comfortable home and happy disposition" and later on also "having rather too much her own way, and a disposition to think a little too well of herself" (5). For the greater part of the novel Emma is not a very likeable character, a point of view many critics agree upon, like Bree:

> She [Emma] is so keen that Mr Elton should want to marry Harriet, and it is so inconceivable to her that Mr Elton could consider her as a possible wife, that she willfully ignores any hint to the contrary, even when she is warned by John Knightley of intentions that are clearly visible to bystanders. The snobbery of which Emma is so often accused is in fact part of her intellectual laziness: reliance on traditional social structures absolves her from having to think through the strengths and weaknesses of each individual case, and yet, when it suits her, as with Harriet Smith, or with her eventual decision to accept the Coles' invitation to dinner, these values prove to be infinitely elastic as she simply reorders her principles to suit her wishes. (137)

This is an aspect many adaptations try to alter slightly in order to gain the viewer's sympathy for Emma. However, since Emma is a rather self-indulgent and self-misleading character for

the greater part in the novel, there is no escape from depicting this in an adaptation. A character easier to sympathize with is Jane Fairfax. Unfortunately, Emma's jealousy clouds the narration and characterization of Jane. Finding Miss Bates' continuous chatter about the accomplishments of Jane Fairfax extremely annoying, and perhaps also a bit confrontational, as Mr Knightley mentions to her (173), Emma is inclined not to like or admire Jane Fairfax. Jane Austen, Lynda A. Hall argues, does, because "[t]here are few characters in Austen's novel depicted as quite so elegant and talented" (Hall) as Jane Fairfax. Bree also calls her Austen's most accomplished female character because "Jane is a typical fictional heroine through her elegance and accomplishments on the one hand, and her helplessness and vulnerability on the other" (139). Emma dislikes Jane not only because of Miss Bates, but also because she finds Jane to be rather reserved and passive and thought to be "disgustingly, […] suspiciously reserved" (176) and Emma could get no real opinion on a subject out of Jane (also 176). Sharing traits with Elinor in this respect, Jane is polite in society but does not share her true feelings with others. In the end, Jane is rewarded with marriage, like Elinor, for her ability to keep the engagement a secret and having to deceive her environment a little bit.

1.3 Narrative Style

Free Indirect Discourse in Emma and Sense & Sensibility

Finally, Austen's narrative style should be considered. Often claimed by critics to be the "first extensive practitioner" of free indirect discourse, Austen complicates many an adaptation in terms of forcing it to create dialogue which does not exist in the novel (Spencer 186). Jane Spencer clarifies what free indirect discourse is:

> In free indirect discourse, a text's dominant narrative style (typically third-person and past-tense) incorporates, for brief snatches or long passages, words emanating from a particular character, without such tags as "he said" or "she thought" to make their attribution explicit. Character and narrator momentarily merge and move apart again. (Spencer 186)

In *Narrative Fiction* by Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan free indirect discourse is stated to be: "grammatically and mimetically intermediate between indirect and direct discourse" (111) and also bears the "character's language or mode of experience" (115). An example of free indirect speech in *Sense and Sensibility* is: "Elinor could not be surprised at their attachment. She only wished that it were less openly shewn, and once or twice did venture to suggest the propriety of some self-command to Marianne" (51). An example in *Emma*: "The hair was curled, and the maid sent away, and Emma sat down to think and be miserable. – It was a wretched business, indeed! – Such an overthrow of every thing she had been wishing for! – Such a blow for Harriet! – That was the worst of all" (141).

In *Sense and Sensibility* fairly little of this narrative mode is to be found. Usually the free indirect mode is used to voice Elinor's thoughts and experiences; there are also instances where the focalization shifts to other characters. When Fanny Dashwood learns of

Edward favouring the company of Elinor she warns Mrs Dashwood as follows: “She took the first opportunity of affronting her mother-in-law on the occasion, talking of her so expressively of her brother’s great expectations […] and of the danger attending any young woman who attempted to *draw him in*, that Mrs Dashwood could neither pretend to be unconscious, nor endeavour to be calm. She gave her an answer which marked her contempt […]” (21). Here, Fanny Dashwood is used as the speaker, with her mode of speech in italics. However, what the answer exactly contains in terms of the literal words she uses is unknown. Should this particular passage be adapted into film or series scene, then the screenwriter should invent dialogue between the two women himself/herself.

In *Emma*, however, free indirect discourse is used practically throughout the novel to follow Emma’s inner consciousness. Possibly one of the few other instances where Austen lets the focalization stray from Emma’s occurs in the passage where Mr Knightley observes his suspicions about Frank (Sturrock).

Irony in *Emma* and *Sense & Sensibility*

Austen uses an ironic and satirical voice in all her novels. This is observed by William Duckworth in “Reading *Emma*: Comic Irony, the Follies of Janeites, and Hermeneutic Mastery”:

> Emma herself is repeatedly made the object of critical ironies, as in her persuasion of Harriet to reject the offer of Mr. Martin (50-53), and in her musing about rejecting the expected invitation of the Coles to a dinner party (207-08). An ironic criticism that continues through much of the novel is the implied comparison of Emma with a snob whom she intensely dislikes, Miss Hawkins (later Mrs. Elton). She is characterized as boasting of a sister who “was very well married to a gentleman in a

> great way...who kept two carriages . . . that was the glory of Miss Hawkins" (183). Biting ironic criticisms of Miss Hawkins abound, especially after she becomes Mrs. Elton, and presentation of mitigating factors is muted. Her most irritating defects, like Emma's, are her snobbishness and her officious interference in affairs of others. As Marvin Mudrick has observed, Mrs. Elton is Emma without intelligence or breeding (195), so Emma's criticism might equally be directed at herself.

To distinguish the difference between the critical, ironic narrator and Emma might be difficult to show in screen adaptations of the novel. Other critical ironies that run throughout the novel are whenever the narrator describes Mr Woodhouse and Mrs Elton (Duckworth).

According to Oberman (2009), Emma's development is also represented in the narrative voice: "Once Emma begins to hear Mr Knightley's voice in her reflections, her view of herself and of her relationship to others begins to change. […] It is Emma's movement toward the mixing of consciousness manifested in the narrative voice that represents the true story of development" (12). Toward the end of *Emma*, Emma's voice and that of the narrator are nearly always merged. Austen does not need to distance her narrator from Emma's voice anymore, because they have become similar (Oberman). The ironic voice of the narrator towards Emma's behaviour has lessened at the end of the novel, and is now directed toward other characters such as Mrs Elton:

> The wedding was very much like other weddings, where the parties have no taste for finery or parade; and Mrs Elton […] thought it all extremely shabby, and very inferior to her own. – 'Very little white satin, very few lace veils; a most pitiful business! […]'. But in spite of these deficiencies, the wishes, the hopes, the confidence, the

> predictions of the small band of true friends who witnessed the ceremony, were fully answered in the perfect happiness of the union. (508)

To translate this change in narration onto the screen might prove to be difficult. How can the, often ironic, narrator of the novel be included in a film or television series adaptation? Options are to use voice-over, to leave this critical voice out altogether and leave it to the audience to judge each character without extra aid, or to put the narrator's words in the mouth of a character – such as Lizzy Bennet in the 1995 BBC production of *Pride and Prejudice*.

In *Sense and Sensibility* an ironic tone is also regularly used. For instance when the narrator describes the emotions of Mrs Dashwood and Marianne about the trip to London with Mrs Jennings:

> Marianne's joy was almost a degree beyond happiness, so great was the perturbation of her spirits and her impatience to be gone. Her unwillingness to quit her mother was her only restorative to calmness; and at the moment of parting her grief on that score was excessive. Her mother's affliction was hardly less, and Elinor was the only one of the three who seemed to consider the separation as anything short of eternal. (152)

Only Elinor escapes Austen's irony, because she is aware that the occasion does not require such extravagant emotional display. Austen uses this ironic and critical voice to judge the characters. In the last quotation, Austen clearly shows that the sentiment of Mrs Dashwood and Marianne is unjustified and that the journey to London is hardly "eternal". In *Emma* Austen passes judgment likewise, for example, in the quotation used on Mrs Elton's thoughts about Emma's and Mr Knightley's wedding. Mrs Elton thinks the wedding was

“shabby” and “inferior to her own” because it is small and not extravagant (508). The next sentence then starts with “[b]ut in spite of these deficiencies”, which Austen clearly does not find deficiencies; thus Mrs Elton is judged as being the inferior character.

To conclude, both *Sense and Sensibility* and *Emma* have been shown to include many other themes than the romantic aspect of the novel. In *Sense and Sensibility* the themes of “sense”, “sensibility” and “deception” have been discussed in detail. In *Emma* the themes “deception” and “self-knowledge” have been detailed. Lastly, Austen’s use of free indirect discourse and irony has also been discussed in relation to the two novels. It would be interesting to see how screen adaptations have incorporated these themes into their version of *Sense and Sensibility* and *Emma*.

Chapter 2 *Sense & Sensibility* – Columbia Tristar 1995

In the following chapters a closer look shall be taken at the screen adaptations of *Sense and Sensibility* and *Emma*. The screen adaptations that will be discussed are the 1995 film version and the 2008 BBC mini-series of *Sense and Sensibility*. The adaptions for *Emma* are the 1996 Hollywood film version and also the 1996 ITV version; the 00´s will be represented by the 2009 BBC mini-series. Each adaptation shall be discussed individually, and the section is organised in the following way: a short account will be given of the cultural background of the film/mini-series and an inventory of the most important scenes will be given with regard to the harlequinization of Austen's novels.

The 1995 version of *Sense and Sensibility* is a 130 minute rendering of the original, directed by Ang Lee and written for the screen by Emma Thompson. Thompson won an Academy Award for her screenplay of *Sense and Sensibility*. The stars of the film are Emma Thompson as Elinor Dashwood, Kate Winslet as Marianne, Hugh Grant playing Edward Ferrars and Alan Rickman as Colonel Brandon. Ang Lee had previously directed and written the film *Eat Drink Man Woman*, which had been nominated for an Academy Award. Hugh Grant had previously starred in *Four Weddings and A Funeral*, which would later be designated as the starting point of Grant being typecast in roles as the charming, stuttering male lead in romantic films set in the present. *Sense and Sensibility* could be considered as no exception; except for its being a period production. Thompson had previously won an Academy Award for her role in the adaption of E.M. Forster's novel *Howards End*, a film in which the relationship between sisters is also examined. (IMDB)

2.1 The Film

In accordance with the novel the film opens on the deathbed of Mr Dashwood, and with his wish that his heir John Dashwood financially aids his second wife and their daughters. In a short period of screen time, Thompson has already managed to emphasize the patriarchal system in which men inherit and women have to rely on their male relatives. First, Thompson lets Mr Dashwood explain the laws of inheritance to the modern audience in a last conversation with his son and heir John Dashwood. Second, Elinor talks to Margaret about the patriarchal system. Margaret is then allowed to say what the audience is thinking by uttering that the Dashwoods already have a home. Elinor replies that "[i]t is the law". Rather than addressing this system as a given, Elinor places emphasis on the word 'law' and laws can be changed[1]. In one of the extra scenes with Edward, Elinor is talking about the position of women in their society. Elinor mentions that "[w]e [women] cannot even earn ours [fortune]". Through Elinor, Thompson has inserted feminist ideas in the adaptation. In her article "Piracy Is Our Only Option: Postfeminist Intervention in *Sense and Sensibility*" Kristin F. Samuelian claims that "Thompson injects what appears an explicit feminist rhetoric into the work of an author more often celebrated for the implicitness of her critiques of the customs and institutions that support patriarchy" (Samuelian 148). In that same essay it is mentioned that this feminist injection is something a twentieth century audience is not likely to object to (Samuelian 150). As appeasing as it may seem, Elinor is only able to talk of these differences between men and women and cannot act upon her feminist ideas. She remains stuck in a patriarchal society and comes into a, albeit small, fortune through her marriage to

[1] In her essay "Piracy Is Our Only Option: Postfeminist Intervention in *Sense and Sensibility*" Kristin Flieger Samuelian mentions that the law of primogeniture (and the custom that men could only inherit) was abolished in the seventeenth century under Charles II. That only men could inherit was a habit and not a law. Once the will had been made up, it did become a law. Mr Dashwood could have made either one of his relatives his heir.

Edward Ferrars. Whereas McGrath's Emma is able to drive her carriage herself and walk around Highbury alone, Elinor and Marianne are restricted to staying at Barton Cottage and always seen accompanied by others. One passage/scene occurs, in novel and film, where Marianne walks alone in the pouring rain in the garden of the Cleveland estate. She falls ill during this walk, and is thus punished for her reckless behaviour.

Another interesting point in light of Thompson's use of feminist rhetoric in her *Sense and Sensiblity* screenplay is that only Elinor uses it. Marianne talks only of her "romantic sensibilities", even so much as to annoy her mother. Conversation with both Marianne's love interests restricts itself to poetry and music. Therefore, Thompson has embedded feminist theory within Elinor's "sense" and omitted it from Marianne's "sensibility".


1.1 Elinor and Edward riding horses.

Several characters have been cut from the novel, such as Mrs Middleton and the vulgar Miss Anne Steele. Since Anne Steele is not present to reveal the secret of Lucy and Edward's engagement, it is Lucy who does so herself. The characters seem to have merged into one. At Norland some extra scenes have been added to give Edward more physical presence in the film, establishing him as the romantic interest for Elinor. Edward does try to tell Elinor about his engagement to Lucy Steele. Fanny, fearing that Edward might be proposing to Elinor, interrupts the conversation before Edward can explain his situation.

Some of Willoughby's scenes, however, have been cut. His explanation to Elinor about his conduct toward Marianne has been removed. As a replacement, Willoughby is shown to be watching Marianne's wedding from a distance. Unlike his feelings for Eliza, then, Willoughby is still interested in Marianne. Colonel Brandon has extra screen presence as well, but not so much in interaction with Marianne. Both Kaplan and Samuelian have remarked that in casting Alan Rickman as Colonel Brandon, Thompson has tried to "spruce" up the character of Brandon. There are no mentions of his flannel clothing and slight rheumatism in the film. In the film, Edward has been made more sympathetic, since he had the intention to tell Elinor about his engagement to Lucy. Willoughby, on the other hand, has been made less sympathetic. The chapter in which Willoughby explains his situation to Elinor has been cut. Colonel Brandon has also been altered. His portrayal by Alan Rickman is livelier than in the novel.

Ang Lee emphasizes the Dashwood's bleak situation at Barton Cottage by clothing the women in gray coloured dresses and their enclosure in the cottage. In her essay "*Sense and Sensibility* in a Post-Feminist World" Penny Gay remarks the following:

> Scenes 58-60 offer a fine example of this gendering of space and place in the film. As the women realize their disappointment that Edward has not brought the atlas himself, the grayness of their lives is reinforced by the plain gray walls behind them. Elinor changes into her housework apron in the utilitarian little entrance hall of the cottage; Marianne and Margaret push past her to the barely glimpsed green outdoors, but the camera follows Elinor and her mother as they move with a sense of dreary habit into a Vermeer-like interior room, lacking only – but vitally – the striking

areas of color that enrich a Vermeer interior (Elinor is in white, Mrs. Dashwood in black). (Gay 94)

Only when a man, Willoughby, arrives some change is made possible in the lives of the women. Whereas his introduction in the novel had been on foot, in the film he arrives on horseback in the pouring rain. This results in a rather dark, Gothic scene (Gay 96).


1.2 Arrival of Willoughby on horseback.

Ang Lee shows the Dashwoods in their cottage waiting for men in several scenes. Most often it is anticipating a visit from Willoughby, but also the expected visit of Edward. Another instance of enclosure happens when Mrs Dashwood, Marianne and Margaret shut their doors in front of Elinor. This occurs after Willoughby has left Marianne; while the Dashwood women come home expecting Marianne and Willoughby engaged. Elinor, remaining calm, is left on the landing alone. The scene "dramatizes the difference between Elinor and the rest of her family" (Kaplan). Not only is Elinor isolated from society, she is also isolated from her family at that point.

The climax of the film occurs when Elinor breaks down on Marianne's sickbed. She exclaims that she cannot go on without her and here her otherwise composed behaviour is shattered on the prospect of losing Marianne. In the novel Willoughby makes a last appearance during Marianne's illness, but Thompson has cut this passage, thus placing more

focus on Marianne's sickness and her reformation and the interaction between Marianne and Elinor. Moreover, Elinor's display of strong emotion has also been transferred. In the novel, Austen lets Elinor show strong emotion for the first time when Willoughby visits (Samuelian 152). In the film, Elinor breaks down at Marianne's bed.

Thompson has adapted the dialogue of the novel into more modern speech for the audience. Gay mentions that Thompson has frequently inserted the pet name "dearest" for either Margaret or Marianne (Gay 91). This epithet is not to be found in an Austen novel. Thompson had, however, previously starred in E.M. Forster's *Howard's End*. Gay also mentions that Forster frequently used nicknames, also "dearest", and Thompson has adopted language of Forster's into the *Sense and Sensibility* script (Gay 91). In the script, therefore, some of Thompson's "cultural and biographical luggage" has been, inevitably, inserted (Gay 91).

2.2 Harlequinization

In this version of *Sense and Sensibily*, Lee and Thompson have indeed improved the looks of both Edward and Colonel Brandon by casting Hugh Grant and Alan Rickman. Kaplan mentions that both actors are as attractive as the actor playing Willoughby. Rickman is considerably older than Winslet, 29 years difference, so no alterations have been made in casting a younger Brandon. However, the requirements for a true Harlequin romance hero are not represented in either Edward or Colonel Brandon. Especially Edward is lacking in the qualities of being self-assured, masterful, hot-tempered, and full of passion and tenderness. In accordance with the novel, Edward is shy and Grant is portraying him with a stuttering voice in most of the scenes. There are no scenes which show Edward either full of passion or even tender toward Elinor. They simply have conversations with each other. In Colonel

Brandon one finds more of the qualities prescribed to a romance hero. When Brandon receives news concerning Eliza at the Delaford party, the Colonel acts passionately and leaves immediately. In doing so he perplexes all the guests. He is shown as a man in control of his life and thus acts “self-assured”. Furthermore, there are several instances where the camera follows Brandon looking at Marianne, which shows his “tender” feelings for Marianne. However, in all these scenes Willoughby is still Marianne’s love interest. Character wise, Edward and Brandon are not the ideal romance heroes as dictated in the guidelines for writing a romance novel. Elinor and Marianne are both not in love with their male counterparts at first sight. Elinor and Edward fall in love through conversation with each other, rather than shown to be having a physical attraction to each other.

This adaptation of *Sense and Sensibility* is harlequinized in so far that the screenplay has cut characters and scenes from the novel which do not feature the characters involved in the love plot. This may also be attributed to the lack of screen time for them. Since the film is only roughly two hours long, some compromises had to be made. Therefore, John Middleton is now a widower and the character Anne Steele is merged into Lucy Steele. Their characters are not, however, reduced to one-dimensional beings. John Middleton is shown as a joking, good-humoured man towards his guests as well as being a very loyal friend to Colonol Brandon.

To conclude, in this production of *Sense and Sensibility* many scenes and a number of characters were cut from the original. The most notable passage Thompson decided to delete was the passage where Willoughby explains his actions to Elinor. Other cut passages include visits to the Middletons, in the film only represented by John Middleton and Mrs Jennings, and the passage where Elinor encounters Edward’s brother Robert Ferrars. Some

extra scenes have been added for Grant's portrayal of Edward Ferrars. This gives him a more physical presence in the film. Furthermore, Thompson gives a feminist interpretation of the character of Elinor. Elinor talks about the position of women in their society and her inability to be free to act as she would like to. This was a retort to Edward's complaint in the previous scene in which he explained the strains of his own situation with regard to his mother and sister's future plans for him. In terms of the harlequinization of this adaptation, only the requirement that the plot should focus on the hero and heroine is adhered to. Extra scenes for Edward have been added, and even a few for Brandon as well. Characters and passages that are not necessary for the romance plot have been omitted.

Chapter 3 *Sense and Sensibility* – BBC 2008

The most recent adaption of *Sense and Sensibility* was broadcast in 2008 by the BBC in the form of a three-episode mini-series. Each episode is sixty minutes long. The series was directed by John Alexander and written for the screen by Andrew Davies. Alexander had previously directed several other series and television films. Davies has an established career of adapting period novels to the screen, including the 1996 A&E/ITV *Emma* and the 1995 BBC production of *Pride and Prejudice*. The series stars fairly unknown actors and actresses, except for Mark Williams who is known for his role as Arthur Weasley in the *Harry Potter* films. (IMDB)

3.1 The Series

The series opens with a sequence of shots of a romantic scene between Willoughby and Eliza, who at that point are unknown to the audience. The setting then changes to the original opening of the novel with the death of Mr Dashwood and the arrival of Mr John Dashwood, Mrs John Dashwood and their child. Like the Ang Lee version, extra time has been given to the presence of Edward and the budding relationship between Elinor and Edward. They are introduced to each other while Elinor is beating a carpet outside the Norland manor.

1.3 Elinor beating a carpet.

At that moment Elinor is vexed with all the changes in her life and expresses it by taking over a servant's job of cleaning the carpets. Exactly at that point Edward arrives and is amused by Elinor's behaviour. This introduction of the 2008 Edward shows a difference between Grant's Edward immediately. The shy, stuttering and proper 1995 Edward would never have shown amusement in such a situation.

The series has added several scenes which did not occur in the novel. Whereas Marianne explains to Elinor what happened during her visit with Willoughby to Combe Magna, here it is shown on the screen. During their visit Willoughby and Marianne even kiss. This never happened in any of Austen´s novels.


1.4 Marianne and Willoughby at Combe Magna.

Another invented scene happens when Edward is visiting the Dashwoods at their new residence. Edward has to lie to Elinor about the hair in his ring and now takes his frustration out while chopping the firewood. Elinor catches him and the situation is reversed.

1.5 Edward chopping wood.

Extra time has been allotted for the men and their relationship to the Dashwood women. Colonel Brandon has extra screen time as well. Instead of explaining his history with Eliza and Willoughby to Elinor, the events are shown on the screen in explicit detail. This results in a sword duel which Brandon wins, thus foreshadowing the outcome of him winning Marianne as well. In the novel there is no mention of a sword duel between Brandon and Willoughby. The whole history of Brandon and both Eliza's is precarious even without the duel and Claudia L. Johnson remarks that: "As if to defuse the sensitivity of the subject matter, Austen distances herself from the story of the two Elizas by tucking it safely within the center of *Sense and Sensibility* and delegating its narration to the safe Colonel Brandon" (Johnson 55-56). There is also more interaction between Marianne and Brandon in the series. After Marianne is told of Brandon's history, she is more appreciative of him and her gaze lingers on him in several scenes. When the sisters are going to the Cleveland estate, they are accompanied by Brandon on horseback. Marianne is shown to be watching the colonel from within her carriage. While the previous episodes focused on Brandon watching Marianne, in the last episode the camera is following Marianne's gaze toward Brandon.

On the first night of the Dashwood women at Barton Cottage, Elinor and Marianne sleep in the same bed. As the series progresses and the sisters become somewhat estranged from each other, their separation is also physically shown by them sleeping apart. When

Marianne gets ill, there is a shot of the sisters lying in the same bed again. This implies that their separation is over.

The series uses no voice-over or any other means to show Elinor's thoughts. Overall, Davies has changed little in his script of *Sense and Sensibility*. It seems that the three hours allotted to make these series were too long to convey the story of the two sisters, and Davies added many scenes which would either show a character in a more positive light (Edward is shown to be very upset at Barton Cottage), or give extra information about the background of the characters (Colonel Brandon and Willoughby). All these extra scenes do focus on the men of the novel and give them more physical presence in the series than the novel did.

3.2 Harlequinization

This adaptation of *Sense and Sensibility* might be an ideal example of a harlequinized Austen novel. The series opens with a scene in which Willoughby and Eliza are making love in a candlelit cottage. Whereas all immoral conduct in the novel is only talked about, it is made explicit on the screen. There is more focus on the body than in the 1995 version. Elinor is beating a rug and is observed by Edward. This is also their first encounter, thus not placed in a traditional setting. Later in the series, Elinor is watching Edward, covered in sweat and not properly dressed, as he chops wood outside. Willoughby and Colonel Brandon are even shown dueling. To distinguish that Brandon is the eventual romantic hero of the series, a scene in the second episode is added. In this scene Brandon asks Willoughby about his intentions toward Marianne. Willoughby does not answer directly that his intentions are "honourable", but taunts Brandon by saying that he cannot help it if Marianne prefers his company rather than the Colonel's. As an afterthought, Willoughby adds that "*of course*, my intentions are *entirely* honourable"[emphasis added]. This scene shows not only that

Willoughby's intentions toward Marianne are dubious, but also that Brandon is the better man. This scene shows Brandon's strong will as well. He forces Willoughby to explain to him what his intentions toward Marianne are. Another striking added scene is when Brandon goes out to search for Marianne in the third episode. Brandon arrives on horseback in the pouring rain and pulls a half-conscious Marianne in his arms. Overall, on the physical appearance of the male characters emphasis has been laid by adding scenes that show them doing hard labour or in a duel fight. This shows that they are "real men", by Harlequin standards. Kaplan also mentions that by adding scenes for the men of Austen's novels, the screenwriter and director are critiquing Austen:

> Told by a third-person narrator intimate with the consciousness of the female characters and usually at a distance from the mental lives and daily activities of men, Austen's novels, so the film suggest, underrepresent men. The films redress that imbalance by amplifying and glamorizing Austen's heroes, but […] doing so prevents them from capturing the nuances of Austen's male characters" (Kaplan 180).

The series has inserted a male point of view as well as the main female point of view. By glamorizing the characters of Edward and Brandon, they have become more similar in order to appeal to the audience.

Furthermore, both Edward and Brandon have the qualities that are necessary to create a Harlequin hero. Edward is not shy and awkward in company, winking at Margaret and laughing merrily in scenes at Norland Park. This makes him more of a cheerful and playful character. He can also act hot-tempered, expressing his frustration while chopping the wood at Barton Cottage. Only his capability of violence might be questioned, there are no instances in the series which show him particularly violent. Brandon, on the other hand, is

capable of violence when dueling (and injuring) with Willoughby. Therefore, the heroes are not only physically attractive but their characters are in accordance with the guideline for a harlequin novel as well.

The 1995 version of *Sense and Sensibility* did not only focus on the love plot. Thompson also inserted some feminist rhetoric in the speeches of Elinor. The 1995 version stressed the difference on between the sisters as well. This version focuses solely on the romantic plot and diminishes supporting characters into one-dimensional beings. Especially the Middletons and the Palmers have been the victims of Davies' script. They are only necessary to provide some comical diversion and their estates offer a change of location for the Dashwoods and the audience as well.

To conclude, this mini-series is a true harlequinized version of *Sense and Sensibility*. All the added scenes focus on giving the heroes extra screen time and developing their romance with the heroines. The main characters are often shown to be gazing at one another, observing their bodies. The most "shocking" alteration is the added sex scene between Eliza and Willoughby in the opening of the series.

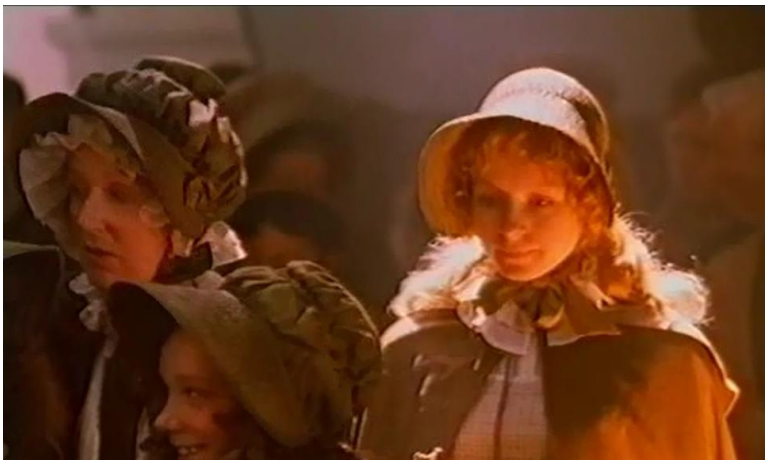
Chapter 4 *Emma* – A&E/ITV 1996

One of the two *Emma* adaptations released in 1996 was the A&E/ITV version. The film starring a young Kate Beckingsale was made for television broadcasting. The film was directed by Diarmuid Lawrence and the screenplay was written by Andrew Davies. Davies had previously also written the screenplay for the very successful 1995 BBC adaptation of *Pride & Prejudice*. The film has won two Primetime Emmy awards. Diarmuid's credits before directing *Emma* include several television series. (IMDB)

4.1 The Film

Overall, Davies' adaptation is very faithful to the novel. The film opens with a scene in which thieves try to steal some chickens from the Hartfield estate. As the film concludes another break-in occurs and is a continuation of everyday life in Highbury. It is also used, in both novel and film, as an incentive for Mr Woodhouse to accept Mr Knightley living at Hartfield.

Davies has changed little in terms of the characterization of the novel's main characters. The age difference between Emma and Mr Knightley in this adaptation seems closer to the 16-year gap than in its Hollywood counterpart. Also, the character of Mr Woodhouse seems more in accordance with the novel than the Miramax version. In a scene at Hartfield, Mr Woodhouse discusses the importance of a boiled egg for one's constitution with the Mrs and Miss Bates and invites Harriet Smith to have "a very little bit of appletart". Mr Woodhouse is as immobile as in the novel; few scenes are detected where Mr Woodhouse is standing. Harriet Smith is introduced at the church to the audience by letting a sunbeam shine through a window upon Harriet's face. This emphasizes not only Emma's choice for Harriet because of her prettiness, but also the randomness of her choice.



2.4 Sunlight falling on Miss Smith.

Furthermore, again unlike McGrath's *Emma*, conversation between Emma and her guests mainly occurs inside the house or on the grounds of the Hartfield estate. Emma's limited freedom is the main source for her lack of self-knowledge and understanding of other characters' motives. The whole affair between Mr Elton, Harriet and Emma is over after thirty minutes and the rest of the film's time is reserved for the exploration of the relationship between Emma, Frank and Jane and eventually between Emma and Mr Knightley.

Monaghan argues that *Emma* is a more serious and innovative piece of work than the usual television adaption and says that:

> Whereas most televised versions of Austen are content to subordinate character and theme to the ready appeal of the romance plots around which her novels are structured, Davies creates complex characters and points up what he considers to be some of *Emma*'s major themes. The specific set of circumstances that are in large part responsible for Emma's meddlesome behaviour and for her excursions into fantasy are, for example, sketched out in the course of several conversations that

> expose Highbury's leading citizens as almost pathological enemies of change. (Monaghan 201)

Emma herself is no exception to this assertion that the inhabitants of Highbury are in fear of change. Her refusal to think of marriage is born out of the same idea. Davies has created an Emma much like the novel. Her behaviour is explained by her static environment and her own desire not to marry. Therefore, Monaghan argues that "[w]ithout this kind of explanatory framework, it is almost impossible to judge Emma who interferes in the lives of others as anything but a spoilt and silly young woman of the type that Gwyneth Paltrow plays in McGrath's version of *Emma*" (Monaghan 202). To demonstrate Emma's escapism through the lives of others, Davies added scenes where Emma is fantasizing about Jane and Mr Dixon. After Frank told the story of Jane's rescue by Mr Dixon on a boat, Emma is imagining the whole event later that night in her room. She is excited at the idea of Jane and Mr Dixon's attachment, but it also shows a secret wish of Emma to experience something similar as well.

Another focus of Davies is on the social structure of England anno 1800. Davies and Lawrence not only show the social classes in which Emma moves, but also all the servants and labourers who make the lives of upper-class society comfortable. The journey to Box Hill can only be made possible with the help of servants who have to carry all the supplies for their party. At Donwell, the strawberry picking is made possible by the servants helping the women. The servants have to move the kneeling cushions on which the ladies sit when the women want to pluck strawberries from another patch.

2.5 Servants carrying supplies to Box Hill.

The film has placed the emphasis on the moral tone of the novel. The ironic tone, however, has not been retained. Emma´s faults are depicted in all seriousness. Emma´s internal monologues have been omitted. Although Emma´s haughtiness is preserved, the novel´s narrator is not represented on the screen to show Emma´s snobbery in an ironic light. Therefore, perhaps, Emma´s musings about invitation to attend the Cole´s dinner have been cut out of the film. Since there is no possibility to render the passage´s ironic criticism to the screen, the passage lost its significance.

Davies, who had previously adapted *Pride and Prejudice* into the 1995 BBC series, has not only been faithful to the plot of *Emma*, but also to Austen´s diction and sentence structures (Monaghan 201). Here follows an example of Davies' adapting the language of Austen for a modern audience, but staying faithful to Austen's sentence structure, when Mr Knightley is asking questions about the Westons' wedding: "Poor Mr and Miss Woodhouse, if you like; but I can't say poor 'Miss Taylor'. At least she has only one to please now, not two" (Davies). Whereas in the novel the sentence is "[p]oor Mr and Miss Woodhouse, if you please; but I cannot possibly say 'poor Miss Taylor'. I have a great regard for you and Emma; but when it comes to the question of dependence or independence! – At any rate, it must be

better to have only one to please, than two" (*Emma* 10). Davies has shortened the novel's sentence and replaced the word "please" for "like". This is probably done so the audience will understand the meaning better. Both director and screenwriter were concerned with rendering the early-nineteenth-century authentically on the screen (Monaghan 201). Therefore, Davies has maintained Austen's language in this adaptation of *Emma*.

4.2 Harlequinization

In this version of *Emma*, Mr Knightley exhibits many qualities that are required to make a Harlequin hero. These qualities of Mr Knightley, however, are already present in the novel. He is self-assured and masterful, reflecting his ideas on moral conduct on Emma. This shows that he is certain his opinions are the ones to follow. Mr Knightley's hot-temperedness shows when he grips Emma's arm in anger at Box Hill. This happens after Emma has insulted Miss Bates, and Mr Knightley lectures her for her inconsiderate behaviour. When Mr Knightley learns that Emma does not have feelings for Frank Churchill, he can hardly stop himself from professing his love. Two characteristics of the ideal Harlequin hero which do seem to be lacking in Mr Knightley are his capability of violence and tenderness. There are no indications that Mr Knightley might have a violent nature in this version. Furthermore, he also does not come across as particularly tender toward Emma. He is often blunt and very honest to Emma, rather than shown to be tender toward her. Overall, this shows that Davies has remained very faithful to the novel with regard to writing Mr Knightley's television script. In the novel Mr Knightley is confident, masterful (of Emma) and hot-tempered as well. At the start of the novel, Austen writes that: "Mr Knightley, in fact, was one of the few people who could see faults in Emma Woodhouse, and the only one who ever told her of them: and […] this was not particularly agreeable to Emma herself […]" (*Emma* 11). On the

other hand, Knightley's "cheerful manner" has somewhat been omitted. Knightley is only seen cheerful when his brother and sister-in-law visit Hartfield.

However, the beginning of the novel and film focuses more on Frank Churchill as a possible love interest for Emma. Does Frank also fit the description as a Harlequin hero? Apart from him being self-assured, the other qualities do not apply to him. He is very lively, playful and flirtatious. This is in contrast to the requirement that the hero should be "often mysteriously moody" (Kaplan 177). He is very distracted when he learns that Jane is taking the governess position at the Box Hill excursion, but expresses it by being even more flirtatious with Emma. Furthermore, to strengthen Frank's lively character, he has blond hair, and often wears colourful clothing, in contrast to Mr Knightley, with his black hair and dark coloured clothing. Also, the hero and heroine should be good-looking and sexy. Kate Beckingsale has been ranked in the lists of several magazines as either one of the "most desirable" or "sexiest women" women in the world (IMDB). To classify her as good-looking and sexy would be correct then. Mark Strong, playing Mr Knightley, has been playing more villainous roles than romantic roles in his acting career. It does not necessarily mean that he is not considered good-looking. It shows that he is considered good in portraying dark roles, and in *Emma* the audience finds him scowling in many scenes as well (e.g. at the Crown ball, when Emma insults Ms Bates, when he is observing Emma in general).

The second indication to determine if this version of *Emma* is harlequinized is that the plot should focus on the courtship of the two main characters. The love plot should start from the beginning. At the Christmas party at the Westons, Emma tells Mr Knightley that if she were to marry then she always imagined it would be Frank Churchill. This is not said to make Mr Knightley jealous and he only questions Emma about what she thinks of Frank's

conduct in not visiting his father. Later that evening, Emma looks at a portrait of Frank and it comes alive in Emma's mind. The portrait-Frank introduces himself and kisses Emma's hand. Emma is, therefore, more focused on Frank as a potential husband than Mr Knightley at the start of the film (and novel).

With regard to the omission of supporting characters and chapters of the novel, few characters have been cut and some chapters have been omitted from the film. That some chapters have been removed is also due to the limited duration of a film. Some visits have been cut, such as the Eltons visiting Hartfield, some conversations between supporting characters as well, for example the comical miscommunication between Mr Weston and Mrs Elton at one of the dinners at Hartfield. No scenes have been added for Mr Knightley as is he is very present in the novel as well.

That Mr Knightley's character both in the novel and film is a suitable one for a Harlequin novel has been established. The character of Emma, however, might not be one for the ideal heroine of a Harlequin novel. Emma's inclination to play with Harriet's love life is born out of her lack of knowledge of human nature and her own arrogance. In this film, her character has hardly been altered. It is necessary for the plot of the story that Emma is conceited and lacking in self-knowledge (and blind to other people's intentions) in order to have her fall, and then to realize that she is in love with Mr Knightley.

To conclude, in the A&E/ITV version of *Emma*, little has been changed in terms of the plot of the novel. Also, the characters have not changed much. Therefore, it can be said that this 1996 adaptation is faithful to the original text. In addition to the novel, Davies and Lawrence have inserted some extra emphasis on the representation of early nineteenth-century England (Monaghan 204).

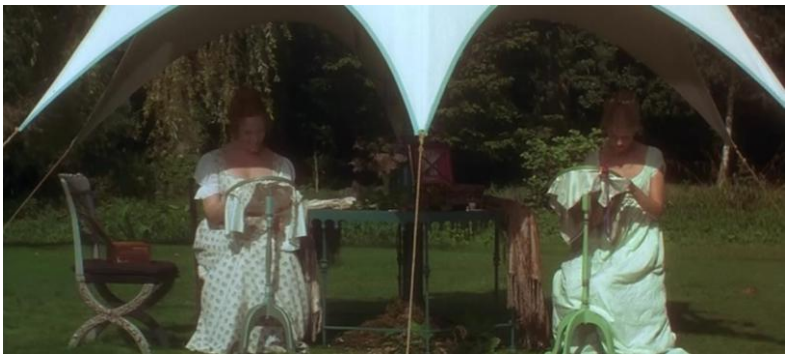
Chapter 5 *Emma*- Miramax 1996

The Miramax production of *Emma* is a 1hr51 version of the original, directed and written for the screen by Douglas McGrath. The stars of the film are Gwyneth Paltrow as Emma, Jeremy Northam as Mr Knightley, Ewan McGregor as Frank Churchill and Sophie Thompson as Miss Bates. The tagline of the film is "cupid is armed and dangerous", thus placing the emphasis of the film, from the outset, on its romantic aspect. The film earned one Academy Award in the category "Best Music" and was nominated in the category "Best Costume Design". It was McGrath's debut as a director, having previously only written for television and film. His writing credits include several episodes for the sketch comedy show *Saturday Night Live* and, among others, the 1994 film *Bullets over Broadway*, co-written with Woody Allen. His preference seems to be for comical series and films, and his version of *Emma* is no exception. Paltrow had previously starred in several Hollywood productions, such as the Oscar nominated thriller *Se7en* and the romantic comedy *The Pallbearer*. Northam was relatively unknown before his role as Mr Knightley. McGregor starred in that same year as the lead Renton in the drug drama *Trainspotting*. Only Thompson seems to be typecast as the ever chatting Miss Bates. Her previous roles include *Persuasion*, another Austen adaption where she portrays the hypochondriac Mary Musgrove. (IMDB)

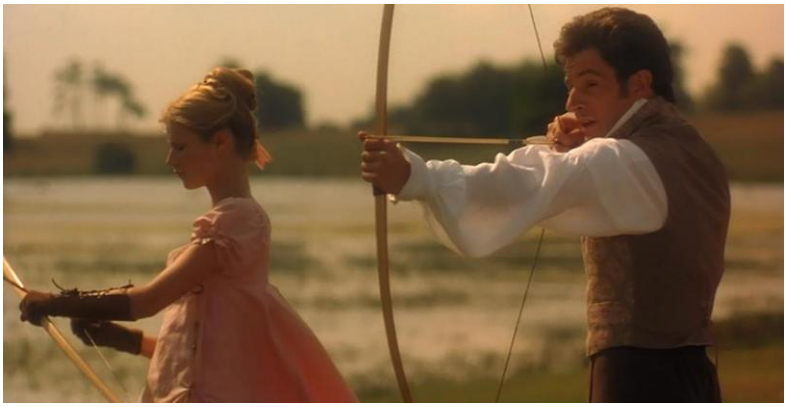
5.1 The Film

The film's opening sequence features a globe with at first only England on it, and while it turns depicts drawings of all the families of Highbury and their estates. At first it may seem to indicate that the focus of the film restricts itself to the town of Highbury, but the first scene shows Emma giving the globe to newly-wed Mrs Weston. As it is Emma's globe, it is Emma's focus and limitation to Highbury and its society. Another striking aspect of that scene is the depiction of Mr Woodhouse. Instead of an ever worrying and rather immobile

man, Mr Woodhouse is energetic and humorous. When Mr Knightley is introduced, the audience would hardly think him older than twenty-five. The age difference between Emma and Mr Knightley has been diminished and Mr Knightley is, like Emma, very handsome (Monaghan 221). As the film progresses, Emma is seen to be a very active young woman. She is seen out and about walking with Harriet, driving carriages, shooting arrows with Mr Knightley, and helping Mr Elton with decorating the church. Therefore, many of the novel's dialogues between Emma and other characters have been taken outside the Hartfield estate.



1.1 Emma and Harriet embroidering and talking about Robert Martin and Mr Elton.



1.2 Emma and Mr Knightley practicing archery.

The plot of Emma's matchmaking and its consequences is McGrath's main theme; the relationship of Emma and Frank Churchill is diminished and there is hardly any on screen evidence of their, faked, affection for each other. The day spent at Donwell and the trip to Box Hill have been joined into one single event, and it focuses on Emma insulting Miss Bates.

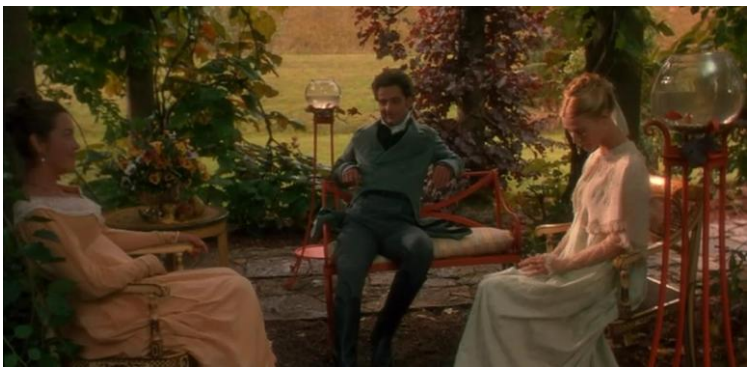
The flirtation between Emma and Frank has been removed entirely, making Mr Knightley's sudden visit to his brother John Knightley in London rather unmotivated. When he explains his motives in the film, he claims that it was Frank's influence over Emma which made him go to London. In the novel, however, Mr Knightley explains his actions for leaving so suddenly because he could not bear the flirtations between Emma and Frank any more: "It was his [Mr Knightley's] jealousy of Frank Churchill that had taken him from the country. – The Box Hill party had decided him on going away. He would save himself from witnessing again such permitted, encouraged attentions" (453).

The darker plot of the secret engagement of Frank Churchill and Jane Fairfax is hardly touched upon. Frank Churchill's character is reduced to an erratic, misleading one, and hardly worthy of Emma's attention. Instead of Emma's suggestion that the piano forte was given by Mr Dixon, it is Frank who plants the idea in Emma's head and he is obviously enjoying misleading her. The effect of this small change is not only to "villainize" Frank even more, but also to make Emma less of a spoiled creature. The reason for Jane to accept Frank in marriage seems unclear; his unworthiness of Jane is magnified in the film. The marriage comes across as a means for Jane to escape becoming a governess.

The Eltons serve merely as comical characters during the film. Mr Elton is trying to please Emma by befriending Harriet, and does so with such obvious glances and lines directed towards Emma that the audience might wonder how Emma could not have seen these signs. When Mr Elton proposes to Emma in the carriage, he stops in mid-sentence in order to formulate the most flattering sentence and he smiles self-satisfied during its deliverance. It is not his haughty, proud personality which is highlighted but after his

marriage to Miss Hawkins he only appears in scenes where he is shown to be under the thumb of his wife (except the scene at the ball where he refuses to dance with Harriet).

The director chose to film *Emma* on location in England, which shows that he clearly wished that the setting and architecture should be correct (Monaghan 221). However, David Monaghan also argues that "he [McGrath] seems far more interested in creating striking visual effects than in following Austen's occasional clues about the look of her fictional world" (Monaghan 221). The whole film is very colourful, and Emma's clothing is no exception. In every scene she appears a new dress is around her body. One of these colourful scenes is where Emma, Mrs Weston and Mr Knightley have a conversation about Jane Fairfax in Hartfield's garden.



2.3 Emma, Mrs Weston and Mr Knightley in conversation.

In order to give the audience an appealing picture while listening to the conversation, McGrath chose to have decoration in the form of fishbowls filled with goldfish in the picturesque, green garden. Monaghan further remarks that "[a]t such moments the relationship between the tone of the film and of Austen's extremely astringent and unsentimental novel is remote indeed" (Monaghan 222).

The tone of the film is very lively and comical. Several scenes occur where McGrath has inserted some comical visual effects, for instance, when Mr Woodhouse is admiring Emma's portrait of Harriet at Hartfield and Mr Elton appears out of the seemingly unoccupied large chair. Such scenes enhance the idea that the film is intended to fall under the genre of the "romantic comedy" and the film discards the moral aspect of the novel.

McGrath uses several ways to convey Emma's thoughts to the screen. There are scenes, for instance, where Emma tells Harriet or Mrs Weston her thoughts. Some scenes occur where McGrath uses Emma as a voice-over, for instance, when Harriet is talking to Robert Martin and Emma is saying in voice-over that Harriet could do better than that. Sometimes Emma's voice-over is turned into speech in the next scene, emphasizing the liveliness of the film. The use of these three means to convey Emma's thoughts enhances the energy of the whole film.

Although McGrath did project Emma's thoughts on the screen, he did not succeed in conveying the ironic tone of the novel in the film. In her article "'As If!': Translating Austen's Ironic Narrator to Film" Nora Nachumi argues that although McGrath tried to portray the heroine in an ironic light, he failed because Gwyneth Paltrow is cast as Emma (Nachumi 135). Nachumi mentions that "[w]ith Paltrow as Emma, Emma's union with Knightley is a foregone conclusion. Moreover, as a star, Paltrow's apparent perfection works against the notion that Emma must get off her pedestal and rejoin the human race. Despite her faults, this Emma ends the move where she begins it, firmly fixed upon Mount Olympus" (Nachumi 135).

To conclude, McGrath's focus is on the romantic aspect of the novel, and enhances it by setting the film in a picturesque version of early nineteenth-century England. However, having only about two hours to convey the whole story of Emma, certain changes had to be

made. McGrath therefore decided to cut many scenes involving Emma and Frank Churchill. Also, since Emma is shown to be a very active girl who is seemingly free to do as she pleases, the grand operation of the trip to Donwell Abbey has also been deleted from the film.

5.2 Harlequinization

Several critics have mentioned the miscasting of Jeremy Northam as Mr Knightley. According to Monaghan, this Knightley has "shed about ten years, become extremely handsome and acquired a sensitive and even bashful manner" (Monaghan 221). This is in contrast to Austen's concise description of Mr Knightley: "a sensible man about seven or eight-and-thirty" and having 'a cheerful manner" (Austen 9-10). Kaplan argues that due to this lack of age difference and consequently also a lack of Knightley's paternal advisory role, there is no obvious obstacle for them not to get married (Kaplan 182). They are shown to be in each other's company very often; as if Mr Knightley does not have other occupations. In the novel it is mentioned on several occasions that Mr Knightley works as a farmer, magistrate and road improver. Kaplan points out that this Knightley "has no place to go and nothing else to do but entertain Emma and, with an attention to dress worthy of Mrs Elton, try out a variety of fashions, including a straw hat for outdoor parties" (Kaplan 183). Although Mr Knightley is present in a great part of the film and functions as the romantic lead during the whole film, he is not necessarily an ideal Harlequin hero. Since McGrath has characterized Mr Knightley as a rather shy person, that immediately eliminates Knightley as being masterful. He is also never seen capable of violence. Furthermore, his passion for Emma is only demonstrated when he, as in all the other *Emma* versions, cannot refrain himself from trying to tell Emma he is in love with her. Unlike the A&E/ITV *Emma*, their passion for each other is shown by the kiss that follows after Knightley's confession. This seems like a necessary evil added in order to appeal to a modern audience.

The focus of this adaptation is on the romantic and comical aspect of the novel. The comical scenes mostly involve the Eltons and Harriet. They have been reduced to characters who merely serve as comic relief. Whereas Harriet is a pretty girl in the novel, and this is the main reason Emma chose to get acquainted with her, in this film she is the "awkward and lump" side-kick of Emma (Monagan 221). Emma's obsession with Harriet has been diminished into a wish for a companion whom she can walk around with and talk about men with (Kaplan 185). Not only do some of the supporting characters offer comical relief, McGrath has also inserted "sight gags" (Monaghan 223). For example, McGrath included a shot of Emma and Harriet positioned in front of Ford's shop looking like they are wearing men's hats, which hang in the window of the shop (Monaghan 223). When Knightley tells Emma of Mr Elton's engagement, a crack of thunder follows the announcement. The subplot with Jane and Frank is, as said before, hardly touched upon. Emma is not shown to be anticipating Frank's arrival and she is hardly affected by his attentions toward her. At Box Hill, Emma's and Frank's flirting has been removed from the script. This is all done to reduce Emma coming across as unperceptive and being a bit foolish in allowing Frank's attentions, while in the novel she is very unperceptive and does allow Frank's compliments. Frank functions more as a friend in whom Emma confides her fantasies about Jane and Mr Dixon. Frank, then, has been made more of a villain in order to distance him from being a romantic interest for Emma. He often glances mischievously at both Emma and Jane, creating the impression that he is enjoying having the secret engagement.

In this adaptation the focus is on the appearance of both main characters. Both Emma and Mr Knightley are changing clothes almost as often as there are different scenes. Although the focus has been placed on the appearance of Emma and Knightley, they do not seem to be desirous of each other's body. There are no longing glances toward each other.

Only when they kiss after Mr Knightley's confession, there seems to be some physical attraction between the two.

To conclude, this version of *Emma* is a highly harlequinized adaptation. The focus of the film is on the interaction between Emma and Mr Knightley. The plot between Emma, Frank and Jane has been reduced and is hardly present in this adaptation, thus placing more attention on Emma and Knightley. The age difference between Emma and Mr Knightley has been reduced and the paternal role Knightley plays in the novel has been omitted entirely. Although McGrath has changed Knightley's character, only two characteristics for creating an ideal Harlequin hero are present in this Mr Knightley. He is self-assured and can show tenderness towards Emma. There is only one occasion where his passion shows. This happens when Knightley kisses Emma. This film is harlequinized, most of all, because it reduces supporting characters into comical, one-dimensional beings. This is done to create more scenes and interaction between Emma and Mr Knightley alone, such as the invented archery scene.

Chapter 6 *Emma* – BBC 2009

The most recent screen adaptation of *Emma* was broadcast by the BBC in 2009. This time *Emma* was adapted in the form of a mini-series. The series consists of four episodes, each one hour long. Whereas films are usually between one hour and a half and two hours, the series has about four hours to convey Emma's story. The series was directed by Jim O'Hanlon and written by Sandy Welch. O'Hanlon's previous credits include mostly series, and Welch had previously adapted *Jane Eyre* and Elizabeth Gaskell's *North and South* into mini-series as well. Romola Garai stars as Emma and Jonny Lee Miller plays Mr Knightley. Mr Woodhouse is played by Michael Gambon, who is the best-known actor to star in this adaptation, for his role as Professor Dumbledore in the *Harry Potter* films. Another interesting fact is that Jonny Lee Miller had previously starred in Rozema's *Mansfield Park* as the lead Edmund Bertram and now reprises as the male lead in another Austen adaptation. (IMDB)

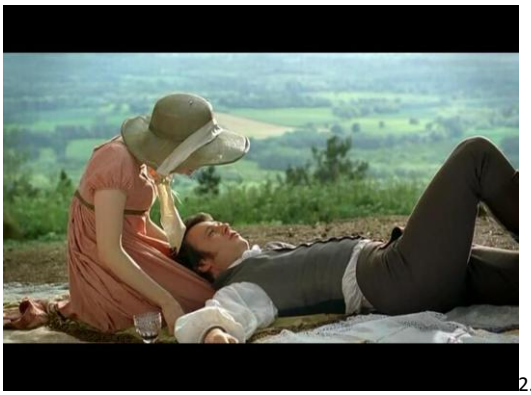
6.1 The Series

This version of Emma starts with telling the history of Emma and Frank Churchill in an intertwining way. They are both shown on the screen as babies and in their childhood, thus suggesting that their fate is related to each other. After these scenes involving Emma and Frank as babies, Mrs and Miss Bates are shown in a couple of scenes moving out of their estate and into a considerably smaller cottage. As Emma grows older, she is constantly reminded of Jane Fairfax and her accomplishments by Miss Bates, and Emma remarks that her own skills are not so much in reading and music but rather in her knowledge of human nature. She points this out by suggesting to Mr Knightley that his brother and Emma's sister are likely to marry and that this has been Emma's wish for several months. This is established as her first matchmaking success, and her next accomplishment follows quickly.

Thirty minutes of the first episode has been taken to introduce Emma and her friends and family to the audience by visualizing Emma's history.

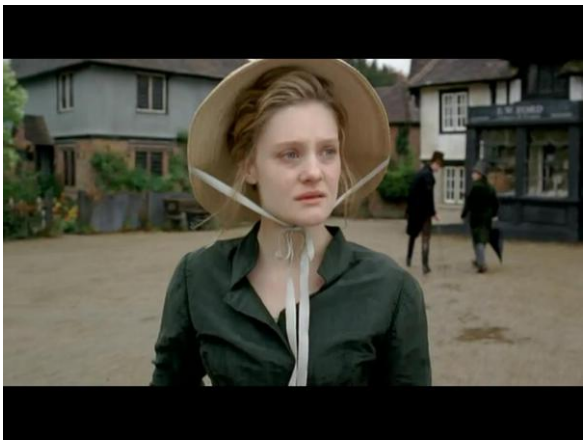
In this version of *Emma*, Emma is again shown to be very free in her actions. She walks alone to Mrs Goddard's school and is then questioned by Mrs Goddard about the propriety of this action, which Emma neglects. Emma willfully disobeys the social rules, and is not, as Paltrow's Emma is, a free woman in an otherwise free society. However, these are all actions in Highbury itself. She hardly has any knowledge of the world outside Highbury. An added scene shows Mr Knightley giving Emma a present in the form of a book in which Box Hill has been painted. Also, the regularity of life at Hartfield is emphasized by the walks of Mr Woodhouse around the house. Mr Woodhouse asks Emma at one point whether he should finish his walk, for he fears it might get cold outside and Emma replies that he should finish his "regular walk" and then tightens her father's scarf around his neck.

The introduction of Frank Churchill is depicted as somewhat as an intrusion on life in the town of Highbury. Emma is flattered by his attention, but it is Mr Knightley who is shown to be the most affected by Frank's arrival. There are several scenes in which the camera follows Mr Knightley's gaze to Emma and Frank. This eventually climaxes at the Weston ball at the Crown Inn. The scenes at the ball are almost all shot from Mr Knightley's point of view as he follows Emma's dancing and finally combine Mr Knightley and Emma together in the last dance. The Box Hill trip is also focused on Mr Knightley's gaze at Emma and Frank. The relationship between Emma and Frank is depicted as cheerful, but also rather superficial, resulting in their flirtation on Box Hill where Frank lays his head upon Emma's lap.


2.6 Frank rests on Emma's lap.

However, not this position is emphasized, but their effects on both Jane and Mr Knightley. Furthermore, Emma's insult of Miss Bates is rather underplayed by the excessive flirting between Emma and Frank. A short shot is taken of Miss Bates' reaction to the insult and then Emma is shown again. Emma is flustered and realizes her mistake when looking at Mr Knightley, trying to forget the affair by further flirting with Frank.

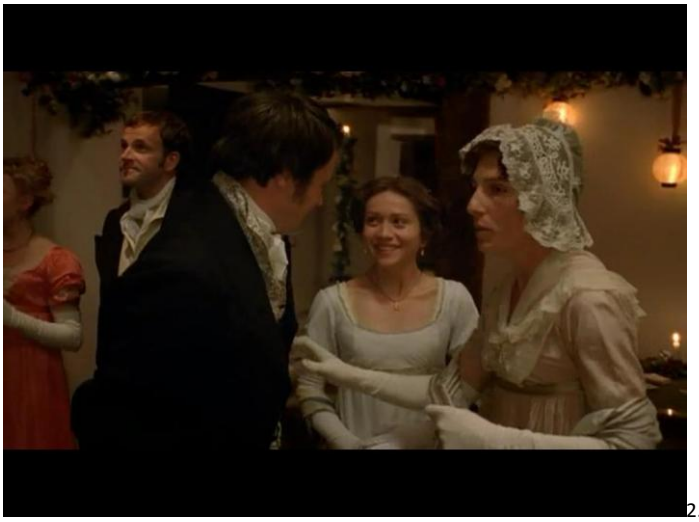
After the insult of Miss Bates and Mr Knightley's reprimand, Emma walks through Highbury very self-consciously and thinks everyone is looking at her.


2.7 Self-reflection of Emma.

Whereas Emma was shown to be wearing very colourful dresses in the previous episodes, here she is wearing a darker outfit according to her pensive mood. The purpose of Emma walking through Highbury is to visit Miss Bates and Jane. When Emma is talking to Miss Bates she does so very conscious of her past behaviour: she sincerely wishes to make

amends. Emma's gaining self-knowledge is thus depicted in these scenes. To emphasize these changes in Emma's mind, her costuming has also been adjusted.

Another focus of the director is the relationship between Jane and Frank. Numerous scenes occur where the gaze of the camera is focused on the glances between Frank and Jane. A small inserted difference from the novel is Jane's slight enjoyment of the secrecy. She often does not avert her eyes from Frank's and is seen to be in private conversation at the Bates' house and at the ball as well.


2.8 Jane (in the middle) laughing at Frank.

Jane's headaches are more a result of Miss Bates' chattering and Mrs Elton forcing her help on Jane than the strains of a secret engagement and the doom of becoming a governess.

The language used in this adaptation is modernized. In the A&E/ITV *Emma*, Davies had preserved Austen's dialogue as much as possible, but in this version the original dialogue is only rarely to be found. Only Mr Knightley's reprimands are preserved. Sometimes original dialogue remains, but is cut short. For instance, at the Crown ball when Mr Knightley asks Emma whom she shall dance with, her reply does not include the following sentence "and you know we are not really so much brother and sister as to make it all improper" (*Emma* 346). The screenwriter may have omitted this so the audience will not

think of their relationship having a sort of family bond. Both films did include this passage to emphasize Mr Knightley's assertion that they are not brother and sister and his romantic feelings for Emma. By omitting this in the series, it appears that the screenwriter wishes the audience to think of Emma and Mr Knightley's relationship as being nothing other than friends and possibly romantic.

In BBC One's *Behind the Scenes*, the producer and O'Hanlon both mention that they have adapted *Emma* with modern elements. Therefore, O'Hanlon says that is was necessary to insert modern body language which is recognizable for the audience. In her essay "Adapting *Emma* for the Twenty-first Century: An Emma No One Will Like" Laurie Kaplan mentions the use of modern body language in *Emma*:

> [P]hysical activity and restlessness are transformed in this modern adaptation into familiarity and intimacy, resulting in shocking breaches of the early nineteenth-century codes for decorous behavior. […] Fidgeting, complaining that he is bored or hot, Frank Churchill also moves in too close to Emma. His manner is flirtatious, his sexual presence undeniable. When the Westons, Frank, and Emma are looking at the Crown Inn to determine if it will do for their private ball, Frank Churchill, after the most perfunctory bow, impulsively grabs Emma and embraces her in this very intimate dance. But it is one thing to have the impetuous young man pretend to waltz with her, and quite another to have him lie down during the picnic at Box Hill and settle his head in Emma's lap. The physical intimacy is an outrageous violation of propriety, something Emma would never have allowed and would have rebuked. (L. Kaplan)

These modern gestures and attitudes inserted into this adaptation of Austen's novel are used to make *Emma* appeal to a broader audience than, for instance, the faithful 1996 A&E/ITV *Emma*.

6.2 Harlequinization

Sandy Welch, the screenwriter, adds in *Behind the Scenes* that she wishes to convey the story of a woman who wants to find a mate and be happy. As shown in the first chapter, *Emma* is not just a story of a woman who wishes to find a husband. Emma has to learn of her mistakes and when she finally realizes she should not meddle in Harriet's life, Harriet reveals her "crush" on Mr Knightley. This sets Emma's self-reflection in motion and realizes she is in love with Mr Knightley herself. In the series, Knightley has a moment of revelation as well. In episode three, after the ball at the Crown Inn, Knightley is walking through the corridors of his estate, and in flashbacks the audience sees he is thinking of Emma dancing at the ball.

To create the idea that Emma is looking for a husband, both Mr Knightley and Frank Churchill have the characteristics of a Harlequin hero. Mr Knightley is much like Austen described him: he is good-natured and the age difference seems right, although the actors only differ ten years in real life. Knightley and Churchill are both self-assured, masterful (though Frank is seen to be more overbearing with Jane than with Emma), hot-tempered and full of passion and tenderness. Frank's hot temper and passionate behaviour is more a result of his previous interaction with Jane. At first, Frank is depicted as a possible love interest for Emma. As the third and fourth episode follow, however, more glances between Frank and Jane are shown. In episode three, Frank makes the error of thinking that Mrs Weston wrote to him about carriage of Mr Perry. Then a shot follows where Jane is suddenly coughing and is obviously trying to distract the attention from the conversation. Like Mr Knightley, the audience must think something is "going on" between the two characters.

The focus of this adaptation is not necessarily on the courtship between Emma and Mr Knightley. None of the supporting characters are diminished into one-dimensional figures. As in the novel, the actress playing Miss Bates is chattering much of the time, but she is also very affectionate toward all her acquaintances. In McGrath's *Emma*, Miss Bates is simply an annoying spinster. The Eltons, too, are not only comical relief as in McGrath's *Emma*, but very proud and set on hurting both Emma and Harriet most of the time.

A feature much in common with the Miramax *Emma* is the idealization of early-nineteenth century England. The landscapes are luscious, and the town of Highbury seems to consist entirely of typical English cottages. *Emma* is shot in a pastel colour scheme; there are hardly any harsh colours to be found. Only the gentlemen are seen wearing somewhat darker clothing. Mrs Elton, on the other hand, is wearing very bright coloured clothing, thus suggesting that she is out of place in Highbury.

This adaptation of *Emma* mostly shows Mr Knightley's desire for Emma. The camera follows Knightley's gaze on Emma at the Crown Inn ball, revealing his interest in Emma. Later, Knightley is thinking in flashback about Emma and is, consequently, desirous of Emma. Emma is the one who initiates the first intimate contact between her and Knightley. After Knightley proclaims his love for Emma, she answers by placing his head in her hands and then kisses him. Just like McGrath's *Emma*, a kiss seems necessary to consolidate their love for each other and to satisfy the audience.

Conclusion

The object of this thesis was to determine whether the latest round of screen adaptations of Austen's novels is more focused on the romantic aspect than the nineties screen adaptations. It is now possible to state that the 2008 BBC *Sense & Sensibility* is indeed more harlequinized than the 1995 version. On the other hand, the 1996 Miramax version of *Emma* is a true example of Kaplan's outline for a romanticized interpretation of the original. The 2009 series also tends to focus on the romantic aspect of the novel, but depicts more of Austen's plot than McGrath's *Emma* does.

In the first chapter I have shown that *Sense & Sensibility* has other themes than the search for a husband. Especially the different characters of the sisters Elinor and Marianne is an important theme. Austen aligns herself with Elinor, who is the ideal combination of "sense" and "sensibility". Eventually Elinor is allowed to marry the man of her choice, due to her proper behaviour. Thompson also focused on this difference between the sisters in the script of the 1995 adaptation of *Sense and Sensibility*. Thompson has also embedded some feminist criticism in the characterization of Elinor. In order to emphasize the difference between the sisters, Marianne has not been granted feminist speech in the film. On the other hand, in this version some of Kaplan's requirements for a harlequinized adaptation are also to be found. Especially the male characters have been romanticized.

The mini-series of *Sense and Sensibility*, adapted by Andrew Davies, seems to focus on romance entirely. Although the series has more time to convey Austen's story, the time is allotted to depict the men in various labours. Especially Colonel Brandon has been given more screen time to present himself as the ideal man for Marianne. The series include an

explicit sex scene, several scenes in which characters kiss (Willoughby & Marianne, Elinor & Edward) and a general focus on the male body. One can conclude that the series seems to target a female audience. The difference between the sister's characters has also been diminished. Elinor is shown to be much more emotional, for example in the scene where she is beating a carpet out of frustration on the grounds of Norland Park.

While it can be concluded that the 2008 *Sense and Sensibility* is indeed more harlequinized than the 1995 version, for the *Emma* adaptations it is not so easy to conclude the same. The 2009 series has been proved to include several elements of a romanticized adaptation of the original. However, it also depicts Emma's growth and gaining self-knowledge in the course of the series. This is something McGrath's film fails to do. As Nachumi argues, Emma remains on her pedestal at the end of the film (Nachumi 135).

I have established that the A&E/ITV film adaptation of *Emma* has stayed very faithful to the novel, even in the casting of the actors for Emma and Mr Knightley. Davies and Lawrence focussed on the social structure of Austen's time in this adaptation. They depicted servants and labourors, which have never been represented in the novels. They did not choose to focus more on the interaction between Emma and Mr Knightley. Therefore, the conclusion can be drawn that this adaptation is the least harlequinized of all the versions of *Emma* I have researched. Both McGrath's film and the BBC series are harlequinized adaptations of *Emma*. It seems that the 1996 Miramax is even more romanticized than the 2009 series, thus proving that my thesis statement was incorrect in the case of the *Emma* adaptations.

It would be interesting to see if comparisons between the nineties and '00's adaptations of the other Austen's novels also show a tendency to romanticize the plot. Since

I have concluded that both series are indeed romanticized versions of the original, it might be concluded that the audience expects a romantic film when watching an Austen adaptation. However, I have only looked at *Emma* and *Sense and Sensibility*, a further study of the harlequinization of the other ’00 adaptations might be necessary to draw conclusions for certain.

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