
Notes

Introduction

1. A complete guide to all of the film adaptations of *Emma*, including cast and production team lists, can be found in the Appendix.
2. The “independent” film’s success story, and the rise of the “women’s film,” has been chronicled in cinema history books such as *Celluloid Mavericks: A History of American Independent Film* by Greg Merritt (Thunder’s Mouth Press, 1999), *Cinema of Outsiders: The Rise of American Independent Film* by Emanuel Levy (New York University Press, 2001), and *Women Who Run the Show: How a Brilliant and Creative New Generation of Women Stormed Hollywood, 1973–2000* by Mollie Gregory (St. Martin’s Press, 2002). Many books on the subject agree that 1989 was a banner year for movies emerging from “outside of the mainstream,” laying the groundwork for the explosion of independent films produced during the 1990s.

However, one might also argue that Austen’s concern with the social mores and class issues of her time interested a contemporary audience that looked to classic works of 19th century literature (and films based upon them) for a more complex and realistic portrayal of society than had been presented by popular cinema of the recent past. That would explain, in broader terms, the movement to bring classic fiction to the screen that typified European and American cinema of the 1990s.

3. In popular circles, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences granted Oscars to *Emma* (1996) for Rachel Portman’s music score and to *Sense and Sensibility* (1995) for Emma Thompson’s screenplay. Also, *Persuasion* (1995) is featured in *The New York Times’ Guide to the Best 1,000 Movies Ever Made*, a 1999 book edited by film critics Vincent Canby, Janet Maslin, and Peter M. Nichols (Three Rivers Press).
4. Wayne Booth popularized the phrase “free indirect style” in *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (University of Chicago Press, 1961). However, some critics have argued that the style itself was first identified by Ian Watt. In *The Rise of the Novel*

(Berkeley, University of California Press, 1957) Watt observes how Austen's writing style successfully combines the satirical narrative voice of Fielding and the personal, psychological storytelling of Richardson. See page 297.

Chapter One

1. Mosier writes: "The meaning of 'handsome' when applied to a woman was in Jane Austen's time pretty well understood. A handsome woman is one of a certain physical size: 'having a fine form or figure (usually in conjunction with full size or stateliness)' is how the *Oxford English Dictionary* puts it in part 6 of the definition of 'handsome' (I.1281 in the compact two-volume edition). She is not simply attractive, but her figure has certain properties. A less refined age might indeed call her voluptuous....To Jane Austen, 'handsome' was high praise....That this is the case puts Gwyneth Paltrow in rather an unenviable position. Regardless of what one thinks of her physical appearance or her acting abilities, she hardly qualifies as 'handsome,' and she really looks too old to be an Emma of 'nearly twenty-one,' as the qualifier 'nearly' suggests an age less than twenty-one, not more" (235).
2. As is to be expected, the last ten years of literary criticism of the novel *Emma* has been replete with essays that either allude in passing to the three film adaptations of 1995 and 1996, or which take in-depth looks at the films in comparison to the novel. Some of these scholarly treatments are kinder to the films than others. Many of these essays were written for (or were reprinted in) the following book-length studies: *Jane Austen in Hollywood* (1998) edited by Linda Troost and Sayre Greenfield; *Nineteenth Century Women at the Movies: Adapting Classic Women's Fiction to Film* (1997), edited by Barbara Tapa Lupack, and "*Emma*" on Film (1999), a special edition of *Persuasions*, the Jane Austen Society of North America's periodical. Particularly worthy of note are *Jane Austen and Co.* (2003), edited by Suzanne R. Pucci and James Thompson, and *Film and Literature* (1999) by Timothy Corrigan. In addition to including insightful commentaries on the *Emma* adaptations that will be referred to repeatedly in later chapters, both works feature juxtaposed photographs of Gwyneth Paltrow from *Emma* and Alicia Silverstone from *Clueless* on their covers. [Therefore, I didn't want to follow suit with this book's cover since it has been done twice already. Fortunately, this book is blessed to have a cover rendered by a talented, generous, and immensely likeable cover artist Donald Hendricks.] Paltrow is dressed in pseudo-Regency-period clothing, Silverstone is dressed in chic, 1990s Los Angeles attire, yet both are, ostensibly, playing the same character. Book-length studies of the films by a single author include Anke Werker's *By a Lady: Jane Austen's Female Archetypes in Fiction and Film* (1998), John Wiltshire's *Recreating Jane Austen* (2001), and Sue Parrill's *Jane Austen in Film and Television* (2002). Werker's book concludes by observing that "the general opinion of a certain time influences the reception of the novel that is adapted. But it is also through time that the film gains or loses realistic effect" as in the case of the

Persuasion adaptation, which was initially criticized as being too grim and gritty for Jane Austen but which has now, less than a decade later, achieved broader acclaim for its stark realism (114). Wiltshire's book is primarily a sociological one concerned with how "Jane Austen" is a cultural icon in Great Britain, and how the Austen films reflect the polarized and one-dimensional views of her as either a prim conservative or a raging revolutionary. Parrill, meanwhile, comprehensively chronicles and reviews every adaptation of Austen's works made to date, concluding that the vast majority of the filmic interpretations are successful in evoking the spirit of Austen's originals by adhering closely to her plots and keeping most of her dialogue intact (15).

3. In *Novel to Film* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996) Brian McFarlane also cited David Lean's *Great Expectations* as a cinematic auteur's triumph in finding "a visual stylistic verve that may be compared to the novel's peculiar rhetorical power" (105).
4. For example, Douglas McGrath, who wrote and directed the 1996 *Emma* starring Gwyneth Paltrow, chose to make the movie because he had a genuine love of the novel. Despite being an English major, he had never read the novel in school because it was not assigned to him. After electing to read it on his own, and discovering how much he loved it, he wanted to make others aware of the book, as well as to bring his visualization of it to the screen. At every stage, his approach to the project of adaptation was to treat the source novel with great respect. As he explains in an interview in *Screenwriter* magazine: "When you have someone like Jane Austen, who is smarter than I am, you cannot afford to ignore the text, so even when you might blithely change something, if your desire is to be faithful to at least the spirit of the novel, if not the letter, you always go back and look. You do have an ultimate responsibility to her, and even though she cannot verbalize her argument, every time you look at the book her version is there and you're always asking yourself, 'Is my version equal to this or better than this, or am I doing damage to something that survived the test [of time] and tastes of people over almost 170 years?' You ignore that at great peril" ("Douglas McGrath, Screenwriter/Director." *Screenwriter Magazine Online*. <http://www.nyscreenwriter.com/article10.htm>).
5. A word on the [sic]: Corrigan makes an understandable error at this point in his writing, incorrectly citing the 1932 Clarence Brown film *Emma* as an early Austen adaptation when it shares her novel's title but not her novel's plot. Sue Parrill, the principal cataloger of Austen adaptations, does not list Brown's film as an adaptation of Austen. The Internet Movie Database (www.imdb.com) cites the film as an adaptation of a story by Frances Marion. It describes the film as being about a nanny who marries her rich employer only to fight with his three children for his inheritance money when he dies. Although Corrigan makes a mistake in citing this film as a retelling of the story of Emma Woodhouse, this error does not undermine his overall point. For the quote to read more accurately, one might choose to substitute a genuine early Austen adaptation on DVD, such as John Glenister's 1972 *Emma*.

Chapter Two

1. According to Tobin: "Emma does not understand that to be first in Highbury society involves much more than accepting praise and flattery; it requires exertion and the performance of not particularly pleasant duties such as being kind to people like the Bateses, inviting them to tea, visiting them in their own home, and providing them with the necessities they lack. As a powerful and wealthy woman, Emma has a social responsibility to assist and protect women who are economically vulnerable and socially disadvantaged. This novel abounds with distressed gentlewomen who by the rights of the old paternal society deserve Emma's protection and benevolence. But failing to grasp her proper role in relationship to these women who are less privileged than she, Emma chooses inappropriate ways to relate to Harriet Smith, Jane Fairfax, and Miss Bates. Eager to form some kind of relationship with Harriet, and claiming she wants to be "useful" and of service (p. 39), Emma adopts Harriet as if she were a pet, and Harriet's grateful and fawning manner encourages Emma's sense of her own superiority. Emma plays with Harriet as if Harriet were a doll, using her to experience vicariously the flirtation and flattery of courtship activities...[And by] assuming the role of match-maker, Emma assumes the right to tinker with the very delicate social and economic adjustments involved in arranging a marriage in a highly structured world" (479–480).
2. A good case can be made that I have inaccurately described Stewart as a critic interested in how Emma reforms during the course of the novel. As a new historicist interested in the social structure of Regency-period Highbury, Stewart may, indeed, have a greater claim to being described as a critic who reads the novel as a "social critique." However, since Stewart so effectively describes the ways in which Emma has mistakenly identified her role within this society, she offers one of the best explanations of why Emma makes so many social "blunders" during the course of the novel; hence Stewart's placement in this discussion of readings of *Emma*.
3. Bharat Tandon, author of 2003's *Jane Austen and the Morality of Conversation*, sees the end of the novel as presenting a moment frozen in time. According to Tandon, "Austen has, throughout the story, threatened the romance by surrounding it with characters unfulfilled within or without marriages, and with possible alternative versions of Emma herself. She then has the audacity to present a romance ending which depends on a marriage, whilst all the time amassing an ever larger weight of equivocal or worrying precedent....Like the marriage which it describes, the last sentence is an act of hope in the ambience and in the teeth of experience. Unlike any relationship, however, it deliberately stops just before the 'ever after,' and remains poised endlessly on the brink" (174–175).

Wayne Booth, who defended the believability of the happy union dramatized at the end in his 1961 work *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, expressed some doubts concerning the marriage when he revisited the topic in his 1988 work *The*

Company We Keep. In this follow-up treatment, Booth writes, "In *Emma*, we play doubled roles much more intricate than are demanded by fantastic elements like gold-laying geese. On the one hand, we must see the ending as indeed a happy one, not in the least ironic, given the world of the conventional plot, a world that we are to enter with absolute wholeheartedness. And yet, simultaneously, we are asked to embrace standards according to which the ending can only be viewed as a fairy tale or fantasy" (Company 434–435).

4. Although there is a strong tradition of *Emma* criticism that sees Mr. Knightley as exercising power over *Emma*, either justly or unjustly, some critics have recently taken to suggesting that the relationship should be viewed as an ideal match between intellectual, moral, and social equals. John Hardy, for example, suggests in *Jane Austen's Heroines: Intimacy in Human Relationships* (1984) that Emma and Knightley ultimately achieve a lively union based on trust that does not inspire discontent in either party. According to John Allen Stevenson, author of "Emma: The New Courtship" (1990), the novel features both "old-fashioned" and "new-style" love stories. The first, embodied by Jane and Frank, is a love story in which the opposition to the couple's union is represented by external forces such as the disapproval of a parental figure. The second, represented by Emma and Knightley, is seemingly incestuous in nature and involves two egomaniacal lovers who need to overcome their own internal flaws in order to realize their true love for one another. Laurie Langbauer, however, has offered a strong challenge to the notion of the ideal marriage as represented by Emma and Mr. Knightley by undermining the perception of Mr. Knightley as a successfully realized ideal husband. In *Women and Romance: The Consolations of Gender in the English Novel*, she calls Mr. Knightley "an experiment in constructing the perfect man, pieced together by changing the emphasis on old literary clichés of gender," and the result is a character who is "authoritative, say, rather than overbearing, domestic without being uxorious." He must be considered a failed experiment as a character because the nuances between his amorous and his fatherly traits are not adequately theorized or maintained, Langbauer explains. However, the novel's attempts to "imagine a man that might somehow be different, even though they fail, still point out the need to do so. The attempt to transform what may be an inevitable patriarchal grammar through new inflections reveals the oppressiveness of its categories even when failing to transform them" (Langbauer 174).
5. Many critics over the years have suggested that Emma herself is either asexual, a "masturbating girl," or a closet lesbian. These views of Emma suggest that the character is incapable of having a fulfilling marital relationship with Mr. Knightley. Although none of the film versions of the novel explore the lesbian overtones of the novel, certain critics have written about the issue in scholarly papers, including Susan M. Korba, who wrote "'Improper and Dangerous Distinctions': Female Relationships and Erotic Domination in *Emma*" (1997) and Tiffany F. Potter's "'A Low But Very Feeling Tone': The Lesbian Continuum and Power Relations in Jane Austen's *Emma*" (1994). The theory that Emma is a

lesbian also inspired a novel, *Emma in Love: Jane Austen's Emma Continued* (1996) by Emma Tennant (London: Fourth Estate).

6. Although this is as far as I am willing to go in labeling specific interpretations of the novel, it is important to note that some critics have taken to labeling the domestic Bildungsroman readings as ideologically conservative and the social critique readings as liberal. To me, the labels "conservative" and "liberal" have lost their meanings in recent years due to overuse and the hyperbolic political rhetoric that has been attached to both. However, these labels are occasionally applied, and readers should be prepared to encounter them. For example, Barbara K. Seeber attempts to reconcile the conflicting readings of Austen as both conservative and liberal in her book *General Consent in Jane Austen: A Study in Dialogism* (2000). In a project that compares the "main text" with the "subtext" of Austen's works, Seeber argues that there is "no general consent to be found there" (12) and that novels such as *Emma* are best read as "both conservative and radical at the same time" (14)

Chapter Three

1. Despite the regrettable fact that Watt makes these observations about Austen's narrative style during the course of only one page, he nevertheless offers *Emma* a place of great prominence in the traditional literary canon as the author of the first "complete" novel.
2. Interestingly, the narrator is often not present for large sections of the novel, and there are key scenes in which the action is viewed only through Emma's perspective. The result is that readers are sometimes left with a less-than-reliable impression of key events and characters. As Janet Todd has indicated, characters such as Harriet are presented to the reader almost solely through Emma's perspective, which is biased in Harriet's favor. "We perceive that Harriet's face has been reflected in Emma's mind—so notoriously prone to alter with its own lighting; of Harriet's real countenance and feelings we have scarcely a hint" (283). The same could be said of Jane Fairfax, who may only seem cold and distant to the reader because that is how Emma herself views Jane.
3. Or, more appropriately, "with 'Cher' and at 'Cher'" since the Emma character has a different name in *Clueless*. Meanwhile, Patricia Rozema's *Mansfield Park* also cleverly attempts to recreate Austen's ironic voice by collapsing the character of Fanny Price and Jane Austen into a single whole that narrates the story, and much of the humor and political commentary comes from the thoughts heard via voice-over or in the moments when Fanny (played by Frances O'Connor) looks into the camera and directly addresses the audience.

4. For example, adaptations that grant primacy to the Harriet Smith storyline and are told primarily from Emma's perspective tend to be more comic in tone. Adaptations that focus on the plight of Jane Fairfax and are told from the perspective of the less wealthy and lower class residents of Highbury tend to be more serious.
5. Transposition adaptations bring traditional readings of the novel to the screen, often as a result of a given production team's intent to achieve complete tonal and thematic fidelity to the mother text despite the absence of certain characters and scenes from the novel. For example, the stated goal of the production team of the 1972 BBC miniseries *Emma* was "total fidelity" to the source material (Lauritzen 112). As we will later see, while the producers did not succeed in creating a cinematic experience that is directly equivalent to reading *Emma*, they did provide a thoughtful interpretation of Austen's novel.
6. See the appendix for the full cast list and production team information.
7. Since the film has been lost, Campbell's screenplay, complete with a full cast list and a credit for producer Michael Barry but no directorial credit, remains the most significant extant evidence of the nature of this particular adaptation. Of the eight *Emma* adaptations, only the most recent four are readily available to be viewed by the public on DVD and VHS. Of the previous four, only one version, the *NBC Kraft Television Theatre* production of 1954, still exists in a viewable form. This is on a videotape made available to scholars who present a letter of introduction to Rosemary Hanes of the Motion Picture and Television Reading Room of the Library of Congress, and who travel to the Madison Building for a special viewing of the program. The hour-long *CBS Camera Three* production from 1960 no longer exists in any format, since the footage has been lost and the original screenplay is no longer available. The remaining two adaptations, a live, 180-minute BBC miniseries written by Vincent Tilsley that was broadcast in 1960 and a live, 105-minute BBC TV broadcast from 1948, exist only in screenplay form as the original prints have been lost. (This is not unusual, especially for the live BBC television adaptations, because the BBC spent years destroying archive copies of old broadcasts, not realizing that they would be of interest to later viewers and historians. For example, the BBC is most notorious for destroying more than three years worth of episodes of its venerable science fiction program *Doctor Who*.) With the help of Sue Parrill, author of *Jane Austen on Film and Television* (2002), I have obtained copies of these screenplays, which were on file in the BBC Written Archives Centre, and have used them as the basis for my analysis of the two "lost" television adaptations. The two scripts are: 1) Judy Cambell. "Emma." Unpublished screenplay. BBC TV. 1948. In the BBC Written Archives Centre. Television Drama Scripts Microfilm 31/32. 2) Vincent Tilsley. "Emma." Unpublished screenplay. BBC TV. 1960. In the BBC Written Archives Centre. Television Drama Scripts Microfilm. Note: Much of the above *Emma* adaptation information comes from Austen adaptation archivist Sue Parrill, author of *Jane Austen on Film and Television* (McFarland & Company, 2002), and from the Internet Movie Database at <http://www.imdb.com>.

8. Scacchi, though uncredited as narrator, also plays Mrs. Weston in the film. While the identity of the narrator is not known, it is most likely not Mrs. Weston herself. Still, the narrator, who tells the story as if it takes place in a distant, fairy-tale past, shares Mrs. Weston's approval of Emma in her dialogue and inflection. For a more thorough discussion of the identity of the narrator in the McGrath version and the motivation of said narrator, see Christine Colon, "The Social Constructions of Douglas McGrath's *Emma*" in *Persuasions: The Jane Austen Journal On-Line*, Occasional Papers No. 3 (1999).
9. This is especially true of the two adaptations from 1996 (featuring Gwyneth Paltrow and Kate Beckinsale as Emma), neither of which make Mr. Weston's or Mr. Cole's position in society clear enough.
10. Naturally, this observation is based on my reading of the script, since the performances of the actors are not available for examination. Their vocal inflection and facial expression, combined with a general manner, would more firmly set the tone for the gossip dialogue as either farcical or something more serious.
11. Emma's attitude towards gossip in the original novel seems inconsistent. While she is angered at Jane Fairfax for refusing to gossip with her about Frank Churchill, and while she enjoys gossiping with Mrs. Weston, she is also capable of voicing displeasure with the local gossipers when she feels that they have revealed too much to Mr. Knightley about her plans for Harriet. In Chapter VIII she exclaims, "Highbury gossips!—Tiresome wretches!" (63) when Knightley predicts that Harriet will soon receive an offer of marriage.
12. The sudden shifts of topic during these debates are cause for some measure of confusion and the transitions read awkwardly in the screenplay, making one wonder if the scenes were easier to follow when acted out on television. If the actor who played Knightley (Ralph Michael) had enough finesse, he could conceivably make these scenes work. Even then, however, one is never sure of where the lion's share of Knightley's displeasure is coming from, since he keeps mentioning Jane Fairfax when he should be concerned with more immediate issues.
13. Wayne Booth suggests that Austen deliberately avoids directly depicting Jane's inner life because the inevitable consequence is a sharp loss in reader sympathy for Emma, who would suffer in comparison to Jane. *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), p. 249.
14. A forerunner of *Masterpiece Theater*, the *Kraft Television Theatre* (1947–1958) program regularly broadcast live, hour-long dramatizations of classic works of literature. Those who want a sense of what kind of program it was may get some

idea by viewing the vintage, 60-minute adaptation of the first James Bond adventure, *Casino Royale*, originally broadcast on the live television series "Climax!" This rare adaptation, currently available as a special feature on the *Casino Royale* DVD (the 1967 version with David Niven, not the 2006 one with Daniel Craig) features an American James Bond played ineptly by Barry Nelson, a rewritten, happy ending (!) in which Bond defeats the villain and "gets the girl" (in the book the villain is killed by another villain and "the girl" kills herself). The action of the novel is compressed, and the production is necessarily "stagey." However, in this Ian Fleming adaptation, as in the Kraft *Emma* adaptation, the main supporting character is played by the most talented actor in the production. Both Roddy McDowall in the Kraft *Emma* and Peter Lorre (the villainous LeChiffre) in the "Climax!" *Casino Royale* steal the show from the protagonist, who is played less skillfully by a less famous actor.

15. The live nature of the broadcast renders this incarnation of Knightley even less plausible since Cookson repeatedly flubs lines in important speeches from Volume I Chapters V and VIII—in which Knightley expresses concern to Mrs. Weston about the nature of the friendship between Emma and Harriet, and in which he defends his farmer tenant as a worthy suitor for Harriet. (Cookson also misspeaks Emma's name at one point and refers to her as "Harriet.")
16. Simple-minded and effusive, William Larkins' portrayal appears to have been somewhat inspired by the biased and uncharitable description that Emma offers of Robert Martin in the novel:

"He is very plain, undoubtedly—remarkably plain:—but that is nothing compared with his entire want of gentility. I had no right to expect much; but I had no idea that he could be so very clownish, so totally without air. I had imagined him, I confess, a degree or two nearer to gentility....I am sure you must have been struck by his awkward look and abrupt manner—and the uncouthness of a voice, which I heard to be wholly unmodulated as I stood here." (Austen 44)

17. The only invented moment of comedy that works revolves around Emma's portfolio of portraits, which is deliberately made to look like the work of a fifth-grader rendered in black crayon, and Emma's hurt expression when Mr. Elton (Roddy McDowall) misidentifies a portrait of Emma's Cousin Isabella (yes, it is "Cousin" Isabella, here) as Mrs. Weston, but the joke works primarily because the actor's delivery is so adept.
18. In the previous adaptation of 1948, Mrs. Goddard introduces Harriet to Emma and inquires whether Harriet might be brought to Hartfield for cards. Emma agrees, shaking Harriet's hand. After Emma's departure, Harriet stands amazed and says to Mrs. Goddard, "She actually shook hands with me." This seems a lovely dramatic moment that works towards a similar purpose to the scenes

described above, (in which Harriet approaches the opulent world of Emma Woodhouse tentatively,) but handles the characterization with greater finesse.

19. Indeed, Chapter XVI in the novel opens with Emma reflecting darkly on Elton's motivations in proposing to her:

Contrary to the usual course of things, Mr. Elton's wanting to pay his addresses to her had sunk him in her opinion. His professions and his proposals did him no service. She thought nothing of his attachment, and was insulted by his hopes. He wanted to marry well, and having the arrogance to raise his eyes to her, pretended to be in love; but she was perfectly easy as to his not suffering any real disappointment that need be cared for. There had been no real affection in his language or manners. Sighs and fine words had been given in abundance; but she could hardly devise any set of expressions, or fancy any tone of voice, less allied with real love. She need not trouble herself to pity him. He only wanted to aggrandize and enrich himself; and if Miss Woodhouse of Hartfield, the heiress of thirty thousand pounds, were not quite so easily obtained as he had fancied, he would soon try for Miss Somebody else with twenty, or with ten. (Austen 121)

In marrying the heiress Augusta Hawkins shortly thereafter, Elton proves Emma's thoughts prophetic, surprising Emma only with the speed with which she was replaced. However, the novel presents Elton's proposal, and the aftermath, purely from Emma's perspective, leaving open the possibility that she has misjudged his motivations—possibly out of snobbery, possibly out of shock and disappointment. The Kraft production explores this possibility admirably in a manner that need not conflict with the source. It may, in fact, suggest an intriguing alternative way of reading the Elton storyline.

On the subject of Mr. Elton, Claudia Johnson writes, "Implying a counter discourse of 'true feeling,' Emma suggests in a most unBurkean way that 'humanity' and gallantry are two different things. The 'gallant' Mr. Elton by contrast damns himself when he avows that it is impossible 'to contradict a lady' (p. 51) when he takes care 'that nothing ungallant, nothing that did not breathe a compliment to the sex should pass his lips (p. 73), and when he 'sigh[s] and languish[es] and stud[ies] for compliments' (p. 57). As presented here, gallantry is intrinsically nonsensical: artificial and disingenuous, taking on the very femininity it courts. No man, as the logic of the novel would have it, talks or believes such rubbish. When Mr. Elton is alone among men, as Mr. Knightley informs us, he makes it clear that he wants to marry into money and that his attentions to the fair sex are only a means to an end, that he is not really a man of feeling at all" (451). From "'Not at all what a man should be!': Remaking English Manhood in Emma" (451)

20. In the novel, reader perception of Mrs. Elton is, primarily, filtered through the heroine's view of the character, which is essentially antagonistic from the outset.

First laying eyes on Mrs. Elton in church, Emma decides on the basis of appearance that:

She did not really like her. She would not be in a hurry to find fault, but she suspected there was no elegance;—ease, but not elegance.—She was almost sure that for a young woman, a stranger, a bride, there was too much ease. Her person was rather good; her face not unpretty; but neither feature, nor air, nor voice, nor manner, were elegant. Emma thought at least it would turn out so. (Austen 219)

When Mrs. Elton paid a visit to Emma at Hartfield shortly thereafter, and Emma was able to speak with her alone for fifteen minutes, the conversation merely served to confirm these poor initial impressions.

[T]he quarter of an hour quite convinced her that Mrs. Elton was a vain woman, extremely well satisfied with herself, and thinking very much of her own importance; that she was meant to shine and be very superior, but with manners that had been formed in a very bad school, pert and familiar; that all her notions were drawn from one set of people, and one style of living; that if not foolish she was ignorant, and that her society would certainly do Mr. Elton no good. (Austen 221)

Shortly after this passage, Austen presents the conversation to readers to judge for themselves whether Emma is being too harsh. Most, if not all, of Mrs. Elton's dialogue is indeed damning, as she spends much of the conversation bragging of her wealth, her worldliness, and her selflessness. Worse still, Mrs. Elton makes tactless allusions to the personal defects of all of Emma's loved ones, making a quick succession of loaded observations about Mr. Woodhouse's ill health, Mr. Knightley's rustic background, Mrs. Weston's past as a governess, and Emma's own provincialism. While it is possible to interpret Mrs. Elton's dialogue as being friendly in tone and well meant, it seems more likely that her remarks are calculated to inflate her own self-importance and/or to wound Emma. However, some readers might well view the scene when Emma encounters Mrs. Elton for the first time from Mrs. Elton's perspective and see a genuine overture of friendship and an invitation to form a musical club turned away by a narrow-minded snob. Such readers are less likely to see Emma as a heroine keeping a cold-hearted social opportunist at bay and more likely to view Emma a self-appointed guardian of the establishment whose chief interest is in preventing new blood from becoming part of the community.

21. While the Harriet character in *Clueless* (called "Tai") eventually begins to turn on, and even socially surpass the Emma character ("Cher"), this was not her goal for most of the film.

22. Before the proposal comes there is an intriguing moment when Emma is showing her sketch of Mr. Knightley to Harriet. Emma observes that she was displeased with it because she “had made him too pretty, you see.” Harriet disagrees, cooing “Oh, Miss Woodhouse, I think it is just like him,” in a dreamy tone that could only be interpreted as a declaration of love for Knightley that Emma does not notice. In addition, when Emma first meets William Larkins, she observes, “Well I thought he looked very respectable and hard-working,” to which Harriet replies, “Of course, he is not so genteel as a real gentleman,” already thinking of Mr. Knightley. And, during the debate over Larkins’ proposal, the camera is off of Harriet’s face and on Emma’s for much of the conversation, so it is unclear how much of what Emma says is greeted with consternation. What is clear, however, is the primacy she gives Knightley and the offhand manner in which Harriet ultimately considers Larkins’ disappointment: “I must admit that since my coming here I have seen people ... one is so handsome and agreeable [smile]... but William is very amiable ...and he has written such a letter....” Emma then reminds her that a tolerable letter should not be inducement enough to marry, to which she replies, “I wonder if he will be unhappy. I wonder if ... well ... and it is but a short letter, too.”
23. Interestingly enough, the 1995 film *Clueless*, which transported the tale to contemporary Los Angeles, flirted with the idea that “Harriet” could indeed rise to greater social heights than “Emma” by allying herself with “Mrs. Elton.” This seeming alteration in the story takes excellent advantage of the dramatic opportunities opened up by transporting the plot to a more “democratic” time and society, but the Kraft adaptation, which takes similar liberties with the source material for less reason, makes no such intriguing adjustment to the storyline.
24. Like the previous British adaptation written by Judy Campbell, this adaptation no longer exists on film, but Vincent Tilsley’s screenplay still exists, and it is based on this screenplay that I will be making my observations. (Tilsley, Vincent. “Emma.” Unpublished screenplay. BBC TV. 1960. In the BBC Written Archives Centre. Television Drama Scripts Microfilm.)
25. In the novel, when Emma reveals to Mr. Knightley her suspicions that he loves Jane Fairfax, Austen writes the following:

Mr. Knightley was hard at work upon the lower buttons of his thick leather gaiters, and either the exertion of getting them together, or some other cause, brought the color into his face as he answered,

“Oh! Are you there?—But you are miserably behind-hand. Mr. Cole gave me a hint of it six weeks ago.”

He stopped.—Emma felt her foot pressed by Mrs. Weston and did not know herself what to think. In a moment, he went on—

"That will never be, however, I can assure you. Miss Fairfax, I dare say, would not have me if I were to ask her—and I am very sure I shall never ask her."...

...he was thoughtful—and in a manner which shewed him not pleased, soon afterwards said, "So you have been settling that I should marry Jane Fairfax."

...Mr. Knightley was thoughtful again. The result of his reverie was, "No, Emma, I do not think the extent of my admiration for her will ever take me by surprise.—I never had a thought of her in that way, I assure you." And soon afterwards, "Jane Fairfax is a very charming woman—but not even Jane Fairfax is perfect. She has a fault. She has not the open temper which a man would wish for in a wife."

Emma could not but rejoice to hear that she had a fault. "Well," said she, "and you soon silenced Mr. Cole, I supposed?"

"Yes, very soon. He gave me a quiet hint; I told him he was mistaken; he asked my pardon and said no more. Cole does not want to be wiser or wittier than his neighbors." (233)

Tilsley's screenplay suggests that Mr. Knightley's red face and long, thoughtful pauses in this scene reveal that he is either not honest with himself or not honest with Emma when he denies his attraction to Jane Fairfax. Such a reading is possible. It is also just as possible to take Mr. Knightley at his word when he claims that he "never thought of her in that way."

26. Why is Emma so jealous of Jane? Some critics have suggested that Emma has an inferiority complex since she is well aware of Jane's superior talents. Others have argued that the primary reason for the jealousy is Emma's fear that Jane will win Mr. Knightley away from her. Concerning the first of these theories, Beth Fowkes Tobin writes that Emma "is threatened by Jane's talents, recognizing that without her inherited status and wealth, she would fall short of Jane Fairfax. Envious of Jane's real accomplishments, Emma cannot tolerate equality with a woman who, without property or position, lays claim to elegance and gentility. Preferring the nonthreatening and clearly inferior Harriet, who is without property, position, gentility or accomplishments, Emma rejects Miss Bates' niece as too cold and reserved for her taste, thus preserving her sense of superiority" (480). Concerning the second of these theories, Janet Todd argues, "The fear that Mr. Knightley loves Jane starts Emma on her path to self knowledge. Only when Harriet declares herself does Emma understand her own heart, but already her extravagant hostility must hint the truth. At the mere suggestion of Mr. Knightley's interest, she exclaims, 'Jane Fairfax mistress of the Abbey!—Oh! No, no;—every feeling revolts' (p. 225). The match would be, she asserts, 'shameful and degrading.' Yet the woman in question is one whom Emma has declared to be all that is elegant and accomplished, and her only disadvantages have been the reserve Mr. Knightley esteems in moderation and her loquacious aunt. Certainly Emma's own unconscious desires intrude here to make the horror, and the match further repulses by its uniting of social status and worth, a

combination which threatens to top Emma herself. 'A Mrs. Knightley for them all to give way to!' she muses bitterly" (292).

27. In fact, I am surprised that not one of the adaptations presented the death of the first Mrs. Weston and the delivery of Frank into the hands of the Churchills as a form of dramatic, pre-credits segment since that event, like Wickham's seduction of Darcy's sister in *Pride and Prejudice*, influences the events that occur during the course of the story proper, despite taking place long beforehand. Such a backstory would certainly make the Frank Churchill-Jane Fairfax storyline easier to grasp, as well as make Emma more sympathetic by suggesting that she has finally brought Mr. Weston the happiness he lost at the death of his first wife by promoting his marriage to Miss Taylor.

28. Most film adaptations of *Emma* have tended to portray Frank as merely phony in the blandest and most obvious possible way instead of in a more interesting fashion as sinister or charming. Even the likeable Ewan McGregor, who was solid in the part in the Douglas McGrath adaptation, fails to evoke much reaction. Although it is not possible to know exactly how David McCallum (*Sapphire and Steel*, *Billy Budd*) played the part in the Tilsley adaptation, the screenplay would tend to suggest that this was the version that strove the most noticeably to make Frank a graspable and sympathetic character.

The screenplay dramatizes certain scenes from Frank's point of view in order to bring his character more fully to life. One example of this is Frank's meeting with Jane as she departs from the strawberry-picking outing, which is only referred to in the novel, but which Tilsley dramatizes. Frank and Jane's dialogue is suitably coded and Frank seems about to make a direct plea to his fiancé when the two are interrupted. As a consequence of scenes such as this, the secret engagement between Frank and Jane is a little too strongly hinted at, but that is typical of the British television adaptations, which tend to favor creating a memorable Jane Fairfax to preserving the mystery.

29. Certainly Andrew Davies, screenwriter of the ITV/A&E version from 1996, saw it in this fashion (Birtwistle 7).
30. This scene is included in the 1975 version, this version, and the 1996 ITV/A&E version with Kate Beckinsale.
31. Unlike the previous versions discussed, only one of which exists on film (and it can only be viewed in the United States by those eager to visit the Library of Congress' viewing room), this production is readily available on DVD and VHS through major distributors such as Amazon.com and Barnes and Noble. Although originally broadcast in five installments, the VHS version has only one set of credits, the opening credits of part one and the closing credits of part five, and edits together all of the episodes to make one long, feature-film version. This is a different viewing experience from the original broadcast as it eliminates many of the effects of the original "cliffhanger serial" feel of the presentation. For

example, in its original broadcast, episode one ended with a dramatic close-up of Emma dictating Harriet's refusal letter to Robert Martin. Viewers of the VHS tape do not have to wait a week to see what happens next as viewers back in 1972 did.

32. Austen aficionados interested in a purely faithful adaptation would be pleased by this version remaining faithful to the novel in its presentation of the proposal scene, cutting away to another scene before Emma gives her response to Knightley and refraining from melodramatic music and soft lighting, but viewers hoping for a little more physical passion in their romantic fiction are bound to be disappointed. In contrast, Mr. Knightleys from more recent adaptations, most notably Mark Strong and Jeremy Northam, have been described as too young and too glamorous, pointing to the possibility that Knightley is a difficult part to cast, as he is markedly older than Emma, but still described through Emma's eyes as young-looking, "tall, firm, upright" (Austen 261) during the Crown Inn ball. But while their physical types are not ideal for the character, it is possibly more important that both Carson and Northam are naturals in the role, and performance quality is a critical consideration.
33. Ultimately, Lauritzen concludes that the production succeeds on its own terms—that it will most likely encourage viewers over the years to read a novel that they never would have otherwise (154) and that those who already appreciate the novel will derive the most pleasure from the serial's "dramatic effectiveness, the directness and emotional force of the performance (153), especially in the Box Hill segment, which lends itself to dramatic staging and, done properly, can eclipse the novel in dramatic potency. Still, Lauritzen observes that the serial "falls short of the original...with regard to subtlety and precision, and this has an effect both on the characterization and on the articulation of the main themes of the story" (154).

Two more recent reviews of the Glenister-Constanduros film were written by David Monaghan and by William Phillips and Louise Heal. David Monaghan's 2003 article "*Emma* and the Art of Adaptation" takes the Glenister-Constanduros version to task for relying too heavily on "historically accurate costumes and settings" and bread-and-butter direction to present a faithful onscreen rendering of the Regency period novel. For Monaghan, this *Emma*, and other "televised versions of Austen function as illustrated supplements to the original novels rather than as independent works of art" (Monaghan 197) primarily because, "pleasing as it has been to millions of viewers, the 'verisimilitude' carefully cultivated by televisual renderings of the Austen canon is usually 'superficial' and serves as a substitute for any attempt to point up complexities of character and theme that lie beneath the polished surface of her novels. Pre-1990 BBC adaptations also tend to make use of unobtrusive and conservative camera and editing techniques that reflect their creator's unwillingness to rethink Austen's novels in visual terms" (Monaghan 197).

William Phillips and Louise Heal observe in "Extensive Grounds and Classic Columns: *Emma* on Film" that the Glenister-Constanduros film "does what a film isn't particularly necessary for: it tells the story of *Emma* and not

much more. As our discussion suggests, it neither distorts its source enough to distress anyone unduly (except perhaps at the exclusion of Jane Fairfax at Box Hill and the alphabet puzzle game) nor extends the characters in directions that send anyone back to Austen to explore ideas. One distressing (if not surprising) aspect of this film is that it is rather “male oriented.” The male characters tend to have principal focus in their scenes, the concentration on the fretting by Mr. Woodhouse being a good example. There is even some superfluous “good old boy” chatting between men in at least one scene. This aspect of the film is perhaps the one area in which this film warrants further scrutiny” (Phillips and Heal 7).

34. Lauritzen calculated that, “In the novel, Emma is alone on about 21 out of 355 pages. This means that Austen devotes about 1/16 of her text to this type of scene. In the serial, Emma is alone during about 5 of 270 minutes, which is only about 1/54 of the total viewing time. This radical modification of an important type of situation is bound to have a negative effect on the articulation of Emma’s development, which is the central subject of the novel....An explanation of the reduction of the scope of this type of situation may no doubt be found in the transition from prose narrative to drama, and in the known expectations of the television audience....It should be added, however, that Constanduros’ presentation of Emma herself, when it occurs, shows a lack of imagination, which is possibly related to his respect for the original text. Rather than using any of the available techniques for rendering interior monologue like letter-writing, voice-over or straight monologue, he refrained from articulating the content of the text verbally. Paradoxically, it could therefore be argued that Constanduros could have attained greater faithfulness to the original if he had allowed himself to depart more from it” (Lauritzen 81).

Chapter Four

1. Although Haskell is a film critic and not a literary scholar, echoes of her view can be found in literary criticism. In “Not Subordinate: Empowering Woman in the Marriage Plot” (1992), Julie Shaffer argues that the traditional lover-mentor marriage-plot novels of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that were made popular by the success of Charlotte Lennox’s *The Female Quixote* (1752) presented females as socially ignorant—if not asocial or antisocial—and in desperate need of education from a wise masculine figure. However, Shaffer writes, Austen worked to subvert the conservative conventions of these lover-mentor novels by writing stories in which the lover-mentor learns as much from the heroine as she learns from him.

In another example, John Hardy suggests in *Jane Austen’s Heroines: Intimacy in Human Relationships* (Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984) that Emma and Knightley ultimately achieve a lively union based on trust that does not inspire discontent in either party. In *The British Novel, Defoe to Austen: A Critical History*, John Allen Stevenson writes that the novel features both “old-fashioned” and

“new-style” love stories. The first, embodied by Jane and Frank, is a love story in which the opposition to the couple’s union is represented by external forces such as the disapproval of a parental figure. The second, represented by Emma and Knightley, is seemingly incestuous in nature and involves two egomaniacal lovers who need to overcome their own internal flaws in order to realize their true love for one another (Boston: Twayne, 1990, pp. 110–28). Perhaps most famously of all, Wayne Booth asserts in “Control of Distance in Jane Austen’s *Emma*” (1961) that “[m]arriage to an intelligent, amiable, good, and attractive man is the best thing that can happen to this heroine, and the readers who do not experience it as such are, I am convinced, far from knowing what Jane Austen is about—whatever they may say about the ‘bitter spinster’s’ attitude towards marriage” (Rhetoric of Fiction 260).

2. Douglas McGrath initially wrote a scene in which Emma and Mr. Knightley competed against one another at croquet. When the film’s production designer, Michael Howells, informed him that croquet was not invented until years later, archery was substituted. (<http://www.nyscreenwriter.com/article10.htm>)
3. As Claudia Johnson wrote, in “‘Not at all what a man should be!’: Remaking English Manhood in *Emma*.” “It is the work of *Emma* to make Mr. Knightley seem traditional. Combining as it does the patron saint of England with the knight of chivalry, his name itself conduces to his traditional-seeming status. But as I hope I have indicated, he is not a traditional and certainly not a chivalric figure, and far from embodying fixed or at the very least commonly shared notions of masculinity, there is nothing in Scott, Burney, More, Burke, Radcliffe, or Edgeworth remotely like him. On one hand, Knightley is impeccably landed, a magistrate, a gentleman of ‘untainted’ blood and judicious temper, and as such emphatically not the impetuous, combustible masculine type Burke so feared, the mere man of talent who is dangerous precisely because he has nothing to lose. But on the other hand, Knightley avows himself a farmer and a man of business, absorbed in the figures and computations Emma considers so vulgar, a man of energy, vigor, and decision, and as such emphatically not an embodiment of the stasis onto sluggishness Burke commended in country squires. The exemplary love of this ‘humane’ as opposed to ‘gallant’ man is fraternal rather than heterosexual. If Emma has difficulty in realizing that Knightley is in love with her, it is not because she is impercipient, but rather because he is highly unusual in loving a woman in the same manner he loves his brother rather than the other way around....” (452)
4. Douglas McGrath on the Americanisms: “The funniest kind of problem we had was many English people complained, or Boston scholars complained. Knowing I was American, they’d say, ‘there are dreadful Americanisms in the script.’ I’m not 100% faithful to the dialogue because there were places I couldn’t be, but I love the dialogue. I’m all for taking what is pre-typed and putting it right in the script, but every so often you need to throw in a little something. The thing they always sighted as an obvious Americanism was at a number of points in the movie Emma says, ‘Good God.’ The first time I read the complaint, I think it was

in *The New Yorker*, I thought, 'Good God.' And I've been known to say 'Good God' myself, so I don't think it was impossible that I thought of that, but I thought, I'm sure that's from the book, and I looked it up and it indeed is in the book. Well, somebody from England set a letter to the editor of a magazine which had reviewed the film with that very complaint that there were these Americansisms and the one they sighted again was 'Good God.' The letter writer says, 'You can find the phrase 'Good God' on the following pages of Miss Austen's book,' and the letter writer was Alec Guinness. So I was very happy about that. [Her fans] are very devoted—and rightly so—she's a wonderful, wonderful author who has inspired near maniacal devotion from many readers, but when you're making a transition from the book to the screen, you have other considerations besides merely how it's done in the book. You want to be faithful and that's why you're drawn to the material, because you love it. But there are a lot of things you have to think about besides just how it is in the book." From *Screenwriter Magazine Online*. (<http://www.nyscreenwriter.com/article10.htm>)

5. This was the core argument of an essay by Moya Luckett called "Image and Nation in 1990s British Cinema."

Although Luckett is concerned primarily with Paltrow's performance as a modern-day British woman in the film *Sliding Doors*, the comments remain salient in an evaluation of her performance as an archetypal Regency period heroine. For Luckett, any time that Paltrow plays a British character, especially in a film such as *Sliding Doors*, she causes a displacement that "leaves a vacuum at the center of the nation" suggesting "that national identity is always elsewhere, a paradox that seems to be echoed in the current efforts of audiences to find the nation in the images of British cinema." Since a false Brit such as Paltrow cannot uncover the truth of "Britishness," *Sliding Doors* "attempts to find the truth of the nation rest on supporting characters who have strong regional identities." Luckett concludes that, "After all, Gwyneth Paltrow is American, and despite her appearances in films like *Emma* (Douglas McGrath, 1996) and *Shakespeare in Love* as "the quintessentially British" heroine, her star image undermines her authenticity" (Luckett 98).

6. Mining magazine articles and newspaper reviews published at the time of the release of *Emma*, James Thompson presented a montage of tabloid descriptions of Gwyneth Paltrow as both the ultimate Jane Austen heroine and the personification of silver screen "class": "The new representations of Austen, then, present an aristocracy as attractive to nominal or residual democrats, an aristocracy at the point of its moralization and anesthetization into an abstract hierarchy, an aristocracy of the plucky, of the good, and the elegant, in which we perceive morality as style. This operation turns on the transcoding of class from brute exclusionary practice to class as elegance in grace, to class in a commodity culture. This is an Austen superimposed with the look and feel of Ralph Lauren nostalgia for an available aristocracy, old money and class in the consumer sense of the term. The language of class is most evident in the marketing of Gwyneth Paltrow. In the *New York Times* review of *Emma*, (August 2, 1996), Janet Maslin makes it clear that *Emma* thematizes stardom: like *Clueless*, this film "turns the

role of Austen's best-loved busybody into a showcase for a show-stopping young star." Or, as Mike Clark writes in *USA Today* (August 12, 1995, p. 1), "Emma is Paltrow, Paltrow is Emma." But Paltrow is not just Emma: she is also Audrey Hepburn and Grace Kelly: "What used to be called class" (quoted in Richard Corliss, "A Touch of Class," *Time*, July 29, 1996, p. 2). As director McGrath puts it, "It's like, 'Shannon Doherty is Emma?' I don't think so" (Richard Corliss, "A Touch of Class"...). McGrath says in a *Vogue* article (August 1996), "the minute Gwyneth started speaking, I felt like I was looking at the perfect Emma" (214). It is in this context that Paltrow's election to the "50 Best Dressed People" in *People* magazine makes sense, her positioning as classic, understated elegance, as sheer class....This is fashion before the fall into its globalization and corporatization, before supermodels, back when it could be envisioned as (relatively) innocent, something more about style and connected, with transparent, unproblematic cultural capital with the great houses, with individually named designers, and with the very rich and exclusive" (Thompson 24).

7. See <http://userpages.umbc.edu/~jpeck1/films/emma.html>
8. The uncertainty of the identity of the female narrator, and the lack of ascertainable physical presence of the narrator on screen, is one of the things that makes this film rare. Kaja Silverman explains in her 1984 essay "Dis-Embodying the Female Voice" that male film viewers are disturbed by a disjunction between a woman's voice and a woman's body, so a female narrative voice is almost unheard of in cinema. "To allow her to be heard without being seen...would disrupt the specular regime upon which mainstream cinema relies; it would put her beyond the control of the male gaze, and release her voice from the signifying obligations which the gaze sustains. It would be to open the possibility of woman participating in phallic discourse and...to challenge every conception by means of which we have previously known her, since it is precisely as body that she is constructed....Thus (with the exception of music) there are no instances within mainstream cinema where the female voice is not matched up in some way, even if only retrospectively, with the female body....The female voice almost never functions as a voice-over, and when it does it enjoys a comparable status to the male voice-over in film noir—i.e. it is autobiographical, evoking in reminiscent fashion the diegesis which constitutes the film's 'present,' a diegesis in which the speaker features centrally" (135–136).

Writing specifically about McGrath's use of a female narrator in his film of *Emma*, Hilary Schor argues that "McGrath has made an interesting choice...in choosing a female narrator for his film. Much as the beginning of the novel spins around the absence of Miss Taylor and the loss of female friendship which has centered Emma's world since the death of her mother, so the loss of that initial, comforting if slightly acerbic narratorial voice leads us to long for that absent mother—for a decidedly female intelligence who will complete Emma's moral makeover and make the world spin in the proper direction. As Emma moves through its own various techniques of voice, suspending the narrator's own voice until the happy conclusion of the romance plot, it challenges us to listen

more acutely to the vagaries of individual voice—and to listen for absent voices as well” (148–149).

9. In “‘The Duty of Woman by Woman’: Reforming Feminism in *Emma*,” Devoney Looser describes Mrs. Elton as the novel’s “gravest warning against female/female paternalism,” a central theme of the book filled with student-teacher relationships that range from the fruitless to the nightmarish. “Mrs. Elton is Emma’s nemesis but she is also a sign of what Emma—if unrepentant—could become....If Mrs. Elton selects a more class appropriate and deserving humble companion in Jane than Emma does in Harriet, she more egregiously oversteps her boundaries as patron in her attempted machinations. Mrs. Elton’s finding employment for Jane as a governess poses as a selfless act. It is, however, an attempt to force an unwanted agenda on Jane and to prove to her new community (and to her beloved Maple Grove relatives) that she has power in Highbury” (Looser 588).
 Paul Delany writes in “‘A Sort of Notch in the Donwell Estate’: Intersections of Status and Class in *Emma*” that the novel stigmatizes all efforts made by ambitious members of the rising classes to purchase status. This disapproval of “consumption” is presented most noticeably in scenes in which John Knightley casts a disdainful eye on Mrs. Elton’s lace and pearls, and in which Emma mocks Mrs. Elton’s sister’s barouche-landau. Meanwhile, the narrator of the story pays little attention to clothing worn by Emma or purchases made by characters with old-world status, minimizing the importance of ostentatious displays of wealth to Highbury’s upper crust, Delaney observes (515).
10. Galperin’s view of the novel will be given greater coverage in the discussion of *Clueless*.
11. Critics generally cite *Clueless*, which was released before *Jane Austen’s “Emma,”* as the most daring treatment of the source material since it acts as a post-modern re-visioning of the story set in an America of the “present.” Since *Clueless* is the only adaptation of the story that does not attempt to visually recreate the Regency period setting in which it was originally intended to take place, I have chosen to discuss that particular film last. It is important to note, however, that *Clueless* was released in the United States on July 19, 1995, before both the McGrath film (which was released on August 2, 1996) and the Meridian-ITV/A&E film *Jane Austen’s “Emma,”* written by Andrew Davies and directed by Diarmuid Lawrence, which aired on British television in 1996 and which was released in the United States on February 16, 1997. If I had organized this survey of adaptations purely chronologically, the Meridian-ITV/A&E film would be discussed last because it was the most recent of the adaptations.
12. In *Sensibility*, Janet Todd explains that “One of the most sustained attacks on the female sentimental novel came from Jane Austen, all of whose works, from the juvenile parodies to the final unfinished *Sanditon*, form part of the debate of sentimentalism. In her novels the clichés of sentimental fiction are overturned:

mothers are vulgar and limited, sentimental friends are a sham, and orphans prove not noble but lower-middle class. Families exist not as images of harmonious society, infused with sentimental female values, but as constricting forces, embarrassments to the few sensible offspring they produce. Heroines do not fight against their fathers to marry beyond their power, but choose as spouses paternal men who have helped bring them up and who are often already within the family" (144).

13. It is also important to note that the gypsy segment is rarely so faithfully recreated as it is here, with the all-important satire of romantic fiction present in the original text preserved for posterity on film. The Glenister-Constanduros version also makes Harriet seem suitably ludicrous during the "attack," in which she trips and hits her head while running from several small children. The tone of the scene in that version is in keeping with the satirical tone of the scene in the novel. Otherwise, in general, the gypsy segment suffers badly in transference from the novel to the screen. Judy Campbell treats the attack seriously, but at least she uses it as an intriguing opportunity to bring Robert Martin back into the spotlight. The McGrath film is noteworthy as being particularly bad at realizing the gypsy segment. It is presented seriously and falls flat; it is most definitely the worst scene in the entire film.
14. Each film has struggled with finding a means of bringing the two characters together dramatically, and all have fallen flat in the attempt. The novel presents their first meeting in a primarily narrated manner. Mrs. Goddard, who forms a part of Mr. Woodhouse's regular whist party along with Mrs. Bates, brings Harriet to Hartfield one evening and Emma is taken with her. It works well enough in the novel, but has proven a difficult scene to realize dramatically on screen. Vincent Tilsley's screenplay skips the meeting and begins the story after they are already friends. The Glenister-Constanduros film has Mrs. Goddard introduce Harriet to Emma in the hallway at Hartfield and the Kraft version has Mrs. Goddard bring Harriet with her to the Weston wedding.
15. And the film, through the use of the "objective" camera, is able to show the audience the disjunction between Emma's perceptions of reality and reality itself quite dramatically. In the book, the narrator serves a similar purpose, often with a humorous and dramatic result. However, Emma's perspective dominates large portions of the novel's narrative, leaving readers less certain of where her ideas end and reality begins than the Lawrence-Davies version would have viewers be.
16. This running joke may not seem funny, but it is laugh-out-loud hilarious by about the mid-point of the novel. (I just wanted to insert a gratuitous opinion here. Thanks for flipping to the back of the book for this. And for reading the book, actually. I hope you are enjoying it.)

17. Most of the other adaptations, like the novel itself, de-emphasize the presence of servants. One notable exception to the rule is the Kraft broadcast featuring Roddy McDowall, which shows servants taking pains to decorate for the Weston wedding and which develops the friendship between Mr. Knightley and the Woodhouse butler, Serle, both of whom enjoy complaining to one another of Miss Woodhouse's excesses. Of course, part of the issue is not whether servants are shown but how they are shown as well. In the Kraft version Serle is a figure of fun, and the other servants are really just window dressing to give the audience a sense of the Woodhouse wealth.

Commenting on the presence of servants in the Glenister-Constanduros version, Monica Lauritzen observes that "servants appear in a number of scenes, where they are not explicitly referred to in the novel. It is possible that he [Constanduros] has introduced this adjustment with a view of making the *milieu* seem as authentic as possible, but it hardly means a violation of Austen's text. It may be assumed, on the contrary, that servants were so much taken for granted among the upper classes at the time that even a scrupulous writer like Jane Austen included references to their existence only as an exception and for specific purposes" (Lauritzen 78).

18. It is important for any adaptation interested in portraying Emma as an imagist to render Jane Fairfax in a starkly realistic and compelling fashion, and the Lawrence-Davies film does just this. It is important because the audience needs to be able to see that the real Jane Fairfax is a far more interesting and loveable woman than the Jane Fairfax that Emma constructs in her mind. While Beckinsale's Emma learns the hard way that she needs to democratize her sensibilities, she also learns that seeing people as they are can be an even more rewarding experience than seeing them as she would prefer them to be.
19. "Actress Lucy Robinson's portrayal of Mrs. Elton with a suggested Somerset accent whose heavy post-vocalic 'r' (perhaps intended to remind viewers of certain American accents) certainly helps establish a growing irritation in the viewer parallel to the same irritation that is amply shown in Kate Beckinsale's portrayal of Emma" (Phillips 2).

Chapter Five

1. Heckerling made these comments during a Harold Lloyd Seminar, which was, at one time, available on-line, but the link no longer functions. The web address used to be <http://www.afionline.org/haroldlloyd/heckerling/script.1.html>.
2. Geoffrey Wagner's other categories of adaptation include the transposition, an adaptation "in which a novel is given directly on the screen, with the minimum of apparent interference" (222) and the commentary, in which the original is

“either purposely or inadvertently altered in some respect” causing “a re-emphasis or re-structure” (223)

3. The entry on *Clueless* in the appendix includes a guide to the *Clueless* characters and the corresponding characters in *Emma* upon whom they are based.
4. Making Cher a high-school student instead of a 21-year-old woman almost seems to necessitate making the film’s Mr. Knightley younger as well. Had Josh retained Knightley’s age while Cher became markedly younger, the film would start to seem more like an adaptation of *Lolita* than of *Emma*.
5. In this manner, both films have an advantage over the earlier, made-for-television British adaptations, which took less pains to make Emma’s thoughts and feelings known to the audience, often resulting in portrayals of Emma that appeared too cold and calculating.
6. In “Emma Becomes Clueless,” Suzanne Ferris writes that, “Cher’s first-person voice-over neatly captures the contradiction between actual events and her perceptions. As a commentary on events, a voice-over is always temporally distinct from the visually realized events, occurring in narrative time necessarily after the events pictured have unfolded. Simultaneously, the voice-over illustrates the disjunction between Cher’s perceptions and reality, and her confidence in her own misguided views of it emphasizes her outspokenness” (124).
7. This moment, like others in the film, is self-referential—it is *Clueless* discussing its own cultural significance as a film adaptation of a classic literary text. Another significant way in which the film discusses its own value as a work of art is through Christian Stovitz, a character who is complex enough to serve multiple functions in the narrative. In one of his many functions in the story, Christian serves as a symbolic vehicle through which previously undervalued products of popular culture might achieve greater status and acclaim. In this fashion, Christian represents one of the film’s arguments in favor of itself; that is to say, his love of revered pop culture of the past offers the promise that, one day, the teenager movie, the comedy film, and the film adaptation of the classic novel, will find greater respect in the eyes of the arbiters of good taste. Denise Fulbrook writes: “Christian and the venerable history he represents is in a sense ‘trash’ culture already redeemed, already ‘classic;’ it is his character who most overtly moves popular culture in the film into the terrain of ‘high’ or ‘classic’ art. To the stylish, Christian is the connoisseur of fashion. His character not only has a passionate knowledge of high art and an awareness of how one could capitalize on art; he loves movies now considered ‘classic’ such as *Spartacus*, clothes that pay tribute to ‘classic’ queer icons and music that identifies him with Billie Holiday, Judy Garland, and Barbara Streisand. Finally, he drives a ‘classic’ convertible and calls Cher from art museums where cartoons hang, framed

behind him. This last scene provides the film with a recognizable script for the movement of popular culture to the hallowed halls of high aestheticism" (198).

8. Some critics have cited Emma's claim to have made the Weston match to be pure hubris on Emma's part, and agree with Mr. Knightley that the claim is unsubstantiated. Certainly, at no point in the novel does either Mr. Weston or Miss Taylor ever offer an opinion on this issue, so the mystery is not resolved by them. However, Denise Kohn has demonstrated how Emma could be seen as being correct in her assertion.
9. Tom Doherty, discussing the often unintentional subtext of the traditional teenage sex comedy, contends that "the lightweight banter and the *Tiger Beat*-puppy love in *Clueless* is not without its darker cultural historical resonance. Since the blithe, orgiastic days of *Risky Business*, sex has become just that. The deep background is AIDS, the horror now nascent in real-life sex. The recreational adolescent fornication celebrated and spied through peepholes in *Animal House*, *Porky's*, *Private School* (1983), *Revenge of the Nerds* (1984), and other exemplars of what William Paul has dubbed the "animal comedy" of the late Seventies/early Eighties now seems less a passage to adulthood than a jump into the fire" (3).

Chapter 6

1. The writings of Sulloway and Johnson are explored in greater detail in Chapter 2.