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**ENCOUNTER AND EPIPHANY:
RECONSTRUCTING LITERARY CONSCIOUSNESS THROUGH FILM ADAPTATION**

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I assert my moral right to be identified as the author of this work.

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Abstract

Many discussions of adaptation continue to be underscored by assumptions of hierarchical relations, with films positioned as colonies serving the sovereignty of literature. But if we understand why and how we tell stories, then we understand why the adaptation process corresponds with and deviates from its source text; we understand how one story produces many. This thesis explores how film adaptation facilitates our understanding of film narrative construction. It does this by considering how, through the important process of retelling, film adaptation plays an instrumental role in the wider endeavour of giving innovative, artistic form to human consciousness through narrative. The transition between literary and filmic character is an opportunity to engage with and explore dimensions of a written text and thus cast new perspectives on narrative through the cinematic unfolding of a character's journey. How film realises a character's internal and external realities also casts an interesting light on the internally conjured world of literature.

These ideas are explored through close analyses of a range of film adaptations of literary texts. Four popular film and TV adaptations of novels by Jane Austen are first discussed as specific instances of how the adaptation process restructures the unfolding of narrative events and how it utilises the multiple signifiers of film to evoke and explore "the self" and the narrative's thematic dimensions in line with the strengths and sensibilities of film. These ideas are then explored in closer detail through more focused discussions of *The Reader* and *An Education*, which are analysed in terms of how they handle climactic narrative events involving encounter and discoveries or realisations which can be read as forms of epiphany. These close readings illustrate how, in conversation with their source texts, films construct scenes to illuminate "the self" of character and to explore the wider, thematic implications of the narrative. *An Education* and *The Reader* exemplify how the adaptation process cinematically restructures the turning points in a character's journey to propel the narrative through character and plot discoveries.

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**“I exist ... as the tension between all my ‘versions’,
for that tension, too (and perhaps that above all) is me.”**

-Václav Havel

**“Our anticipation –
The spectator’s concentration on the tight rope -
was a mixture of rather cruel curiosity and a vague unease.
We felt as if we were seeking to trap this woman,
who faced us alone.”**

-Le Testament Français, Andreï Makine

CHAPTER ONE

Human Consciousness in Narrative Form

"Human time is a storied affair."

-The Stories We Live By Dan P. McAdams

"We dream in narrative, day-dream in narrative, remember, anticipate, hope, despair, believe, doubt, plan, revise, criticize, construct, gossip, learn, hate, and love by narrative.

In order to really live, we make up stories about ourselves and others, about the personal as well as the social past and future."

-Towards a Poetic of Fiction Barbara Hardy

Despite film's duly achieved autonomy as an experimental and critical art form, film adaptations are persistently assessed by how they depict a literary text, rather than how they created a cinematic narrative. In many academic corners and public pockets, the collaborative process of adaptation is deemed somehow an inauthentic form of storytelling. These forums still grapple with the notion that similarities in literary and film narrative form do not result in an identical execution of the same story. This chapter will explore how the perceived authority of literary texts over film is entwined in adaptation discourse and how this affects the criticism, theory and practice of adaptation. Furthermore, this discussion will establish a new approach to adaptation underpinned by a thematic and theoretical concept of encounter and epiphany. Ultimately this chapter will look to place the "fidelity" question in a new light and deconstruct the hierarchical and stagnant views of adaptation's role towards a discourse that expounds the explorative fruits of retelling narrative.

Part of the problem in film adaptation discourse springs from a failure to acknowledge that all narratives, in whatever medium, are a form of adaptation, so that all "source texts" are ultimately also adaptations. This is an important consideration not just because stories are constantly evolving and morphing into others, but also (and more importantly) because as human beings we make sense of ourselves through ongoing reconstructions of adapted narratives. We understand and construct our "selves" in and through constantly evolving processes of storytelling and adaptation.

Storytelling and “the Self”

Storytelling is inextricably linked with human experience. Indeed, the notion that “narrative is a fundamental way that humans make sense of the world” (Bordwell and Thompson 74) has been said in various ways in various fields of enquiry. This shared conclusion is telling. Narrative is a universal centrality evidenced by the regularity with which we use written, aural, oral and visual narratives to transmit our experiences of and to the world.

Several cognitive psychologists have argued that our individual and collective identity is underpinned by a “narrative necessity” (Bruner 4) to depict, learn and share something of our consciousness. Furthermore, not only do we reflect through narrative, but we also think, plan and anticipate, suggesting that it is not solely the subject matter or ideas within our stories that are valued but also the notion of the story itself. As an aesthetic and practical way to contain and assemble whole “selves” and worlds, narrative is omnipresent and a way that we can express ourselves and seek to understand each other.

In *Consciousness and the Novel*, writer and literary critic David Lodge contends that because literature is the richest and most comprehensive record of human consciousness we have, the creation of literary texts recapitulates “the dense specificity of personal experience” (10) which is “always unique, because each of us has a slightly or very different personal history, modifying every new experience we have” (Lodge 10). Yet, the elegant and malleable scope of language is not confined to written mediums: the seemingly boundless body of literature. The joint feat of art and technology in the language of film make it a consummate storytelling medium for depicting the undulations of human experience. Accessible to film is a panoply of resources: literal and metaphorical language, visuals, movement and sound. Film’s narrative strength is largely this: its comprehensiveness. Through their own languages, literary and filmic narratives construct and contribute to exploring and traversing the world of “the self”.

Storytelling is about seizing perspective through language. Lodge refers to Joseph Levine’s paper *Materialism and Qualia: The Explanatory Gap* (1983) to expand on the capacity of language to give voice to human sensations and experiences. According to Levine, *qualia* is a vital concept in consciousness studies concerning the “phenomenological character” (qtd. in Lodge 8) of our experiences. *Qualia* encompasses all things sensory from the scent of cut grass, to the sight of a red evening sky, the sound of a busy street, the feeling of being in water or the taste of salt. Lodge suggests that our most successful attempts to describe *qualia*, or the verbal and non-verbal particularities of experience, have been

through the power of the literary metaphor, primarily poetry and the novel. Yet what of film? The sensory physicality of film accommodates a spectrum of realities and can verbalise *and* visualise the tangible and intangible within the values of film art.

The lingual rendering of *qualia*, or verbal and non-verbal experience, through simile and metaphor is essentially a kind of *matching*, a kind of meta-adaptation. The parallel between the literary translation of *qualia* and film adaptation is striking: rediscovering through retelling. The power of metaphor is “the thrill of recognition” (12) whereby one sensation is invoked to “vividly simulate” (13) and stimulate the essence of something else. Theoretically then, adaptation works similarly to simulate narrative in the language of another medium in order to stimulate fresh perspectives. This is deftly encapsulated in what theorist Linda Hutcheon called adaptation’s “comfort of ritual” and “piquancy of surprise” (4). As a process and a product, adaptation is about engagement and exploration to preserve and produce ideas, experiences and narrative, while innovating new meanings through cinematic voice.

The breadth of possibility in storytelling is as infinite as the breadth of human experience. We are what we communicate and one reading produces many. At the intersection of literary and film narrative, adaptation can facilitate a better understanding of storytelling in both mediums while contributing to our record of human consciousness through its role of recovery and rediscovery. How can we embrace film adaptation as belonging to an independent, valid storytelling medium and yet reap the fruits of an intertextual dialogue between literature and film?

Film and Literature: the Illusory Power of Hierarchy

The constant rivalry between book and film of “which is better?” stems from a perceived inborn hierarchy within the arts and a presumption that “older arts are necessarily better arts” (Stam and Raengo 4). The chief problem with this hierarchy is that it disregards the crucial differences in the narrative make-up of film and literature but informs academic, journalistic and public evaluations of film adaptations and possibly the practice of adaptation itself.

What is the value of hierarchy among the arts? Cross-cultural collaboration, inspiration and imitation are an ingrained and important aspect of creativity, indispensable to the evolution of art and our engagement with it. Andre Bazin, writing ‘In Defence of Mixed Cinema’, points to the historical development of film and its disparate modes of function as an argument against the needless hierarchy:

Cinema developed under sociological conditions very different from those in which the traditional arts exist [...] Technical progress gave way to new expression. (53)

The following chapters will delve into how this technical progress enhances the cinematic portrayal of the individual's experience. Although film's history is not as extensive as other traditional arts, its critical history is expanding rapidly. Bazin sought to deconstruct the hierarchy through the recognition of film as an independent art form while acknowledging the fruits of reciprocity among the arts. The cinema, he argued, could and should use the "formidable resources [...] of neighbouring arts" and "make them its own" because we have a "desire to rediscover them by way of cinema" (70). Adaptation is a confluence of filmic auteurism and literary stimulus to find new narrative perspectives through new narrative dimensions. Many film and adaptation scholars since Bazin have reiterated his progressive insights that "coming after" literature as film does historically and adaptation does by its very nature, "should not mean belated in a [...] negative sense" (Sanders 158). How does the hierarchy between literature and film affect the discourse, theory and to a greater extent, the practice of adaptation?

Film Adaptation Discourse and the 'F' Word

Bazin's understanding of the "arts as reciprocal" (53) suggests a positive omen for the development of adaptation theory in its relative beginnings. However, adaptation scholarship and criticism have not continued with such positive momentum. Since its conception, studies have centered on how "faithful" an adaptation is to its original source text. This debate is only too well known in the field as the issue of "fidelity." Film adaptation is one of the few art forms still entangled in constant comparison and evaluated on how well it deals with its original source text, rather than how it creates art anew.

Moralistic criticism and "fidelity" impedes the advancements to be made in the field of adaptation. The widely held belief among current adaptation scholars is that "the most frequent and [...] most tiresome discussion of adaptation [...] concerns fidelity [...as] here it is assumed that the task of adaptation is the reproduction in cinema of something essential about an original text" (Andrew 100). Yet this stubborn discourse appears to remain the chain around the neck of adaptation despite its impracticality as a method of assessment for films, as evidenced by the amount of dull adaptations that have failed because the filmmakers attempted to replicate the source text (Desmond and Hawkes 2). Literary and film narratologist Seymour Chatman echoes this sentiment, insisting that viewing source texts as "sacrosanct" has given rise to "empty adaptations" (163).

The moralistic, condemnatory descriptions sometimes used formally and informally to discuss adaptation include: “derivative, belated, middlebrow, culturally inferior [...] tampering, interference, violation, betrayal and infidelity” (Hutcheon 2). Even a glance beneath online articles about adaptation will show comments from members of the public regularly involve individuals waxing lyrical about the superiority of the book over the adaptation (even if they have not seen the film or it is yet to be released). Terms synonymous with “plagiarism” are frequently used to describe the process and product of film adaptation. In an online article for *The Observer* (guardian.co.uk 21 Aug 2011), lecturer, author and film journalist Peter Conrad, preempted the 2011 release of director Cary Fukunaga’s adaptation *Jane Eyre* and Andrea Arnold’s adaptation *Wuthering Heights*, asking readers whether new film versions were necessary. Conrad makes a mildly supportive case for screen adaptations and their potential to find new meaning but perpetuates the hierarchy by painting film in a desperate light, broadly concluding that a written text “is more vivid than any cinematic image can hope to be” (guardian.co.uk 21 Aug 2011). A comment left beneath this article is representative of the remarks these discussions invite: “Simple plagiarism. Pathetic...if it’s not a realistic description of the text then why can’t they write their own stuff.”

The criticism surrounding the practice of film adaptation is particularly unusual, as it is not invoked with adaptations and appropriations in other art forms and media. As Hutcheon observes, “Western culture [has a] long and happy history of borrowing [and] sharing stories” (4). Sir John Everett Millais’s imaginative painting of Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* heroine *Ophelia* (1851-1852) is celebrated as a defining piece of the Pre-Raphaelite era. British pop star Kate Bush released a song in 1978 called *Wuthering Heights* after being inspired by Director Michael Fuest’s 1970 film adaptation. Her song features direct quotes from the novel and film and was immensely popular, reaching number 1 in the UK charts. Perfumer Romano Ricci (grandson of *haute couture* designer Nina Ricci) has created a line of boutique perfumes that are modern fragrant interpretations of Shakespeare’s heroine, Juliet. These are popular examples taken from *high and low art* but are all essentially adaptations in that they proffer a new angle of experience through matching. Adaptation and appropriation possibilities are as innumerable as our own points-of-view and stem from our “narrative necessity” (Bruner 4) to experience, tells stories and rediscover them through retelling. Is art without influence even possible? Surely inspiration is the seed of creativity. Indeed pop music covers of old songs or, as Stam suggests, samplings of riffs placed in new contexts, are encouraged and enjoyed. To morph this example of music in to metaphor, author Louis Begley relished the differences the 2002 adaptation of his

novel *About Schmidt* (1996) produced, saying, “I was able to hear [the themes] rather like melodies transposed into a different key” (Hutcheon 10).

Film and adaptation theorists Stam and Raengo pinpoint this moralistic criticism of film adaptation to the aforementioned hierarchy that views adaptation as a “disservice to literature” (3). Furthermore, they propose the possibility that *iconophobia* and *logophilia* pervade the field. Iconophobia, as a fear or aversion to images, is a “source of hostility [that] derives at some deep level from a desire to assert one’s faith, in literature, for example” (3). Logophilia, for all intents and purposes, achieves the same result with “the valorization of the verbal” (6). Whether or not iconophobia and/or logophilia do underpin a general antipathy towards adaptation is not conclusive. Arguably, an iconophobic element exists with literary purists whether consciously or not. Adaptation as a process of visualisation cannot but assume a perspective on a text. Perhaps the experience of seeing a beloved text visualised is a threat to one’s own experience of that text, like someone telling you their experience of the same event was better than your own.

The most obvious flaw with fidelity as a method of assessment, as adaptation theorist Brian McFarlane argues, is that it “depends on a notion of the text as having and rendering up to the reader a single, correct ‘meaning; which the film-maker has either adhered to or in some sense violated or tampered with’ in adaptation” (Aragay, 23). In a similar vein, adaptation theorist Shelley Cobb rather answers the question of “fidelity to what?” (Stam and Raengo 6) with her own question reminding us of the diversity of audiences and interpretations: “Whose memory is worth protecting” (Cobb 31)?

A central challenge to the concept and practice of adaptation derives from what Jerome Bruner calls the “hermeneutic composability” (6) of narrative. According to Bruner, all texts generate an interpretative (hermeneutic) exchange and narration involves the expression as well as the extraction of meaning. Bruner expounds that representing “the self” and experience through narrative requires an interpretative binary of “construction” and “comprehension” (6). He writes:

There is compelling evidence to indicate that narrative comprehension is among the earliest powers of mind to appear in the young child and among the most widely used forms of organizing human experience. (9)

Our stories shape and are shaped by the singularity of “the self”. It follows then, that our *hermeneutic capacity*, for all that it facilitates, prevents a singular reading of events, narrative ones or otherwise. The variety of readings and interpretations available to a given text, the vastness and/or exactness of theme, plot and characterisation, mean that every reader’s imagining or “memory” of that text will differ. But this is a good thing. This is how

adaptation is born. Fidelity or faithfulness in adaptation to the text is thus impossible. Bruner observes, “The best hope of hermeneutic analysis is to provide an intuitively convincing account of the meaning of the text as a whole in the light of the constituent parts that make it up [...This] leads to the dilemma of [how] we try to justify the ‘rightness’ of one reading of a text” (7). The “rightness” of a reading of a text is at the heart of adaptation scholarship in its attempt to propel audiences’ and practitioners’ attitudes beyond viewing film adaptation as a correct or incorrect reading.

Formal and informal discourses feed off each other. McFarlane reflects upon his own encounters with colleagues about adaptation and surmises, “It is as if they want film to be more like literature and are oblivious to what might make film more cinematically exciting” (*The Literature/Film Reader* 3). He continues:

“Fidelity is obviously very desirable in marriage; but with film adaptations I suspect playing around is more effective.” (6)

McFarlane argues that while the film-trained of today are largely “ignorant about literature” (5), he laments that those trained in literature are “far more likely to hold forth about film” as having done literature an ill turn despite their lack of understanding about how storytelling in film works. Certainly, such criticism can “more damagingly [...] set up a sort of Leavisite evaluative judgment, a high culture/popular culture hierarchy, in which film inevitably comes below/behind the literary text” (4). While training in literature equips one with a nuanced understanding of literary narrative construction and discourse it does not follow that this translates to an equivalent understanding of film. McFarlane writes:

My contention is that their training hasn’t taught them to look in film for riches comparable to those they find in literature and that, in consequence, their film-going experience, especially when adaptation is in question, tends to seem thin by comparison. (6)

These conversations are not uncommon and indeed they are valuable if they illuminate the structural approach to narrative in either medium. However, the downside of such conversations, as McFarlane demonstrates, is that they are rarely well balanced. An understanding of storytelling in film would balance the literature/film debate and enable a more receptive approach to adaptation itself. Understanding film narrative construction coalesces with understanding the adaptation process. Ultimately, this enriches the film viewing experience. Certainly this stance has been reiterated by other film and adaptation theorists such as Dudley Andrew who writes, “The study of adaptation is tantamount to the study of cinema as a whole” (100). Stam and Raengo also assert, “The study of adaptation potentially impacts our understanding of all film” (20) and it might be added, given

the binary nature of adaptations studies, it also significantly impacts upon our understanding of literature.

Why we need to talk about fidelity

The rejection of the fidelity paradigm has given rise to the notion that case studies of source texts and their films invite an unproductive comparison that usually results in reaffirming hierarchy; a separation of analysis between literature and film is necessary to assert adaptation's validity and contribution to narrative. Ironically, this latter perspective only serves to perpetuate the attitude that film and literature cannot co-exist as storytelling mediums with curious similarities and compelling differences.

The issue of fidelity appears to be a theoretical gridlock: it is so ingrained in the scholarship, that it still finds tenancy in discussions that renounce it. Stam argues that the recurring "fidelity" discourse is inescapable because it reveals "a grain of experiential truth" (Cobb 32) about storytelling. Regardless of how the two mediums differ or relate, "the fact of adaptation compels the viewer to compare the feeling and emotion the film evokes to those that the novel evokes" (32). The question of fidelity is important to adaptation insofar as it reveals the impossibility of adaptation to produce an exact replica.

One of the first questions a filmmaker/screenwriter will consider at the outset of the film adaptation process is: Which direction will the film take? Surely the issue then, is not that a film adaptation *is* compared with its literary source text but rather *how* film and text are compared and how this will contribute to how we read, view, use and create narrative. We can achieve this constructive comparison through the language we use to discuss adaptation. In this light, the question of fidelity instead becomes a platform from which to acknowledge the differences and the parallels between literature and film and explore the consequences.

Shifting the Discourse/Enriching Adaptation

Having surveyed the questions currently at the fore of adaptation studies to assess its immediate future, adaptation theorist Thomas Leitch concludes, "The most urgent items on the agenda are to shift evaluative problems the field has inherited from literary studies [such as] fidelity, hierarchy [and] canonicity" (11) and to enlarge the field by analysing how adaptations "play" (12) and interact with their source texts.

This thesis is built on the idea of "play" and reciprocity between literature and film as it aims to find ways to compare and talk about adaptation and source texts that do not re-

sult in hierarchical conclusions but rather illuminate and encourage new perspectives, innovation and creativity in cinematic narrative. Book to film analyses are useful as a way to explore filmic interpretations and the “analogous possibilities between the novel and film” (Cobb 34). Shifting the critical discourse towards constructive comparison between text and film will not only encourage a revision of how we view and talk about adaptation but arguably how we produce adaptations. Adaptation invites comparison and such discussions are not detrimental to the field, indeed they are fundamental. How we talk about adaptation and how we view adaptation are reciprocal. The more we understand the nature of storytelling in each medium, the better we can use narrative form to shape and construct something of our human consciousness.

The Thesis Structure: Encounter and Epiphany in the Adaptation Process

This thesis is theoretically and thematically built on the concepts of encounter and epiphany in film adaptation. From a theoretical perspective, the thesis progresses through the following structure: encounter is the meeting of two different narrative mediums in the adaptation process with different discourses, terminology and media; epiphany is the realisation of a narrative which bridges these mediums in a conversational exchange through adaptation and elucidates film language, while rediscovering new perspectives in the light of a new narrative form. From a thematic perspective, the case studies explore narrative turning points involving encounter and discovery and realisation, which can be read as forms of epiphany. These scenes are ripe for analysing as they are frequently re-structured to utilise the strengths of storytelling in film while rediscovering literary consciousness in the cinematic portrayal of a character’s changing “self”.

Adaptation facilitates our understanding of film narrative construction and serves the wider endeavour of contributing to our record of human consciousness through storytelling that preserves and produces different perspectives, different readings. The transition from literary to cinematic character is an opportunity to create a dialogue between visual and written texts and discover new ways of understanding “the self” and the wider dimensions of a narrative. Considering the internal and external realities of character in film also casts an interesting light on the adaptation process as a transition from the internally conjured world of literature to the visual world of film.

Chapter Two will look at shared aspects of narrative construction in film and literature including description, temporal contexts and tense, narration and characterisation. These terms are conventionally associated with literary analysis and criticism whereas film analysis and criticism employs a different terminology that generally focuses on mise-en-

scene, editing and point of view. The different approaches and terminology of analysis and criticism in either medium are indicative of the different media. As has been established, part of what entrenches and perpetuates the hierarchical discourse of film adaptation is the critical and theoretical discourse, which often uses literary terms and concepts to judge the merit of a film adaptation's handling of a literary text. Using such a discourse is restrictive because it comes with the preconceptions of a written medium and places adaptation in a literary paradigm, rather than a filmic one. However, while the realisation of literary and film narrative readily reveals their differences, each medium also has very similar considerations underlying their approach to narrative construction. Therefore, there is binary value in approaching this study using these terms conventionally associated with literary analysis and criticism. Firstly, the similarities between mediums draw a conceptual comparison and secondly, the literary terminology underlines the limitations of the traditional critical discourse of film adaptation and demonstrates the need to consider film and film adaptation using language that takes into account the different factors of working in a technological and visual medium. This thesis will begin from a literary standpoint to explore these limitations in the conventional discourse but then seek to enrich the way we discuss film adaptation by employing the language of film to explore the conceptual parallels between storytelling in written and visual modes. Considering literary and film terminology also helps bridge the connection between book to film analysis in the case studies.

I have chosen aspects that underpin both film and literary narratives, as a way to propose a relationship of exchange by demonstrating how film materialises these aspects of storytelling. These sections are only artificial distinctions but it facilitates a way to consider each dimension in light of how it functions independently so the case studies can illustrate how collectively they interweave to illuminate character.

Chapter Three will focus on adaptations of Jane Austen's novels including Joe Wright's *Pride and Prejudice* (2006), the BBC's *Pride and Prejudice* (1995), Ang Lee's *Sense and Sensibility* (1995) and Sharon Maguire's 2001 adaptation of *Bridget Jones's Diary* (Fielding's original novel is based on *Pride and Prejudice*). As adaptations of popular literary classics, these films have been robustly discussed in formal and informal forums. This chapter will explore the transition to cinematic character through textual analyses that highlight how we come to understand character differently in film and how the modern language of film brings a new dimension to the literary consciousness of these texts.

Chapter Four and Five's case studies of *The Reader* (Daldry 2008) and *An Education* (Scheffig 2009) further explore the construction of a character's internal reality or "self" as a way to engage with and cast new perspectives on the wider implications of narrative. As recent films of modern texts that are also comparatively shorter than Austen's texts, these adaptations are as yet relatively unmapped in critical forums. These case studies will analyse the structural interpretation of scenes that reveal and utilise character as a vehicle for narrative experience. These comprehensive, more structured case studies demonstrate how a functional (technological demands of film) and philosophical (finding new insight and perspective) approach to the adaptation process can reinvigorate narrative for the screen.

Equipped with an understanding of film narrative construction, the case study analyses deliberately deal with adaptations that are "close readings" of their source texts to clearly demonstrate how they engage with the written text while innovating a filmic voice through the strengths and sensibilities of visual storytelling. These case studies all centre on how narrative events that draw upon themes of encounter and epiphany transpire to film's storytelling strengths and in conversation with their source text.

Adaptation is both an independent storytelling medium and a means to rediscover an existing narrative in a different "language." Much like learning a second language helps you understand your mother tongue, analysing a film adaptation in dialogue with its source text enhances our understanding of narrative construction in both mediums. The more we understand about storytelling in each medium, the more enriched our experiences of storytelling can become. Ultimately, if the discourse we use is comparative, critical and receptive to engagement and innovation between mediums, the better we can use adaptation as a means to rediscover, recover and retell.

CHAPTER TWO

Understanding Adaptation through Film Narrative Construction

"The limits of my language are the limits of my world."
-Wittgenstein

This chapter aims to open a dialogue between source text and film, "cinematic structure, its anatomy [and] form" (Cahir 45) through an understanding of narrative construction. To improve how we tell and understand stories through adaptation and let narrative evolve with our evolving "selves", we need to shift the discourse towards one that challenges viewers to be receptive to new ways of creating and understanding narrative.

To harness the potential of adaptation both in theory and practice, the discourse should explore the exchange between literature and film. An awareness of narrative construction equips reader-viewers with the knowledge of not only why the adaptation process makes changes and reinterprets source texts but also why audiences and storytellers should *want* new perspectives through adaptation. Engaging with the "dialectical interplay" (Andrew 100) through adaptation encourages a conversational exchange between literature and film. Without some form of comparison, the important niche of adaptation studies is lost to just either the sole specificity of literary studies or film studies. To view adaptation without such a collaborative framework would be to hamper the development of adaptation theory and practice and reinforce a hierarchical structure between the mediums.

This chapter will consider the following central tenets of narrative construction as they contribute to the portrayal of the individual's experience in film. These tenets underpin the "anatomy" (45) of both literary and film narrative:

- Descriptive Properties and Possibilities
- Time, Tense and Temporality in Narrative
- Narration and Narrative Perspective
- Character: Embodied and Embrained

It is essential to reiterate that these are conventionally literary terms but the concepts that underpin them are shared aspects of storytelling in either medium. Adaptation has traditionally been looked at from a literary platform. Exploring these terms illuminates the conceptual similarities between the mediums but drives towards the need for a way

to talk about adaptation that prioritises the nature of storytelling in film. The case studies will use film terminology to analyse adaptations but it is important that the give and take between the mediums is initially explored to ultimately argue for the fruits of a dialogical exchange in the adaptation process. This thesis will not judge film adaptation by its realisation and translation of literary technique. The emphasis is upon the cinematic exploration of literary consciousness and what this reveals about storytelling in film and how this retelling contributes to the wider endeavour of exploring human consciousness in narrative form.

I have sequenced these four broad dimensions in this way to create a natural progression towards the case study exploring the “selves” in Jane Austen adaptations in Chapter Three, followed by the comprehensive case studies in Chapters Four and Five of the exploration of narrative through “the self” in *The Reader* and *An Education*.

Again, the divisions in this chapter are essentially artificial distinctions. Narrative construction, like any building process, relies on the sagacious assemblage of individual components to create a sound structure. Therefore, it is difficult to discuss these components in isolation from each other, particularly in a multi-register medium like film, as these aspects are interdependent just as much as they are independent. However, understanding their theoretical and technical properties and possibilities is invaluable to understanding why and how the adaptation process, (particularly those involving close readings), can pose a creative, structural and stylistic challenge to filmmakers. But mostly, how the filmmakers can use this process to reinvigorate narrative for the screen.

Theorist Dudley Andrew differentiates between the literary and filmic worlds through how they are constructed:

Generally film is found to work from perception towards signification [...] from the givenness of a world to the meaning of a story cut out of that world [...] Literary fiction works oppositely [it] elaborat[es] a world out of a story. (101)

Narrative construction underpins how narrative is experienced but it can “only ever achieve *verisimilitude*” (Bruner 4). This verisimilitude, though, is a worthy goal. It makes narratives credible, absorbing, memorable and ultimately part of the cultural consciousness. Credibility is possible regardless of what kind of temporal mould or reality the filmic or literary world takes, as narrative truth is judged by verisimilitude of the narrative world (Bruner 6). Furthermore, as this chapter will illustrate and the following case studies will exemplify, in film a character’s “self” and their world are imbued with each other. Film narrative is largely about creating the impression of an existing world, a world that is going on without us. There is a lot at stake then, regardless of how absurd or normal a

premise is, to create a cogent self-containment to a narrative world. Ultimately, the following sections establish how filmmakers can approach these components of storytelling and use them to film's strength to continue the important, evolutionary process of revisiting, revising and retelling.

Descriptive Properties and Possibilities

Through *mise-en-scene* and editing, film has a cornucopia of visual and aural techniques to give sensory nuance to narrative. It is difficult (though necessary) to discuss the notion of description as distinct from other dimensions of narrative construction because descriptive selections determine every stylistic and functional aspect of storytelling in film and literature.

Initially, the import or role of description may seem self-explanatory as it is embedded in how we communicate. What is *not* description? But the conversation is worth having as description through *mise-en-scene*, editing, cinematography and screenwriting determines a film's projection, tone and ultimately the experience of a narrative. Furthermore, descriptive decisions play a significant role in the development and complexion of a story's plot, temporality, narration or narrative voice and characterisation.

This section will focus on a more conceptual approach: a visual medium is inescapably descriptive and this affects the adaptation process and the discourse surrounding film narrative. From an adaptation perspective, it is important to acknowledge film's scope and capacity for description as it recognises the autonomy and power of the medium to create new perspectives, shape and explore narrative anew. Film's multiple registers only expand the possibilities for description and therefore the ways in which adaptation can cinematically rediscover "the self" of a source text and engender new readings. The case studies in the following chapters will consider how the descriptive properties of *mise-en-scene* and editing have engaged and interacted with the literary narrative and shaped the complexion of the film adaptation by fusing form with content.

Literary and Filmic Description

Certainly one of the richest pleasures in art, particularly literature, is the intangibility of the personalised descriptive escape. Description invites interpretation and subtext.

Film adaptations are most commonly contentious for the descriptive perspective on a literary text. One of the most common arguments is that film fills in "too many gaps" (Chatman 161) with the plenitude of aural and visual information not enabling subjective interpretation. At the other extreme, a reaction is that film does not have any capacity for description and is without focus. Yet, curiously, the gaps or the "indeterminacy" (161) of literature is accepted as a convention of the medium.

Theorist Wolfgang Iser insists that, unlike the riches of literary narrative, the imagination is surplus to watching a film because it is without “gaps” (Chatman 161), and is only “physical perception” (161). Chatman deems Iser’s argument “unreasonable” (161), questioning his understanding of film if “visually explicit” equates to “gapless” (161). He refers to Bordwell who asserts that films “do have gaps in narrative” at a “stylistic level” (161) they rely on the cannily created sense of a pre-existing world, the cinematic world opens *in media res*. It must make for a wearisome view of real life to suppose that we all see, interpret and experience identically simply because the world is without “gaps”. If we all know the tree to be there, do we all view it with the same angle, the same mindset, without nuance or focus? How can a visual medium function without imagery?

Iser’s complaint reinforces the hierarchical relationship between literature and film when the interactions between the “perceptual stimuli” of mise-en-scene, editing and sound in film can require as much judicious decoding as a literary text (McFarlane *The Cambridge Companion* 16). However, his oppositions do pose the question as to how we can discuss description in film when the nature of filmic storytelling is that the world is “prepared earlier.”

Critic Claude Ollier maintains that literary “description [...] has no equivalent in the cinema” (Chatman 38). Chatman suggests this impression may have formed because of the “plentitude of the visual image” (38) and responds:

Narrative film keeps characters and props persistently before our eyes and ears with virtually limitless sensory particularity, there seems no *need* for films to describe; it is their nature to show and to show continuously – a cornucopia of visual detail. (38)

Ollier’s definition of description appears to exclude *showing* as a means of describing. The descriptive properties of cinematography, performance, editing and mise-en-scene during production and post-production, effectively shape the depiction of a character’s “self” and tailor the surrounding world to explore the thematic dimensions of a narrative. Chatman asks:

Why should “description” be limited to discrete, discontinuous citations of details in literature [...] cinema’s evocation of details is rich. Every screen “noun” is already by virtue of the medium, totally saturated with visual “adjectives.” (38)

I part somewhat with Chatman’s argument here though, as he states, “Film gives us plentitude without specificity” (38). Yet it is the specificity of film description that has laden film adaptations with so much critical grief. The most common complaint from readers regarding adaptation is that the film will not or did not match the story they envisioned. The plentitude of the cinematic image does not mean that it is not specific, deliberate and

focused. Chatman continues, “Only words can fix description because of the subjectivity in definitions of appearance. One person’s “grossly corpulent” could be another person’s “sort of fat” (38). This argument can also be applied to written narratives. Writers can fix descriptions with words, but this does not ensure that every reader envisages the text the same way. Indubitably, this is why reading is so rewarding; the individual imagination tailors the narrative. This is precisely the challenge of adapting a narrative for the screen: visualisation requires descriptive interpretation, specificity and point-of-view in the mise-en-scene and editing. This has significant bearing on creating the cinematic “self” as it thematically explores narrative.

Pushing the Boundaries of Description

Every element of film has the descriptive potential for literal or metaphorical meaning. The difficulty then, in a discussion of the nature of description in film and literature, is definition.

The directional descriptive choices in mise-en-scene and editing all function to determine and enhance a film’s aesthetic interpretation. As with literature, the descriptive perspective then generates further readings, further descriptions and hopefully, further adaptations. The descriptive scope of film’s multiple registers, are an opportunity to reinvigorate narrative through the visual and aural exploration of character and narrative world.

Description is not bound to the writer whose adjectives mould their subject. Is a writer’s poetry or prose deemed to be more descriptive than the filmmaker’s product because of the consecutive unfolding of how we read? Would we talk about the role of description in film more if the world were not so often so seemingly like our own, an already replete world, sight and sound experienced simultaneously? Perhaps the writer’s vision feels more selective because literary narrative is assembled, line-by-line and description is restricted. Lodge sees linearity as an inherent limitation to portraying the changing “self” in a narrative context. Language is “apprehended [through...] syntactically cumulative meaning lineally, in time” (62). He continues, “When we speak and listen, when we write and read, we are bound to this linear order. But we know intuitively, and cognitive science has confirmed, that consciousness itself is not linear” (62). The following section in this chapter ‘Tense and the Construction of Temporality’ (and eventually the case studies) will demonstrate how film can explore the non-linearity of a character’s consciousness through the editing and mise-en-scene of the surrounding narrative world.

Director Christopher Nolan's *Inception* (2010) is a fascinating example of how film technology can use mise-en-scene and editing to descriptively plunge to the heart of "the self" through the construction of worlds that blur the boundaries between literary and filmic description. *Inception* is based on the premise that our subconscious has its own existence, governed by dreamlike laws and we can exist in this state, constructing a new world to live in. The central characters have developed the ability to enter their own dream-state *and* infiltrate those of others. The "professional" dream architects design the subconscious world. In one scene, a newly recruited architect walks through a subconscious city of Paris, paving it anew with her whimsical description. She pulls in the Parisian buildings on the horizon so that they bend over the city like a roof. She uses a giant mirror as a door, opening a new suburb of the city that reflects the other. The paths are sometimes confusing but the seamless technology makes this phantasmagorical imagery achieve verisimilitude (Bruner 4) within the realms of the narrative.

Although this is not an adaptation, this film is still interesting from a literature to screen perspective, showing how film can engage with literary ideas through film technology. The unexpectedness of the worlds unfolds in the framed mise-en-scene around the character, and are akin to a cinematic visualisation of how literary worlds are built: line-by-line, a slower assemblage, a world coming out of a story rather than the other way around.

Description for Description's Sake

The notion of "descriptive pause" (Chatman 53), like the "loose bits of lyricism" (19) Lodge refers to as innate to literature, is a way for written mediums to explore language without propelling narrative forward. Stam asks, "Is pure description possible in either medium" (40)? This is an interesting question in relation to adaptation as it prompts questions about our propensity to interpret and look for new readings, pattern and meaning as well as illustrating how film is a medium propelled by plot and character discoveries. Considering the comparative time constraints film must overcome, the filmmaker's use of description in mise-en-scene and editing to create pattern and meaning is generally simultaneous with plot action. Furthermore, film is not restricted to solely verbal dimensions as the extensive arsenal of techniques can create multi-layered description in the cinema.

How common are moments within film where the camera takes relief from cinema's relentless narrative drive" (Chatman 53)? Does the camera ever focus on a character's silent impressions, fabric texture or slowly pan the periphery simply so that the viewer might

just *see*? The difficulty in finding such a moment in narrative film speaks volumes about how connotative imagery is. Chatman opines the fashionable departure from establishing shots, as these were an opportunity for pure description. The opening scene of the BBC's screen adaptation of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1996) is a classic establishing shot, opening with a wide, long shot of the imposing Netherfield House in Hertfordshire. While this establishing shot may seem to provide descriptive pause, it also provides the viewer with substantial story information. Bingley and Darcy atop their horses pause to view the house beyond the hills. "It's a fine prospect", says Bingley. Film theorist Ellen Belton suggests that this opening line is a motif that runs throughout *Pride and Prejudice*, the perpetual search for a fine prospect in life (175). This brief interaction between two gentleman characters in an expansive rural setting then, is actually richly descriptive, instantly transporting viewers to the specificity of character, time and place.

These questions trigger interesting ways to think about the expansive scope for descriptive exploration in the adaptation process and thus, how one reading produces many. In Antonioni's *Red Desert* (1964) a couple walk out of frame and the camera "lingers" on a deteriorating building and an antenna tower. Chatman observes that this creates a space in time, what the French have coined *temps mort*: narrative time ceases to exist. He believes this is an example of narrative "pause" because the camera has asserted its "independence of the protagonist's perceptual filter" (38). Yet, what of the crumbling industrial scene? Surely this imagery, evocative for its decay, propels the narrative thematically in some way? Does the lingering camera perhaps suggest a strong cinematic narrator, distinct from its protagonists and if so what does this mean for the commentary on the protagonists' existence in their world?

Chatman proposes that this "pause" is a temporal point of interest as it changes the drive of the film and lets the abstract cinematic narrator hold the reins on description. Jane Campion's *Bright Star* (2009) is a fascinating example of what might be reckoned as cinema with descriptive, *narrative-time* "pause" (Stam 40). This film depicts the tender love affair between the English poet John Keats (Ben Whishaw) and Fanny Brawne (Abbie Cornish). At various moments throughout *Bright Star*, stunning and extended scenes and sounds of nature engage the viewer. Rippling streams, fields of lavender and autumnal woods overwhelm the camera frame in colour and *sometimes*, amidst this are the characters, Keats and Brawne. The correlation Campion makes between Keats's opulent poetry and his surroundings is palpable to the viewer. Alongside the knowledge of Keats's illness, this consuming imagery takes on a heart-rending form. This descriptive mise-en-scene and editing constructs material inspiration for Keats's poetry and fuses his character with

his world. Furthermore, as Lodge illuminated, nature is shown to persist without humanity (19); a cruel message for the likes of Keats who is portrayed as wanting so much to be a part of it.

Descriptive Conclusions

Description is a slippery notion to encapsulate because arguably everything we communicate, in any medium, is descriptive in some form. The purpose of this section has been to illustrate how the “panoply of cinematic techniques further multiples the possibilities” (Stam and Raengo 21) in both interpreting meaning in a source text and extracting further readings from an adaptation. Cinematic description in editing and mise-en-scene plays a defining role in the film’s characterisation and realisation of point-of-view and as the case studies will show, makes a cinematic character inseparable from its world. Considering how description, inescapably connotative, is achieved in film highlights the explorative possibilities for the screenwriter or filmmaker in adaptation seeking to reinvigorate literary narrative through new meanings in the portrayal of a cinematic character’s unfolding experience. Description in film is interpretation and visualisation. Dudley Andrew argues, “Cinema is a medium of excess. Meaning in the cinema comes by way of calculated or ideological limitation of this excess” (75).

This discussion will inform the rest of the chapter on narrative construction in filmic storytelling. The following section on *Time, Tense and Temporality* will integrate these ideas of technological, stylistic and functional descriptive properties alongside extrinsic and intrinsic issues of time in narrative that can complicate and invigorate the adaptation process.

Time, Tense and Temporality in Narrative

Once Upon A Time has launched countless narratives to sail in the imaginations of the receptive individual, eager to be transported in adventure. The crucial aspect about this familiar convention in storytelling traditions is the last word: time. Every narrative suggests a temporality and compelling narratives have a strong sense of passing time to intensify the weight or import of experience against life's "ticking clock". Departing from the storytelling port of *Once Upon A Time*, a narrative can go anywhere. It is a curious dichotomy that the writer of narrative is not bound by time, yet a good narrative also depends upon its structure.

A primary challenge in the initial stages of the adaptation process is that mainstream film has a conventional running time (averaging 120 minutes) compared with the indefinite pages of literature. This accepted convention of film narratives is a relative constraint regardless of the length of the source text as it affects the structural interpretation of film. Furthermore, we experience narrative differently in either medium. We rarely complete a book in one sitting whereas in the cinema, audiences, in most cases experience the story uninterrupted. This conventional running time arguably exists for a variety of reasons, the most prominent of which to do with how we consume films in one sitting and the resources required for film production. Consequently, the adaptation process often necessitates that filmmakers condense narratives, combine or omit characters to focus on the indispensable elements of their particular retelling. This conventional time constraint is still a determining factor in the realisation and progression of a character's journey in film adaptations dealing with relatively short source texts (such as Lynn Barber's autobiographical essay *An Education* to be analysed in a following case study). Whether the adaptation process compresses or expands, how we experience film (continually and in real-time) significantly shapes our experience of the resulting narrative and how we come to understand character.

The conventional time constraint in film production places structural demands on the interior world of the narrative as well as extrinsically, on the real world of film production. Though not often seen in this light, film's comparative time constraint can work to the narrative's advantage. A filmmaker is compelled to propel the narrative, isolating or amplifying those narrative events that incite emotion and captivate the audience. Storytelling in film is largely about creating a kind of Wagnerian journey through manipulating emotion. The impact of real-time unfolding in film as it affects the adaptation process's structural interpretation of a character's journey will be explored in the case studies.

The edited construction of how time passes in film is as important to the development of a compelling story as a time signature is to a music score. Film's capacity to visually collapse and telescope narrative events through varied shot and scene durations fashions the tone of the film's atmosphere and development and the conversation an adaptation has with its source text. The screenwriter and filmmaker shapes the point of view and complexion of a film by prioritising ideas, themes and images through how they manipulate the duration of shots and scenes. How the adaptation process uses editing techniques to collapse and telescope time in narrative turning points will be explored further in the case studies' scenes of encounter, discovery and epiphany.

Jerome Bruner succinctly defines narrative as "an account of events occurring over time" (6). A valuable way to think about narrative time in film, which is not so concerned with "abstract or clock time", is as philosopher Paul Ricoeur described: "human time" (qtd. in Bruner 6). "Human time" conceptualises the significance and "meaning assigned to events within [a narrative's] compass" (6). This is also essentially what the adaptation process involves: a restructured, reinterpretation of those narrative events which best transmit the meaning and experiences of "human time" (6). Narratives achieve their particular flavour through the considered weight of time given to depicting character experience. This facet of storytelling in film is a crucial aspect of this thesis. The case studies will examine how film adaptations create a dialogical exchange between written and visual text through the cinematic portrayal of "human time" (6).

Live in the Now: the Present-Tense/Real-Time of Motion Pictures

One of the first to spearhead the critical discourse between literature and film was George Bluestone. He argued, "The novel has three tenses [and] film has only one" because film is an enacted medium, unfolding in the present tense (Cartmell and Whelehan *Adaptations: from text* 11). Adaptation theorist Imelda Whelehan agrees that a "major distinction between the two forms: [is] there is no past tense in [...] film" (11) because regardless of the narrative's temporal context, a film unfolds in real-time. Like literature's innate linearity, the present-tense/real-time of film is unavoidable and inherent in the medium of *motion* pictures. As it pertains to the transition of cinematic character in the adaptation process, the present-tense/real-time of film significantly affects the structure of scenes and the portrayal of an individual's experience. The adaptation process frequently restructures turning points to utilise the immediacy and undigested feel that comes with the real-time of film, enhancing the experience of a character's changing "self." The case studies will demonstrate this through how differently the same narrative event

transpires in either medium to utilise their respective storytelling strengths. Film narrative frequently restructures these scenes to use a character's internal reality and external reality to illuminate each other and interact. Here, the discussion on tense in narrative construction moves into the realm of how a temporality is realised, how film can bring physicality, a tangibility to time.

Literature and film share an "astonishing fluidity" to "evoke [time and] place" (McFarlane *The Cambridge* 23). Writers of literature have the transitory ease of simply conjugating a verb to present a new tense: a past, present or future timeframe. (Obviously there is more to this to avoid unwanted anachronisms). Film's temporal shifts are not as easily facilitated because the filmic methods for constructing temporality are as various as the techniques available to film and are largely realised through the controlled handling of the *mise-en-scene*. A few notable methods to indicate shifts in time include fades, music, props, subtitles, costume and different narration (voiceover) and even the hue of the camera quality itself can indicate the early technology of a bygone era. Director Thomas Alfredson's film adaptation *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy* (2011) of John le Carré's Cold War espionage novel has an outmoded grain to the tonal quality of the images to technologically convey the feel of the early 1970's period and immerse the audience further into the drama. However, while the multi-registers of film make the process of conveying a temporal context more demanding, again it increases the opportunities for character exploration and new meanings and descriptive perspectives. The following discussion will consider how film can use these different temporal registers to "play" with their narrative's portrayal of the individual's experience.

Editing Time to Illuminate Character Experience

Cinema's multifaceted editing methods have the "potential for non-simultaneity" (Stam and Raengo 20) and a "capacity for mingling apparently contradictory times and temporalities" (20). This capacity facilitates new ways into storytelling and understanding character as films that cleverly manipulate time like *The Hours* (Stephen Daldry 2002) and *Forrest Gump* (Francis Zemeckis 1994) demonstrate. The ever-advancing progress in film technology enables the manipulation of time and space through the construction of the present, past, future, imagined, flashbacks and "flashforwards" which can provide cinematic narrative with indefinite avenues for creative description and materialising the consciousness of character and story.

In Nabokov's *Lolita*, Humbert Humbert "expresses a kind of envy of the cinema" (Stam and Raengo 20) as though he "laments the prodding deliberateness of prose fiction, its

subordination to linear consecution, its congenital incapacity to seize the moment in its multifaceted simultaneity” (20). As an art form, perhaps cinema’s greatest asset is just this: constructing and sharing the seized “moment in its multifaceted simultaneity” (30).

Film narrative construction can not only fashion time and temporality but it can contradict it by using effects or techniques in one temporal setting which reflect another, rather like a deliberate anachronism. Sofia Coppola’s *Marie-Antoinette* (2006) exemplifies how the simultaneity of cinematic effects to do with tense and temporality creates another avenue for the creation and exploration of character in narrative. Most distinctly, the soundtrack was not the orchestral score one might expect of an Eighteenth Century historical narrative. Coppola’s use of modern pop rock throughout the film creates a peculiarly anachronistic and neoteric narrative perspective, changing the way the narrative is experienced. Marie Antoinette was only fifteen when she married Louis XVI, the future king of France. The soundtrack injects a fresh-faced, teenaged and reckless overtone to the narrative, reminding the viewer of just how young the central protagonists are.

The use of diegetic and non-diegetic music as “language tracks” (Stam and Raengo 20) can provide further commentary on a narrative’s temporal context by evoking “all the moods and voices and tenses of verbal or written language” (20). The impact of “language tracks” will be explored in further detail in the case studies, particularly in *An Education* where soundtrack is used to aurally explore temporal context and character as a product of “their time” and the wider implications of narrative.

Timely Conclusions

There is an extensive discussion to be had on how film can actualise and explore a temporal context, manipulate the passing of time and overcome the external pressures of time through the various structural, stylistic and functional techniques in editing and mise-en-scene. The descriptive and technological properties of mise-en-scene and editing that can create, enhance and mingle temporal contexts are an opportunity for filmmakers to innovate new perspectives on character and narrative. The present-tense/real-time of film has a significant impact upon how narrative events unfold in film. This is particularly evident in adaptation where important scenes are frequently restructured to utilise the immediacy and emotional rawness the real time of film brings to narrative turning points. These extrinsic and intrinsic issues of time are what make film a medium driven by character and plot discoveries, not just through what we discover of plot and character but *how* we discover it. This is evident in many film adaptations that protract the unfolding of scenes of encounter and epiphany and explore the immediate emotional consequences of

these narrative events as they impact upon a character and their relationship with others and the world around them.

The avenues for temporal expression available to the cinema can interplay and contradict, “shadow, jostle, undercut, haunt, and revitalize one another” (Stam and Raengo 21). Storytelling is about sharing, shaping and exploring “human time.” Coupled with the careful sensory assemblage of imagery and dialogue, the shaping and signification of a film narrative’s tense and temporality can transform how cinematic character is developed and understood and thus how literary consciousness is imbued in the form and content of narrative. The following sections on narration and characterisation will further explore the techniques available to film to illuminate the particularities of “the self” and cast new perspectives on the “human time” (Bruner 6) of narrative.

Narration and Narrative Perspective: Finding Film's Voice

The question of narration is of import in both literature and film because it defines and transforms the tone, structure and depth of story information, affecting the way we experience and discuss narrative. Once more, it is difficult to discuss these concepts in isolation from other aspects of narrative construction in view of how much these aspects necessarily overlap, interact and collectively create narrative.

From a literature to screen perspective, the question of narration and narrative voice is material to the interpretative direction of a film adaptation and the transition from literary to cinematic character. Narrative voice is a central to literary studies and its cinematic equivalent is point-of-view. This section considers the important differences in emphasis that each of these concepts assume in written and visual storytelling and how acknowledging this is a vital precondition to understanding how either medium fashions and reconstructs narrative.

Furthermore, how film adaptation approaches narration and narrative voice through point-of-view has significant bearing on how an adaptation engages with its source text while exploring its own cinematic voice. A few examples from adaptations will also be cited which succinctly illustrate how an innovative approach to narration and voice can invigorate character for the screen.

Narrator vs. Abstract Narrator

There is ongoing debate about the capacity for narration in film. If a film does not have an explicit narrator in the form of a character, onlooker or voice-over, can it be deemed to have narration? A common argument against adaptation is that a literary text's narrative voice is lost in the process of film adaptation. Chapter Three's textual analysis on *Bridget Jones's Diary* (2001) will demonstrate how narrative voice is not lost in film but rather to be found in different places. To assert film adaptation's validity as a strong, explorative storytelling medium through cinematic character and to consider the practical and philosophical reasons for changes made in the adaptation process, we need to understand how film realises narration through point-of-view.

As a written medium, literature *is* inescapably narrative voice. The narrator generally has a demonstrable first person, second person, third person, third person restricted or omniscient (to name a few) presence. Perhaps it is too self-evident to state but it is worth noting that words are literature's organs and a narrative only breathes in its telling.

A narrative is still being *narrated* regardless of whether it is shown or told. Narratologist Seymour Chatman distinguishes between the modes of narration in literature and film through how an audience experiences the story. Literature is “recounted” and film is “enacted” (109). If narrative tone and atmosphere is achieved in film, surely it has the capacity for narration or a narrative voice?

Considering narration in film as an abstract concept is an accessible way to analyse and discuss how narrative unfolds through these cinematographic techniques. Stam and Raengo describe the “narrator” in film as “not a person or character in the fiction but, rather, the abstract instance or superordinate agency that regulates the spectator’s knowledge” (34). They use the terms “mega-narrator” or “grand imagier” (34) as another effective way to portray the filmic narrator’s abstract stand-in who commands and controls “the various ‘instruments’ of cinematic expression” (34). This orchestral analogy is an apposite metaphor encapsulating how the various layers of cinematic technique and registers constitute a film’s particular *voice*. Conversely, Stam and Raengo cite the argument that the notion of film being able to narrate is “an anthropomorphic fiction” (36). They rebut this, stating, “By this logic novelistic narrators as well offer only a pathetic mimicry of real-life, flesh and blood narrators” (36). Other film theorists, such as Christian Metz, Marie-Laure Ryan and Robert Burgoyne, view film as having an “impersonal” narration (36). However, I find this notional “impersonal narration” too emotionally connotative. “Impersonal” is too often used as synonymous with dispassionate and standoffish, and thus it is a problematic term to describe narration when film is a highly selective and emotionally calculated storytelling medium. Indeed, even when an explicit narrator is present in film narrative, the flexibility of an abstract concept encompasses the mise-en-scene, characterisation and edited product of film’s stylistic and technical storytelling threads that comprise film point of view.

Narration and Portraying the “Self”

On the historical metamorphosis of the literary narrator and its changing relationship to the reader, theorist Norman Friedman cites Joseph Warren Beach who writes:

In a bird’s eye view of the English novel from Fielding to Ford, the one thing that will impress you more than any other is the disappearance of the author. (1160)

The authors Beach refers to are the likes of the once chatty and interrupting Victorian narrators who would intrude on the story, perpetually reminding the reader that the author was the puppeteer pulling the strings behind the narrative. The rise of modern literature saw writers like Woolf, Joyce and Lawrence shift the narrative perspective from the author to one that plunged into its central protagonist’s psychology, often submerging

into streams of consciousness. Readers now gained direct access to characters without the feeling of the authorial proprietor. Friedman writes that this change in perceived control of experience from the author to the character enhanced the “intensity, vividness, and coherence” of the story (1163).

A similar shift in narrative voice occurred in film. In its humble beginnings, early in the Twentieth Century, silent films were often narrated between shots of the actors’ performance. A black screen with large white print would give an excerpt of dialogue or narration commenting on the preceding image. These days, this kind of film is sometimes referred to in parody. The clumsy, slapstick performances accompanied by a few written words projected on the screen and the clicking sound of the film ticking through the projector.

Correspondingly, the shift from modernism to post-modernism meant a change in stylistic values in narrative literature (Lodge 162). The post-modern heirs of the modernist revolution sought something different from their predecessors. As a result there was a distinct departure from the “modernist privileging of depth over surface” (162) to the post-modernist focus on the external world and action rather than feeling. Lodge argues that this was influenced by the advent of the cinema, increasingly popular as a narrative medium and very much “tied with the visible world” (162).

The relatively brief history of the cinema has seen the rapid development of narrative voice in film. The expansive and expedient progress of technology has had an immense impact on the refinement and possibilities available to storytelling in film. As Stanley Donen and Gene Kelly’s 1952 film *Singin’ in the Rain* comically shows, achieving consistent and clear recordings of the actors’ voices with hidden microphones was once a creative act in itself. Technological progress has also enabled better narrative execution. Cinematography is an industry of its own. Graphic effects, soundtrack, dialogue, exacting mise-en-scene and adroit editing have elevated film to accommodate human experience, possible or otherwise. Film technology increases the possibilities for cinematic solutions to narration and from an adaptation perspective, this lends itself to engaging with written texts as muse.

All manner of narrative events are or at least *feel* conceivable in film. The sophistication of technology in film has transformed how audiences come to know characters and engage with the narration and cinematic world. Analogous to the disappearance of the interfering literary narrator, a good film narrative is edited to slip seamlessly between scenes, sounds and characters. Like the Modernists’ freeing turn to characterisation to reach fresh depths

in storytelling, the reaches of film technology enables filmmakers to actualise an innovative projection of “the self” in film. In this way, film adaptation will only continue to contribute towards storytelling in the cinema and the more immense undertaking of constructing and representing new perspectives of human consciousness through narrative.

Materialising Narration and Voice Through Cinematic Character

As has been established, an accessible way to consider narration in film is as an abstract entity: the resulting composition of film’s narrative construction, screenplay, editing and mise-en-scene. Written source texts with strong narrators, narrative voices or character-narrators pose a significant creative question for the adaptation process. The following examples briefly demonstrate how varyingly the adaptation process can cast new perspectives on a source text’s narrative perspective through a cinematic voice and point-of-view. Furthermore, materialising narration or narrative voice in adaptation affects the portrayal and thus the understanding of cinematic character and the wider implications of narrative.

The film adaptation of John Fowles’s novel *The French Lieutenant’s Woman* (Reisz 1981) is pioneering for its innovative approach to adapting a novel with a domineering and intrusive narrator. This adaptation’s narration exemplifies a conversational exchange between source text and film. Fowles’s novel, although published in 1969, imitates the aforementioned “nosey” narrators of the Victorian era, ready to judge and remark upon the characters of his own creation. On a wider level, the relationship between novel and adaptation mimics the literary and cinematic historical shift from explicit narrator to abstract narration that plunges directly into the world of character action as a way of rendering narrative voice. Furthermore, the film’s richly descriptive construction of two different temporal contexts coupled with the impact of film’s real-time/present-tense unfolding which comprises narration, brings together the ideas considered in the preceding sections and looks to the following section on characterisation.

The novel’s interjecting narrator is materialised through a split narrative telling two stories of the on and off-screen love affair between the actors Mike (Jeremy Irons) and Anna (Meryl Streep), who play the unconventional and secret Victorian lovers of Fowles’s novel, Charles Smithson and Sarah Woodruff. The film shifts regularly between the behind the scenes real life of 1981 and the fictional but affecting world of the film’s Victorian context. The binary construction of time in this adaptation is used as a form of commentary and narration as well as characterisation. Aural, oral and visual techniques are used

throughout the film to slip artfully between temporal contexts, such as when a scene opens to the sound of a car or a passing steam train. In the Victorian era, Mike plays Charles Smithson, a gentleman and amateur paleontologist and Anna plays Sarah Woodruff, the mysterious, intelligent heroine, searching for an identity of her own.

The film's two temporal settings of the modern 1980s and the Victorian era alongside each other invoke an inevitable comparison of the changing gender roles, cultural consciousness and opportunities in society. This is an innovative way to explore and engage with the novel's modern narrator who frequently soliloquises about the temporal context of the world his characters live in versus the present day. Sarah Woodruff is misplaced, confused and frustrated by the limited options she has in life, determined by mere facts of birth and gender. Her intelligence and passion for life means she feels bound by the confined, compartmental roles available to Victorian women in the strict conventions and etiquette of the era. As author John Fowles noted, the compelling intrigue of Sarah Woodruff is her timelessness, she is a woman of modern desires and hopes and does not belong in the Victorian era. Through explorative engagement with the text, the film realises the timeless transcendence of Sarah Woodruff's character through the cinematic creation of modern Anna, who, as a young woman, leads a self-determined life that the character she plays, longs for. The tangible representations of time such as costume, make-up and props are vital to this narrative perspective in both eras to bind her to the temporal entrapment of Victorian society and then embody her character with the freedom of the modern era. The adaptation creates a strong dialogue between texts while casting new meanings on the narrative through the modern and clever use of film language in the abstract narration.

Another innovative transition from a bold literary narrator to point of view in film is Stephen Frears's *High Fidelity* (2000), the adaptation of Nick Hornby's novel. The film's central protagonist and narrator, Rob Gordon (John Cusack), speaks openly to the camera about his lists, his love life and his listless present. As a narrative device, Rob Gordon narrating to the camera is effective because it is used consistently throughout the film and visually emboldens his resolute self. Furthermore, it is an innovative filmic approach to a novel with a narrator whose soliloquies are an inseparable part of the novel's form and content.

In a similar vein, though without the narrative impact, Jane Austen's *Persuasion* (Shergold 2007) has the central protagonist Anne Elliot (Sally Hawkins) also confront the camera and her imagined audience beyond the lens. With the intent to shift the narrator role from

Jane Austen to Anne Elliot, this method is comparatively not as persuasive. One suspects it was a narrative technique also employed to modernise the adaptation yet her interaction with the camera is infrequent and sporadic as to appear superfluous to the adaptation's plot. Anne Elliot as a silent, staring kind of narrator does not impart an innovative perspective on her character or the narrative.

While some films intermingle subjective and objective, restricted and unrestricted narration for unconventional effects, "most films take objective narration as a baseline from which [it] may depart in search of subjective depth but to which [...it] will return" (Bordwell and Thompson 21). This is a common pattern of development chiefly because film is a visual medium. The foregoing discussion in 'Descriptive Properties and Possibilities' discerned a central difference between the construction of the literary and filmic worlds as being that the former creates a world out of a story and the latter presents a world and carves a story from within its parameters. It makes sense then that conventional narrative film would use an objective perspective as its opening platform while it fashions a protagonist's subjective journey from this juncture. Film's seamless shifts between objective and subjective perspective enable the simultaneous depiction of character perspective and the wider narrative world. Furthermore, because we come to understand character in film through their actions, reactions *and* interactions, a wider narrative perspective showing how a character is perceived by others, (not only how they perceive themselves) is a vital way into understanding character differently in adaptation.

A film's approach to literary narration or narrative voice through the distribution and development of plot and story information, affects and is affected by issues of time and the descriptive properties of characterisation. The latter in particular has a reciprocating role with narrative point of view. How does the construction and reconstruction of character in adaptation affect the narrative tone, point of view and atmosphere of a story? This will be explored in further detail in the following section on 'Characterisation' and the case studies to follow.

Voicing Conclusions

Writing from a filmmaker's perspective, Director Gaylene Preston contends that the nuance and direction of the literary narrator does exist in film in an equivalent form. She states that narrative voice is not simply about "what to look at but how to look (12). She continues, "A director's vision can give us a look as distinctive as prose style – one that can convey a worldview" (12). Preston believes that compelling narration and/or narrative voice in cinema is primarily about focusing the literal and metaphorical lens of

what is seen and understood by the audience. Just as with literature, the potency of the narrative weakens without such focus.

Viewing narration or narrative in voice in film as an abstract concept caters to narrative point of view and the various technical, stylistic and functional elements that comprise the materialisation of narrative. In a discussion of the modern narrator or narration in film and literature, it must be reiterated that these divides of narrative construction are merely artificial as a way to foster discussion about the different aspects and angles of narrative construction and how this impacts upon the portrayal of “the self”.

Film’s detractors have often argued that it is a medium that cannot achieve worthwhile narrative insight because it is too reliant upon the external world. The external world implies superficiality. Yet this approach disregards the interplay of film’s multiple registers and techniques to shape an idea and our own capacity as viewers to garner pattern and meaning from judicious screenwriting, cinematography, mise-en-scene and editing. The following section on characterisation will tie the foregoing section together to discuss how the external world of a film affects how we come to know the internal reality of central characters.

Character: *Embodied and Embrained*

*“Characters are not born, like people, of woman;
they are born of a situation, a sentence, a metaphor,
containing in a nutshell a basic human possibility.”
-The Unbearable Lightness of Being, Milan Kundera*

*“Not physiognomy alone nor brain alone is worthy for the
Muse, I say the form complete is worthier far.”*

-Walt Whitman

As neuroscientist Antonio Damasio wrote, “The mind is embodied...not just embodied” (qtd. in Lehrer 2). Indeed, this is another important dimension that film adaptation contributes to the construction and chronicling of human consciousness: the sensory embodiment of “the self” and narrative. Not only is character realised differently in literary and film narrative but also readers and viewers understand character differently. The consciousness of a character, of a narrative world is not solely rendered through words but through the valuable insight a character’s actions, interactions and reactions proffer. Realising and understanding character in film involves implication, sensory perception and inference in accordance with the various visual, aural, oral, functional and stylistic signifiers and techniques. Reasserting the connection between action and character, Raymond Durnat wrote of characterisation: “Film’s job is not so much to provide information about the characters’ minds as to communicate their experience”(qtd. in Miller 18). Is conveying the particularities of experience different from or any less valuable or enriching than conveying the mind?

Typical of narrative construction in film, characterisation is the sum of its parts. The narrative world, the diegetic and non-diegetic effects play host to character experience. Because a film narrative presents a world and creates a story within it, narrative context and character are entwined and inform each other. In adaptation, scenes are frequently restructured to reveal “the self” of character and in the process, explore the wider dimensions of narrative. As a result of this, crucial narrative events may unfold differently from their source text to ensure the narrative complexity and impact of the scene’s internal and external reality is portrayed. The critical response to a film’s reinterpretation of characters in this way often overlooks that the adaptation process must change character and the portrayal of their experiences to give them a compelling cinematic existence and to ensure the wider context of the narrative is actualised in a character’s surrounds.

Understanding Character

To illustrate how the reconstruction of narrative events in film adaptations can reveal “the self” of character and become an opportunity for explorative storytelling, we must determine how cinematic character is created. Narrative discourse often veers into a distinction between “character-driven” or “plot-driven” narrative. However, we should be wary of this distinction between character and action because in “sophisticated narratives, action grows out of character and character grows out of action” (Desmond and Hawkes 20). Screenwriter Linda Aronson reiterates this stating, “A character is what it does” (91). The screenwriter’s objective is to “invent and construct a story that will illuminate [...] characters in a way that interests the world” and to create “events that actually demonstrate that character’s personality on the screen” (Aronson 91). This notion of *action is character* is at the core of this thesis. It has manifold value in terms of how character is revealed in film, it is thematically central to the written and visual texts of *The Reader* and *An Education*, and it underpins why we tell stories of our experience: to express who we are.

There continues to be wide-ranging debate on how film develops and conveys the depth of character experience. The discussion is central to film adaptation practice and theory because the construction of character and their surrounding narrative world frequently converge. Considering the transition between literary and cinematic characters can again lead to a territorial medium warfare reinforcing the hierarchical discourse: which medium realised character better? Again, adaptation invites productive comparison between the literary and filmic characters of both narratives if we employ a critically receptive discourse. Desmond and Hawkes differentiate between how personality is revealed in written or visual characters through the “inward” (20) characters of literature and the “outward” (20) characters of film rendered through film’s various signifiers. I hesitate to use the terms *outwardly* and *inwardly* in this way. Given the common argument that film cannot portray a character’s psychology or mentality, the term *outwardly* seems to be too risky, too near awakening this outmoded perception that film narrative can only present a surface or that a surface cannot suggest an interior, or an intangible notion.

A storytelling strength in film is the use of contrasts between descriptive signifiers in the mise-en-scene such as different shades of lighting, sound with imagery that conflicts with or challenges an idea in a scene, or spatial relationships between props, characters and the camera angles which frame these relationships to create a certain dynamic. Contrasts invite comparison and thus provide an immediate commentary or insight on the dimen-

sion of the scene it seeks to illuminate. Spatial relationship are also a vital way that film can plot a character's journey as the pattern of development explored in the Jane Austen case study in Chapter Three will demonstrate. Furthermore, the contrast in the extent to which characters are developed is also an effective narrative device used frequently to create a comparative commentary in film. The case studies will explore how "the self" and depth of personality of a central character as "possess[ing] the multidimensional qualities of actual people"(Desmond and Hawkes 20), is often illuminated through the contrasting *static* function of another character who only represents "a single idea or quality" (20).

Character Consciousness and the Cinematic "Self"

An argument worth voicing for how it questions film's capability to portray human feelings, thought and experience is discussed in Gabriel Miller's book *Screening the Novel – Rediscovered American Fiction in Film* (1981). He controversially argues character in adaptation is a "simplification process" (xiii) because "film is not very successful in dealing either with complex psychological states or with dream or memory, nor can it render thought" (xiii). Miller's argument is not uncommon but it is also symptomatic of a critical era which largely approached adaptation through a literary paradigm rather than a filmic one, let alone one of a dialogical exchange between mediums. Whelehan believes Miller's stance on film's incapacity for symbolism and psychology "demonstrates [...] an ignorance of film narrative strategies and an assumption that [literature] needs no artificial mediation" (*Screen to Text* 3).

Miller reinforces literature's hierarchical privilege over cinema by arguing that the focus of adaptation is the "novelist's art" (xiii). Technology moves quickly and the development of film technology, practice and theory since Miller's time has transformed what film can achieve in and for narrative. Interestingly though, the title of the book itself, *Screening the Novel*, encases one of the most prominent problems with adaptation practice, theory and discourse still today as illustrated in the foregoing discussion in Chapter One. At what point is an adaptation validated as a film rather than a screened novel? I am not set upon deconstructing Miller's argument because it represents a different time in the critical history of adaptation theory but it is interesting as a conversational point. The same year this book was published, the film adaptation of *The French Lieutenant's Woman* was also released. In terms of the relationship between discourse and practice then, Miller's argument is intriguing for how at odds it is with the innovative approach to exploring "the self" and the wider implications of narrative that the adaptation of *The French Lieutenant's Woman* demonstrates. This simple divide between theory and practice shows that to help realise adaptation's potential, our discourse should reflect a close understanding of

film terminology, narrative construction and the adaptations themselves. Miller's argument is worth investigation as it reminds us of the significant development film has made in terms of its ability to represent and reveal human sensibility, "the self" and experience through its multiple registers.

Film conveys the "thoughts and feelings of its characters" (Lodge 72) through the following methods: "dialogue; nonverbal acting – gesture, body, language, facial expressions- [...] by the performers; suggestive imagery in the setting of the action or the way it is lit and photographed [and] music" (72). Lodge argues that while the "combination of all these channels of communication operating together and [...] simultaneously can have a very powerful emotional effect" (72), he persists:

[Film] is not semantically fine-grained [and] it is not capable of the precise descriptions and subtle discriminations of a character's mental life that we find in the classic and modern novel. (72,73)

For all the methods of expression Lodge has just listed as available to film, he rather contradicts himself by suggesting that film is not capable of precision and nuance in description. In adaptation, particularly, a character's "mental life" is necessarily explored and depicted differently from a literary character not least because the tools of expression in film are more varied and more comprehensive. Lodge subjugates the development of character in film compared with literary character asserting, "The subjective inner life of the characters has to be implied rather than explicitly verbalised" (73). Why does it correlate that a narrative which requires its audience to interpret or garner information from implication is less detailed, "fine-grained" and without character complexity? Surely given literature's abundance of modern, naïve or unreliable narrators, these texts too are built on implication and an "inner-life" not "explicitly verbalised" (73) but rather one that must be decoded by the reader? Arguably, the various readings potentially found in a given text illustrate that we can never completely know character; as viewers and readers we will only ever be interpreting. Notwithstanding the writer or filmmaker's portrayal of character, readers and viewers also approach narrative with their own histories and their own points of view, which also taint and affect how characters are realised. In a more balanced approach to the argument, Stam and Raengo argue, "No medium [...] really gives us a direct access to a character, they do give us forms of signification available to that particular medium [such as] live performance in theatre, verbal evocation in the novel and mise-en-scene in film" (21). They describe filmic characters as "at once projected and embodied"(23). They continue:

Although filmic characters in adaptations lose some of the slowly evolving textured verbal complexity developed in a novel, they also gain an automatic "thick-

ness” on the screen through bodily presence, posture, dress and facial expression.
(21)

This “thickness” in itself, generates its own visual and verbal complexity in description of character’s appearance, voice and movement and furthermore, the actors themselves bring new readings to character in their performance.

Embodying Narrative through Character

The recreation of cinematic character experience is a crucial way that adaptation can engage with dimensions of the source text in line with film’s strengths to invigorate narrative through the new perspectives that come with an “embodied” character. With the knowledge of how narrative construction in literary and filmic texts converge and diverge, the case studies demonstrate how film integrates, explores and expands upon the possibilities for cinematic character in adaptation raised in this chapter. While film characters’ thoughts are often not verbalised in the comparative detail of a literary narrative, the structural interpretation of narrative turning points in specific scenes show how character is a vehicle for narrative experience and these recreated experiences are a vehicle to understanding character in a new light.

In *Engaging Characters*, author Murray Smith writes, “Characters are crucial to the rhetorical and aesthetic effects of narrative and performance texts because they engage receivers’ imaginations through...recognition, alignment and allegiance” (Hutcheon 11). “The human subject is central”, he argues, because it represents “psychological development” (11) as the character’s journey cements the dramatic arc of the story.

The following examples have been chosen for their *explorative* and *telescopic* portrayals of character and scene and how they cinematically capture the emotional mentality of the individual in the modern language and real-time discovery of film. This chapter on narrative construction has outlined the functional differences in written and visual storytelling and how these necessitate change to narrative in the adaptation process. This thesis makes a deliberate shift now into practical examples that go beyond explaining why change is inevitable, into proposing why changes in the adaptation process are also desirable and what this reveals about our need to tell stories and tell them again.

CHAPTER THREE

Case Study: The Textual “Selves” in Jane Austen Adaptations

*“...If you please, no reference to examples in books.
Men have had every advantage of us in telling their own story.
Education has been theirs [...] the pen has been in their hands.
I will not allow books to prove anything.”
-Anne Eliot, Persuasion Jane Austen*

*“It was a sweet view – sweet to the eye and the mind.
English verdure, English culture, English comfort,
seen under a sun bright without being oppressive.”
-Emma Jane Austen*

The previous chapter looked at shared components of storytelling in written and visual mediums including the properties and theoretical nature of description in film, temporal context, time and tense, narration and narrative voice and characterisation. Although these are artificial distinctions, they highlight the exchange between written and visual narratives and present different angles on the possibilities of storytelling in film. Actualising these aspects of narrative construction in either medium prompts two quite different discussions because of the nature of an internally conjured world of literature and the technologically, externally conjured world of film. Adaptation facilitates a dialogue between both mediums and understanding the narrative construction of film and literature will improve this dialogue and help deconstruct the hierarchical discourse so entrenched in the criticism of film adaptation.

The case study in this chapter uses textual analyses of Jane Austen adaptations to apply the ideas of narrative construction discussed in Chapter Two and open a critically receptive dialogue that will be the guiding discourse in the structured, thematic analyses of “self” and scene in the case studies on *The Reader* and *An Education*. These analyses employ film terminology in greater depth to demonstrate how an understanding of film language encourages a constructive shift in the analytical and critical discourse of adaptation that both illustrates a conversational exchange between texts and still asserts film’s validity as a storytelling medium.

The primary adaptations I have selected for textual analysis are well known texts all based on a Jane Austen narrative. These film adaptations are: Joe Wright’s 2006 film adaptation *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) and the influential 1995 BBC adaptation of the same novel (screenplay by Andrew Davies), Ang Lee’s 1995 film adaptation of *Sense and Sensi-*

bility (1811) and Sharon Maguire's 2001 film adaptation of Helen Fielding's *Bridget Jones's Diary* (1996), which in its turn is a loose adaptation of Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*.

I have deliberately chosen popular and classic narratives because they have been thoroughly discussed and analysed in formal and informal forums. A kind of hierarchy therefore already exists in these discourses of "which text (written or visual) is better?" The adaptations of these texts are a testament to the ongoing relevance of Austen's narratives and to the cultural value we gain through adaptation.

Screen adaptations of Austen's narratives are generally known for their strong attention to descriptive detail in the ornate houses and costume so crucial to visually creating the divides of wealth and class. One might expect Austen's literature to hold the same descriptive instructions considering how exacting and polished these adaptations are in their descriptive editing and mise-en-scene. Austen's dialogue-centric style is an opportunity for adaptors to interpret and explore the descriptive possibilities particularly in character movement and performance, setting and costume as they envision them unfettered by Austen's own depiction. This case study will look broadly at themes of encounter and epiphany in these adaptations as a means to focus on the portrayal of the changing self of character. Ultimately, encounter and epiphany is also conceptually imbued in how the adaptation process can approach and find new ways into a literary classic and translate it into the modern language of film.

George Bluestone reasons that Austen's work is "adaptable" because her novels possess "the essential ingredients of a movie script" (Belton 175) with a "lack of particularity [and] an absence of metaphorical language" (175). Yet Austen's approach to characterisation and narrative voice convey an impeccably descriptive temporal context. To suggest that Jane Austen and film in general do not employ metaphorical language is to have a narrow view of the forms metaphor takes. Visual metaphor in film is a formidable part of its storytelling repertoire and necessary to suggest an idea beyond the world that is shown. Adaptation as a process of matching, retelling and rediscovery in itself is a metaphor. Austen frequently used symbolic characters to represent the narrow scope of destiny for women and men in Regency England. Needless to say, while her narratives are entertaining for the surface of society they present, her commentary, her figurative projection of society is palpable and has been well researched and considered in literary scholarship. As this section and the following case studies will continue to show, consciousness of "the self" is represented through film's various registers, not solely through the actors. Adaptation is an opportunity to explore new dimensions of established narra-

tive through the creation of cinematic character. Akin to how we often express ourselves using more than our own words in real life, film's capacity to create a sensory spectacle can imbue narrative with the physicality and roundness of emotional experience.

Joe Wright's *Pride and Prejudice* (Working Title Films 2005)

As it revisits and revises Austen's novel, Joe Wright's *Pride and Prejudice* (2005), in conversation with the BBC television adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice* (1996), casts an interesting light on storytelling in film and the role of adaptation as a means to shape new perspective in narrative. The latter has been celebrated for its meticulous handling of the mise-en-scene and Andrew Davies's script that takes its time to explore Regency England and build the tension between Elizabeth and Darcy through a gradual unfolding of their characters and chemistry. Interviewed by adaptation scholars, Deborah Cartmell and Imelda Whelehan, Andrew Davies discusses the joys of adapting Austen's stories:

Everything works and not [...] just the plot [which is] sharp and witty and dramatic, [...] she builds up her drama. She sets up her little jokes and time bombs and big dramatic surprises and then she pays them off at just the right moment [...] like great comedy writers do [...] she makes the adaptor's work very easy and pleasant (*The Cambridge Companion* 244).

The two adaptations are very different in their approach, not least because the BBC version was written for television whereas Wright's adaptation, replete with its contemporary cinematic innovation and compression, is for film. The BBC adaptation is much longer (327 minutes) than Wright's film (127 minutes) accommodating all of Austen's characters and narrative events. Both adaptations use distinctly different artifice to render the complicated alignment between Elizabeth and Darcy. The BBC version employs omniscience in its narration as we see Elizabeth (Jennifer Ehle) and Darcy (Colin Firth) independently. As viewers, we are given ample time to understand these characters and come to know them independently enough that we can see the magnetism between them. Wright's film adaptation is Elizabeth's (Keira Knightly) story. Darcy (Matthew Macfadyen) is rarely seen alone, thus the viewer comes to know Darcy through Elizabeth's encounters with him. Consequently, Darcy's proposal to Elizabeth comes as more of a surprise to the viewer. In a shorter piece which demands stronger emotional undulations, Wright has necessarily created a stronger narrative drive towards these discoveries of character and plot revelations.

In the BBC version, Darcy informs Bingley's haughty sister, Caroline, and Mrs Hurst, that he admires Elizabeth but he does not disclose this in Wright's film. This disclosure is suited to the BBC's adaptation's omniscient narrative perspective and establishes an important character insight to escalate the tension in a narrative that is a much longer jour-

ney. Arguably, Elizabeth and Darcy's eventual declaration of mutual love is more profoundly felt in part due to the strong physical distance between them from the beginning as they "rarely seen in the same shot together" (Belton 175). Their increasingly close proximity in the same frame adds an enjoyable tension to the development in their relationship.

Wright's adaptation feels intended for an audience newer to Jane Austen's story. Of course, just because a film is an adaptation does not mean that every viewer is a reader-viewer. This impression is evidenced through the simpler use of language in the dialogue, the characterisation of Darcy and the choices in setting. While it may just be casting, Wright's Darcy (Matthew Macfadyen) seems to lack the fierce stature that makes his character initially unlikeable and contrast with Elizabeth's vivacity but that ultimately makes his union with Elizabeth more compelling. His character raises an important issue in film adaptation discourse regarding the balance between being receptive to new readings of texts and characters and also being able to critique those readings. Furthermore, the "poorer" rural setting of the Bennet's home (in comparison with the extreme wealth of Darcy, Bingley and Lady Catherine de Bourgh) is much more visually pronounced in Wright's film than Austen's novel and the BBC adaptation suggest. This creates an interesting contrast in narrative perspective not only between texts but also within Wright's narrative world. It is difficult to know whether Wright's visual interpretation of setting is motivated by a need to inform a potentially new audience of the obvious societal differences between Elizabeth and Darcy or whether this is simply his vision. The Bennets' locale needs to be "well-to-do" enough that Mr Bingley and Mr Darcy would keep company with them. The impression the BBC adaptation provides is that the Bennets are part of upper-class English society; their house and grounds are large which, in an unusual turn, makes Darcy's wealth seem more extreme. The functional and stylistic contrasts endure throughout Wright's film, as a cinematic method for narration to immediately invoke comparison between two worlds, giving the viewer ample story information to drive the narrative forward.

Scene: Elizabeth and Darcy Dance at Netherfield Ball

Wright and Davies both utilise the dramatic potential of an early emotional turning point in Austen's novel when Darcy makes an uncharacteristic exception at the Netherfield Ball and dances with Elizabeth. Dances were a rare opportunity for close proximity between men and women, so it makes sense that in narrative "the dance paradigm is a visual equivalent of narration and psychological exploration" (Belton 175).

This encounter is one of the most crucial and cinematically striking scenes in Wright's *Pride and Prejudice* for its visual metaphor and illumination of character through camera techniques and setting. The restrained sensibilities of *good* society, coupled with the combative and stubborn personalities of Elizabeth and Darcy engaged in a ceremonious and delicate dance is an absorbing contradiction of ritual, etiquette and emotion. Surrounded on either side by couples more expressively happy, Darcy and Elizabeth face each other in the middle of the frame. The violin quartet plays a stirring and humourless piece. Out of polite obligation, Elizabeth and Darcy speak politely. The camera follows the increasingly heated dialogue between them as they turn and comment, turn and respond; the physical conversation of dance captures the poignancy of their interaction. When the conversation turns to Darcy's disassociation with Wickham, they pause to confront each other in the middle of the room while others continue dancing around them. A medium close-up frames them standing together, staring intently at each other. Darcy asks Elizabeth what she has discovered of his own character.

Elizabeth: Very little. I hear such different accounts of you as to puzzle me exceedingly

Darcy: I hope to afford you more clarity in the future

(Wright's *Pride and Prejudice* 39:15)¹

They resume their dance but hold their inquisitive gaze on each other. The camera pans around them, creating the dizzying effect of spinning. In the midst of this turn, the room now only shows Elizabeth and Darcy dancing. The clarity Darcy hopes to afford Elizabeth is actualised through their isolation in the empty room. The actors are physically alone in the room but in the context of the narrative, this isolation is purely figurative as a means to penetrate their mutually engaged thoughts and feelings as well as provide a narrative point-of-view on their relationship. The violins are now almost a non-diegetic effect with a higher pitched string added to enhance the friction and intensity of this confrontation. The candlelights flicker in the background, illuminating the ornate walls and reflecting in the evening-filled windows; the setting is geared for romance but charged with a different chemistry. The camera swiftly pans around them giving their movement a gliding, ethereal feel. The harmony in their movement is at odds with their verbal hostility but foreshadows their unity to come. The emptying of the room visually highlights and enhances their absorption in each other and distinguishes them from their peers in their self-determination and quiet shunning of convention. This cinematic effect functions as a psychological exploration of their early dynamic; a conflict between attraction and objection is figuratively portrayed through their movement. As the music ends, so does the spell

¹ Direct dialogue quoted from films will be referenced throughout this thesis by marking the time at which it occurs in the film.

and the room is filled again with their fellow dancers. Elizabeth and Darcy hold each other's gaze as though believing only they occupied the room as only each other occupied their minds.

Scene: Elizabeth learns of Darcy's Interference with Bingley and Jane

In Austen's novel and in the BBC adaptation, Elizabeth is walking with Colonel Fitzwilliam across a park when, as testament to Darcy's good character, he informs her that Darcy recently prevented Bingley from an unbecoming marriage. Colonel Fitzwilliam does not know that the lady in question was Elizabeth's sister, Jane. Elizabeth is distressed at this discovery knowing how much her sister loves Bingley and had hoped for marriage. Furthermore, this had seemed reciprocal. This is a crucial narrative turning point, initially dissolving the hope of a marriage between Jane and Bingley and confusing and complicating the relationship between Elizabeth and Darcy, extending the emotional distance between the pair. This plot revelation and character epiphany unfolds quite differently in Wright's adaptation prompting new ways of exploring character and themes through the visual strength of film. Elizabeth sits in church next door to Colonel Fitzwilliam while Mr Collins delivers a painfully slow and pontificating sermon. The beginning of a rainstorm is heard with grumbings of thunder, ominously timed. The light in the church is dreary and grey, matching the solemnity of the occasion. It is quiet apart from the creaks of a weary parish on wooden seats. A close-up frames the Colonel's side profile as he speaks indifferently of the "imprudent marriage" (01:04:00), while Elizabeth's wide-eyed and hurt expression is in focus. As she absorbs the painful news and its consequences for her family, a point-of-view shot shows her looking through the crowded parish to Darcy, seated quietly among them. The neighbouring worshippers blur in insignificance. A non-diegetic orchestral score plays in crescendo as Elizabeth intensifies her gaze on Darcy. We hear the timely intrusion of Mr Collins's sermon continuing, "Every man that is among us not to think of himself..." (01:05:00). The frame captures a stern Lady Catherine De Bourgh in black garb, sitting behind Darcy. Their spatial relationship is a visual metaphor of society's acceptance of Darcy because of his background, his forebears. The music comes to a climax as Darcy quickly catches Elizabeth's eye and she gasps as the thunder rolls again, closing the scene.

From an adaptation perspective, this is a fascinating scene for its innovative engagement with the source material played out in the real-time strength of cinema. The visual impact of unfolding Elizabeth's discovery in the midst of a crowded church under the pretence of an admonishing God, an admonishing patroness and the destabilizing presence of Darcy is potently immediate. The viewer partakes in the experience of the quiet of the room isolat-

ing and amplifying Elizabeth's harrowing discovery. The individual dealing with epiphany or discovery in the crowd is seen time and time again in film. The drama of the central protagonist's experience is highlighted through the presence of the surrounding normality. Elizabeth's inner turmoil at this epiphany is expressed not only through her performance and her suppression of her feelings, but in the confronting camera angles in the gloomy mise-en-scene. The impending rain metaphorically foreshadows the emotional storm to come.

Joe Wright's *Pride and Prejudice* approaches the literary consciousness of Austen's Elizabeth and narrative world as having a reciprocal relationship with nature. At home in the muddy and bucolic countryside, the cinematography focuses on the rawness of the landscape as Elizabeth lives among it. Seasonally too, the changing weather of the English countryside sentimentally matches the tone of the scene. It rains heavily at the discovery of Bingley and Jane's separation; the sour Lady Catherine De Bourgh reprimands Elizabeth with an ultimatum in the pitch black night; the sun shines softly as Bingley prepares to propose to Jane and the dawn breaks in quiet drama as Elizabeth and Darcy meet in the expanse of the green countryside and decide to never begin a day without each other. The strong relationship between human interaction and setting in this adaptation creates a strong narrative perspective on an important theme in Austen's novels about the import of background and setting as defining and creating who we are. These two scene analyses involving encounter and epiphany succinctly demonstrate how adaptation encourages new perspectives in storytelling and how the discourse that comes with this can be constructive. Wright's film finds a new way to explore and structure "the self" and the wider implications of narrative and although it is a close reading of Austen's original narrative, this retelling still generates new ways of understanding texts, keeping them in the cultural consciousness and creating dialogues between them.

Ang Lee's *Sense & Sensibility* (Columbia Pictures Corporation/Mirage 1995)

Sense and Sensibility (1995) has been critically acclaimed by film and adaptation theorists for its insightful portrayal which “visibly inhabits the heart” (Preston 12) of Austen’s novel. Emma Thompson, who plays the role of Elinor Dashwood, also wrote the screenplay, which is acknowledged by adaptation and film scholars for its visual rejuvenation of character and scene.

The following scene analysis of Elinor’s discovery that Edward Ferrars is engaged to Lucy Steele, exemplifies how the contemporary language of cinema can rediscover literary consciousness of “the self” and scenario through adaptation. As another close reading of its source text, the film’s structural differences of recreating character experience in a new setting, prioritises the strengths of storytelling in film to explore the wider thematic possibilities for narrative. This scene analysis also demonstrates how film and film adaptation are propelled theoretically and thematically through encounter and epiphany. Although this scene’s secret and discovery is at the heart of the story, the difference between how it unfolds in novel and film illustrates how each medium harnesses drama to reveal character, explore the narrative world and engage its audience.

Ever striving to be emotionally even-handed, Elinor Dashwood hides her love for Edward Ferrars by saying she “greatly esteems him” (Austen 23). Their connection is apparent and they share a mutual sensibility. The obstacle keeping Elinor and Edward apart is Edward’s secret four-year engagement to Lucy Steele. Despite not loving her, Edward is bound by his loyal but naïve “understanding” (337) with Lucy, reached when both were much younger. In the novel, as Lucy and Elinor walk alone together, Lucy confides in Elinor about this secret engagement. Lucy Steele’s character is described as superficially “clever” though “ignorant and illiterate [with a] want of delicacy, of rectitude, and integrity of mind” (122). Lucy’s engagement with Edward and her avowal of their mutual love are difficult for Elinor to comprehend. Elinor’s emotions move from incredulity to pain as she realises they love the same Edward Ferrars and this means she will never be with him. Restraining emotion, Elinor struggles inwardly as Lucy cries about the difficulty of distance and secrecy, unaware of how much this affects Elinor. The chapter ends with Elinor relieved to return home without Lucy “at liberty to think and be wretched” (129).

Adaptation theorist Jocelyn Harris writes that adaptations of Jane Austen’s novels often take on a “palimpsestic” nature (44). She refers to Lee’s *Sense and Sensibility* as an example of adaptation which “seem to translate” but are actually layered with “intelligent ex-

pansion" (44). The cinematic portrayal of the youngest Dashwood, Margaret (Emilie François), for example, whose "awkward questions", climbing of trees and fascination with the atlas is "indicative of education, adventure, a new era for women" (44). Harris contends that Emma Thompson's screenplay is "metatextual" for its suggestion that the youngest sister will forge a new direction in life. Thompson has also enlivened the character of Edward Ferrars for the screen. These transitions of literary to cinematic character exemplify how adaptation is propelled by the "epiphany" of realising a new way in storytelling, propelled by plot and character discoveries in the adaptation process and product as filmmakers seek to project new light on "the self" of character. Harris argues we should celebrate adaptation as a means to capture "human nature" and transform it in another language (44).

Austen's description of the upheaval Elinor feels at this discovery illuminates the strength of literature to plunge into and reveal character consciousness. The literary approach immerses the reader into the mind of Elinor in the solitude of a walk. The filmic approach complicates and reveals Elinor's inner turmoil (to the audience) by immersing her in the narrative's busy and emotional societal context.

The scene opens with the Dashwoods and the Palmers in Mrs Jennings's drawing room after dining with her in her palatial home. This is a common scene in Jane Austen's narratives: the drawing room drama where how people occupy their time is indicative of their character. It is raining outside and Marianne (Kate Winslet) sits mournfully at the window: she pines for her love, Willoughby. Mrs Dashwood (Gemma Jones), Mrs Palmer (Imelda Staunton), Mrs Jennings (Elizabeth Spriggs) and Lucy Steele (Imogen Stubbs) have lighthearted banter as they play cards. Mr Palmer (Hugh Laurie) reads the paper, bemused with his company.

Lucy steals a moment with Elinor who is reading on the sofa. A medium long shot frames them seated together. Elinor looks astute poised with her book as Lucy coyly whispers to her. Their conversation is interrupted intermittently by the gossip of Mrs Palmer and Mrs Jennings. The latter appeals to Lucy, "If [Elinor] tells you ought of the famous Mr F, you must pass it on." Mr F clearly denotes to Mr Ferrars, the only detail Mrs Jennings knows of Elinor's love. Lucy and Elinor take "a turn" together to have some privacy, obviously difficult in this setting. As Lucy reveals the details of her engagement to Edward, the camera cuts to a fascinated Mrs Jennings. Shot/reverse shot close-ups between Lucy and Elinor reflect the confidence Lucy has sought in Elinor; the intimacy of the information is represented through the close proximity of space. With quiet passion, Lucy says to Elinor,

“Though you do not know him so well as me, Miss Dashwood, you must have seen [...how] capable [he is] of making a woman sincerely attached to him” (Austen *Sense* 125). The effect of this remark on Elinor is evident yet she remains silent and her eyes are down-cast. The rain can be heard outside. Lucy begins to cry softly and blows her nose with a handkerchief; its delicate embroidery subtly shows the initials E.C.F. Lucy looks knowingly at Elinor, who takes a seat to compose herself.

Lucy Steele: You seem out of sorts Miss Dashwood. Are you quite well?
Elinor: I'm feeling quite well. (*Sense and Sensibility* 1:04:30)

Mrs Jennings strides over in her large finery, “I cannot stand it any longer, I must know what you're saying Lucy” (1:06:04). Lucy pleads urgently with Elinor to not reveal her secret. Elinor breathes heavily and eventually the easily diverted company does not enquire any further.

While this scene visually cannot give the viewer a verbatim commentary of Elinor's emotions, it contributes a new dimension to the narrative in its materialisation of character and time. The setting is already suffused with emotion as Marianne sits alone, broken-hearted and her mother is there, also having lost her husband. The goodwill of Sir John and Mrs Jennings in letting the Dashwoods live in their cottage requires the Dashwoods to be sociable and courteous. Elinor must deal publicly with the discovery that the person she secretly loves is already engaged alongside her other feelings of responsibility to the aforementioned relationships. Furthermore, she is now Lucy's confidante and must feign sympathy for her situation despite her own sadness. Mrs Jennings's character represents the intrigue of wider society and reveals the era's unsuitable social forums to communicate honestly and privately. Elinor's thoughtful silence illuminates her character as guarded and pensive in visual contrast to the surrounding melodramatic characters. It also contrasts with her sister Marianne's emotional transparency, outwardly hurt and visibly dejected when Willoughby left her. Propriety and etiquette conflict visibly in this scene. Elinor's reticence is challenged by Lucy's disclosure and rendered in the pace and rhythm of the camera editing which moves from an impersonal wide shot to the confronting angles of close-ups as we see both Lucy and Elinor in a new light. This movement mimics the shift from ignorance to the quickening heartbeat of personal insight. Through visualisation, this scene projects various commentaries on its characters personalities and relationships in addition to providing a contextual commentary on society. Elinor feels her personal anguish must take a backseat to these other considerations; this in itself illuminates her character's feelings and the nature of their society.

Emma Thompson's performance sensitively balances this weight of disappointment with her need to suppress it. Restructuring this scene to unfold in this open and busy forum, replete with loved ones and gossipers, increases the tension of this encounter with Lucy and her revelation and Elinor's epiphany that her love for Edward is seemingly unrequited.

Again, film uses a variety of cinematic techniques to reconstruct the isolating experience of "the self" and illuminate the emotions of the individual through the unfolding discovery. *Sense and Sensibility* (1995) is an adaptation that contributes to the positive, productive discourse burgeoning in adaptation studies through its dialogical exchange with its source text of retelling a popular narrative with cinematic innovation that is a fresh embodiment of character and theme.

Sharon Maguire's *Bridget Jones's Diary* (Working Title Films 2001)

Bridget Jones's Diary (2001) is a compelling example of how film adaptation can challenge the conventional hierarchy and canonicity of literary discourse and materialise a literary consciousness through film. The filmic *Bridget Jones's Diary* creates a layered, intertextual "self" and challenges our conceptions of classic literature by creating a dialogue between texts in the adaptation process. Maguire's film is intriguing because while it is an adaptation of Helen Fielding's novel, Fielding's plot in turn, is adapted from Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* and makes direct reference to the 1995 BBC adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice* when, as a journalist, Bridget undertakes a story on the actors who played Darcy and Elizabeth, Colin Firth and Jennifer Ehle and their "off-screen romance" (248). This layering is further engendered in the adaptation of *Bridget Jones's Diary* as Mark Darcy is not only a modernised adaptation of Austen's Darcy, but he is also played by Colin Firth (the BBC's Darcy). Furthermore, in a post-modern paradox, the "extra scenes" of *Bridget Jones's Diary* feature an interview between Bridget (Renee Zellweger) and Colin Firth about his role as Darcy. In this instance, she remains in character as Bridget but he is now "playing himself." Her light-hearted questions centering on the BBC adaptation's scene where Darcy jumps into the lake at Pemberley to cool off, create another fold in the evolutionary narratives of the adaptation process. Screenwriter Andrew Davies who innovated this scene in the BBC adaptation said that he initially wrote this as a way to physically explore Darcy's character to show him as "natural man" (Davies 246) by presenting an informal dimension to his character through his ease and contentment at being home. The layers of the written and visual texts of *Pride and Prejudice* imbued in the narrative consciousness of *Bridget Jones's Diary* exemplify the "play" and reciprocity adaptation can bring to storytelling and are indicative of the way retelling enables us to capture literary consciousness in new contexts for new ways to enrich our understanding and enjoyment of narrative. *Bridget Jones's Diary* (2001) is proof of adaptation as a medium to protect and perpetuate storytelling through new, relevant and experimental perspectives. This popular interpretation of Austen in a modern, urban temporal context, using the modern language of cinema is also indicative of the extent to which Jane Austen's narratives have remained timelessly enjoyable.

Helen Fielding's story is bustling with social occasions, phone calls and encounters between "urban family" friends, dalliances, near dalliances and waves of determined feminism soon thwarted by midnight life crises. Undoubtedly due to film's time constraint, the novel has more time to delve into the drama of Bridget's friends' and family's lives whereas the adaptation focuses on scenarios that place Bridget at the centre of situation.

The strong sense of community is still a crucial part of Bridget's filmic narrative even if it takes a secondary role.

Fielding's novel is written in the form of a diary as Bridget begins her new year with the resolve to be honest about her life so she can begin a new socially sophisticated existence. Naturally it follows that Bridget finds herself in situations that indulge her old urges rather than restrains them. The novel's strong narrative voice is facilitated by this diary format of candid chronicling and personal asides as she tries to bridge her hopes with her reality. The constant internal narrator chatter poses a challenge for the adaptation of *Bridget Jones's Diary* but the adaptation triumphs in its layered, cinematic embodiment of Bridget through rich visual and aural approaches to conveying the particularities of her internal and external realities.

Like the novel, this adaptation draws upon the relationships with Daniel Cleaver (Hugh Grant) and Mark Darcy (Colin Firth), and Bridget's (Renee Zellweger) comical and bitter-sweet quest to find personal balance, love and independence. This textual analysis will draw upon the various stylistic and functional threads that engage with its source text but also bring a distinctive cinematic existence to Bridget's "self" and experience. Furthermore, this analysis will explore the interaction between the three texts using a discourse that encourages new readings and retelling. As a vulnerable and feeling character with a sense of humour and a propensity to be caught in confronting situations, the cinematic characterisation of Bridget's "self" is readily illuminated by the sensory physicality of film.

As a film, *Bridget Jones's Diary* is comparatively much more driven by moments of discovery in plot and character. The film frequently uses the narrative device of the notional 'individual in the crowd' visual to isolate and contrast Bridget's unique experience as her epiphany or discovery unfolds in the raw immediacy of film's real-time. The diary in both mediums is an innovative temporal structure to narration, structuring the character's journey. It propels the plot through diarised narrative events and places the narrative within a time frame (one year), thus attributing the story with a sense of passing time in relation to Bridget's changing "self". The adaptation uses various techniques including voice-over to convey Bridget's journalistic entries and externalise her inner banter. Bridget is regularly depicted writing and reading in her diary and in other instances the diary is placed in the frame to reiterate its centrality in the narrative. Mireia Aragay has written extensively about the use of narration in *Bridget Jones's Diary* (2001). She explores the complex nature of this comic and occasionally inconsistent cinematic narrator. Aragay writes:

The spectator is getting accustomed to the arbitrariness of the film's use of the device and enjoys its comic effect: this is an ironic narrator whose colloquial, gossiping, self-deprecating tone will lead viewers not so much through the narrative of events as through the narrative of the self, to which the story is no more than a necessary appendage. (248)

While literary Bridget is consistently narrating, Aragay contends that the inconstant narration from the filmic Bridget is charming but an unsettling departure from form and structure. Aragay writes, "Spectators will only enjoy the comedy if they accept the constant play with and disregard for realistic conventions" (248). This curious critique of the film which does not consider narration or narrative voice in terms of the medium, summons the discussion at the end of Chapter One and the beginning of Chapter Two regarding the need for a discourse in adaptation which draws upon the collective concepts of literature and film but uses film terminology to ensure we consider a film's merits using a film paradigm. It could also be argued that the novel's extensive use of situational dialogue, detailed outlines of encounters and verbatim interactions are unrealistic conventions of diary entries. Yet readers accept this as a convention of style, a necessary artifice of novelistic dialogue fused with a diaristic tone to inject the narrative with the stylistic personality of a journal.

Aragay observes a crucial moment in the film is at a book launch where Bridget stands alone having just given an embarrassingly clumsy and skittish introductory speech in front of a crowd of societal successes. A medium long shot frames her in the crowd, as she stands alone, in contrast to the collar and pearl wearing party, with a drink in one hand and a cigarette in the other. Unaware that while she exhales heavily in disappointment, she looks quietly urbane. Mark Darcy (Colin Firth) gazes at Bridget. He moves to approach her but his adversary, Daniel Cleaver (Hugh Grant) makes it to her first. Mark looks disheartened. Aragay writes:

The moment is thematically and generically relevant because it introduces a desire different from Bridget's and consolidates the film's adherence to the conventions of romantic comedy. One of the central tenets of this genre is the articulation of at least two subjects/objects of desire. (251)

A level of omniscient narration is imperative then, to the cinematic world. To establish romantic hope, a connection among characters must first be established and presenting more than one perspective facilitates this connection through a wider filter of story information. However, I part with Aragay's argument here as she argues:

It is significant that the gradual strengthening of both the role of Mark Darcy and the conventions of romantic comedy with respect to the novel runs parallel to the relative loss of power of the film's narrator, a loss which never happens in the novel...in *Bridget Jones's Diary* a powerful filmic narrator and the fulfilment of erotic desire prove to be incompatible. (252/253)

Aragay's argument essentially rests on the point of view that narration in literature and film are the same thing. This is not the case. This film is a combination of character-narrator and abstract narration. The convenient paradigm of the abstract narrator comprised of cinema's "arsenal of means" (Bazin 53) for storytelling is evident in the variety of ways narration and point of view is manifested in *Bridget Jones's Diary*. Her fluctuating mindset is palpably clear throughout the film and montage helps create the impression of visualised diary entries. The interplay of telling lyrical music, montage and mise-en-scene constructs the film's narrative voice and illuminates Bridget's experience. Innovative visual techniques externalise her mindset such as when Bridget has embarrassed herself in front of her intimidating boss, Daniel (Hugh Grant) and speechless, a handwritten script appears on the screen: "Fuuuuuuuuuck" (10:10) or when happy with her life, the numbered details of Bridget's life (weight, cigarette count etc) appear on a large electronic billboard as she walks through Piccadilly Circus (25:30).

Aragay's argument also proposes that narration is only powerful when the character is also in a position of strength. Bridget's emotionally gruelling experience of losing love twice instigates a shift in tone of the film's narration. While Bridget's voice-over is gradually non-existent, the abstract narration retains a strong hold over the narrative voice of the film. Bridget's character remains the compelling centre of the story but to effectively depict this emotional climax and quarry in the film, a quietening of the character-narrator is necessary. This projection of her changing, withdrawn self is illustrated with more impact through other methods of narration such as the spatial relationship in the mise-en-scene to emphasise her introverted distance, her aloneness. A powerful filmic narrator and the fulfilment of love are compatible in *Bridget Jones's Diary*, as this analysis will continue to show.

The hostile relationship between Mark Darcy and Daniel Cleaver exists because Daniel had an affair with Mark's wife breaking up their marriage. In the novel, Bridget is unsure why these two men do not like each other. Darcy reveals this information to Bridget towards the end of the novel at his parents' lavish Christmas party as he nervously asks her out on a date. The information is rather "by the bye" and only serves to cement the cadish character of Daniel Cleaver and Darcy's justified enmity. Bridget does not dwell on this discovery.

In the film, the screenwriters have utilised this secret, playing it at the centre of the narrative as an opportunity for narrative twists, character development, secrecy, discovery and epiphany. Exploiting Bridget's already ill impression of Mark Darcy, Daniel tells Bridget in

mock solemnity, that Darcy had an affair with his fiancée. This apparent adultery reinforces Bridget's dislike for Darcy. This lie is crucial to the narrative: it prolongs Bridget's relationship with Cleaver, hiding his true nature as well as supplementing his bad character. This secret also presents an obstacle to being with Mark, thus enabling their emotional journey. This character dynamic deliberately mimics the misgivings, lies and deception that Wickham causes between Elizabeth and Darcy in Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*. Once Bridget learns of Daniel's lies, she apologises to Mark.

Mark Darcy: No...it was my wife. My heart. (Maguire *Bridget Jones's Diary* 1:16:13)

Bridget appeals to Mark, saying while he can be "haughty" and should "rethink the length of his sideburns", "you're a nice man and I like you" (1:17:13). This is an effective use of humorous parallelism with the earlier scene where Mark lists trifling concerns about Bridget's family and ineptitude for public speaking before declaring his feelings for her. These revelations also comically parallel with the important episode in *Pride and Prejudice* where Darcy proposes to Elizabeth only after outlining how unfortunate his love is given her inferior status (Austen *Pride* 188).

Shortly after her declaration, the film once more works to compound the individual's experience, manipulating the emotional journey, by restructuring Bridget's epiphany in the thick of the crowd. Bridget's visual isolation conveys the inordinate singularity of her single existence. A long shot shows the room full of "well-to-do" people standing in twos, a circle of marriages and couplings with Bridget in the very distance slightly detached from the crowd. The mise-en-scene grandly indicates through elements such as the guests' clothes, chandeliers and gilded frames of ancestors, the affluence and propriety of the Darcy family. Mark's father announces that Mark is moving with Natasha to New York to be a senior partner in a law firm and adds, "One day this remarkably clever girl is going to be something else in-law as well!" (1:18:35) The camera cuts to the fastidious and unfriendly Natasha, very much the societal asset with her prim and pearled appearance. The string ensemble cheekily play the opening bars of the wedding song and Natasha feigns surprise, "I begged him not to say anything" (1:18:46). The crowd coos in adulation and a close up on Mark shows him hanging his head, subdued. The camera cuts to a close-up of Bridget as the news unfolds, showing her inexplicable disappointment as Mark looks in her direction. The glittering, velvet clad group raise their chutes as Bridget interrupts involuntarily, "No! No!" A long shot from Bridget's perspective places the weight of the room's eyes on her, as she awkwardly attempts another public speech.

Bridget: It's just that it's such a terrible pity...for England...to lose one of our top people...our top person really. (1:19:04)

Mark stares intently at Bridget while Natasha appears ashamed at Bridget's presence and Bridget's parents smile politely. The frame captures the people standing around her confused, visually creating a feeling of enclosure. The relationship between the subjective and objective experience here is a sensory joy of the cinema. The camera frame takes in the enormity of the room, amplifying the pervasive awkward silence. This scene works functionally and stylistically to express the nature of the world Mark belongs to and highlights Bridget's desires. Her physical presence on the outskirts of the party in this scene is figuratively representative of a motif of Bridget unwillingly in the limelight and only ever on the periphery of having what she wants in life. Again, unfolding the individual's moment of discovery in the real-time of film within the crowded room intensifies the moment for Bridget as she balances her emotion with the prevailing etiquette.

The adaptation of *Bridget Jones's Diary* (2001) cleverly engages with the source text's diary format and uses it as a paradigm for its pattern of development. The final scene of *Bridget Jones's Diary* is poignant for its ultimate build up to the long-awaited encounter between Mark Darcy and Bridget. While she is getting changed, Mark disappears from Bridget's home after reading an old but hateful entry about him in her diary. Bridget runs after him, in sneakers, underwear and a cardigan, as the snow falls, along the white evening streets of London (1:26:08). The musical motif of "Isn't No Mountain High Enough" reiterates the thematic focus of *Bridget and Mark*, giving cohesion to her protracted journey towards being with him. A long, high angle shot frames Bridget, flustered, at an intersection unable to see him. The intersection represents her emotional juncture. Mark reenters the frame, walking out of a corner gift-store. "Time to make a new start perhaps", he says revealing a new diary. The diary is a visual emblem of experience and her old diary is her old "self". This creates a cohesive pattern of development for the film that opens and closes with a diary. A song by Van Morrison, 'Someone Like You' begins as reverse mid-shots show Mark and Bridget distanced but facing each other, smiling in relief. The music is perfectly sentimental and again as a languaged track, conveys Bridget's mentality, "I've been searching for a while for someone exactly like you" (1:27:15). Furthermore, I cannot help but think with comic subtlety, it fits the mould of the "easy-listening for over 30s" Bridget so dreads earlier in the film.

People gather, shocked at Bridget's lack of clothing. Mark does not leave Bridget isolated in her boldness (this time) but kisses her. The white expanse of the setting, lit lamplights and the softly swirling snowflakes inject the scene with cinematic romance. Perhaps an ostensibly conventional ending to a romantic comedy but from an adaptation perspective though, this scene is interesting really because it *happens*. The novel, being completely

from Bridget's perspective, is engaging insofar as it tells her personal experiences and only requires her point of view. The reader builds up so much hope for Bridget's quest to find love and happiness throughout the novel that when she does, the feeling of companionship is lost to her flippant voice, whereas the film enables a rounder character experience by including Mark Darcy. The final kiss quenches the anticipated reunion and the audience is able to see that Bridget not only loves but also is loved. Film theorist Mireia Aragay argues, "There is very little romantic hope for a film in which only one point of view and, therefore only one desire predominates" (251).

Throughout the film, wide camera shots have shown Bridget as she walks alone against the grain of the crowd to work or stands alone in a crowded room. The final camera shot draws away from Mark and Bridget to an aerial perspective of them in the street. Bridget has been at the centre of the frame throughout the film and now she stands with Mark to the right side of the frame as silhouettes of couples can be seen walking around them (Maguire *Bridget Jones's Diary* 1:27:59). This image is not only magically aesthetic but the presence of other couples strolling in the evening also shows that Bridget is no longer alone at the centre of her story. She finally shares the image, the experience with someone else.

Bridget Jones Diary (2001) is a superb example of how novel and film adaptation can share a dialogue between narrative and character. The events of each medium feel interchangeable as the novelistic and cinematic "Bridgets" are so well expressed that she rather morphs into one "self". The adaptation is successful in reinvigorating the consciousness of Bridget for the screen. We see her experiences in a new light through a narrative propelled by plot and character discovery and a journey of encounter and epiphany.

Film is a medium driven by discovery both in terms of plot and character. This is particularly true of adaptation as this case study demonstrates; the palimpsestic nature of adaptation as it interprets a text, creates new perspectives, which in turn prompts further readings, further retellings and a dialogue between them. Furthermore, this adaptation demonstrates how the concepts of encounter and epiphany in the adaptation process are an apposite structure to realise new life in narrative as it engages with another. With its multiple registers and sensory signifiers, film can artfully explore the story of the changing "self" through a structured experiential journey underpinned by deliberate emotional undulations.

The following two chapters are comprehensive case studies of *The Reader* and *An Education* that delve further into the adaptation process as it structurally reinterprets narrative turning points to project “the self” and explore the thematic implications of narrative. Ultimately through looking at the various “selves” adapted from Jane Austen texts, this case study illustrated how adaptation is an opportunity to keep narrative in the cultural consciousness. The following case studies will expand upon this by showing conversely how adaptation is an opportunity to give new form to consciousness.

Case Studies Introduction

Encounter and Epiphany in *An Education* and *The Reader*

*“Long may you illumine space...
Roll on, reels of celluloid, as the great earth rolls on!”
-Frank O’Hara To the Film Industry in Crisis*

These case studies will focus on the thematic and theoretical idea of encounter and epiphany in terms of narrative events but also on a wider conceptual level of how adaptation connects with its source text through the language of film to find new meanings and possibilities in storytelling. Analysing how specific scenes transpire from Stephen Daldry’s *The Reader* (2009) and Lone Schefig’s *An Education* (2010) illustrates how the transition from literary to cinematic character is a vehicle for film to illuminate “the self” and cast new perspectives on the peripheral implications of narrative.

I have chosen to focus on these texts ultimately because they were both released at a similar time (2008 and 2009 respectively) and are critically celebrated as films and adaptations. Furthermore, both stories share similar plot and thematic content set in post-war temporal contexts and explore unconventional relationships from a coming-of-age perspective. Each source text is based in memoir (though *The Reader* is fictionalised) and the respective narrators have intelligent, strong and retrospective authorial voices. This poses an interesting challenge to the adaptation process for how film’s various registers and techniques directly and indirectly construct character and furthermore, how the present-tense/real-time of film can transform a retrospective narration into a new way of embodying and understanding character experience.

Though Lynn Barber’s *An Education* and Bernhard Schlink’s *The Reader* are relatively short narratives, the adaptations of these texts are close readings of the narrative events and thus ripe for analysis for how they diverge and converge with their source texts. Lastly, both narratives are enriched by an underlying theme of storytelling. This reconnects the adaptations with the wider framework of this thesis which argues that why and how we retell stories is as important as telling them in the first place.

Chapter Four Case Study:

The Reader

Encounter and Epiphany and the Non-linearity of Human Consciousness

*“What you think isn’t important.
It’s entirely unimportant.
The only thing that matters is what you do.”
-Professor Rohl, *The Reader**

The Reader is a remarkable example of adaptation as a dialogical exchange between written and visual texts to find new cinematic perspectives in narrative. Author Bernhard Schlink said of the adaptation of his novel:

What makes it interesting [...] it’s another piece of art glazed with the same issues and characters [yet it] does something [...] still different. You [...] encounter what you have written in a completely different way.
(*The Reader* DVD interview)

The transition between literary and cinematic character brings a new artistic form to human consciousness, a new way to understand narrative and “the self” of experience through cinematic character. Screenwriter David Hare notes, “Every single thing that is in the film is meant to be there and it’s operating at every level: metaphorical; dramatic; narrative; character. Everything is worked so that you have an achieved work of art” (*The Reader* DVD interview). In conversation with its source text, this case study further examines and illustrates how adaptation frequently restructures how a cinematic character’s journey unfolds to illuminate “the self” and explore the wider implications of narrative. Through turning points in both book and film versions of *The Reader* involving encounter, and epiphany, this case study will analyse how film constructs and creates a dynamic between a character’s internal reality and the narrative context’s external reality.

The Reader, novel and film, tells the story of how fifteen year-old Michael Berg’s chance encounter with a “30-something” woman in Germany in 1958 changes his life forever. Feverishly unwell with the onset of scarlet fever (in the novel it is hepatitis), Michael crumbles in the street outside Hanna Schmitz’s home. She comes to his aid and helps him return home safely. Having regained his health months later, Michael returns to thank Hanna with flowers and it is then that their passionate and unconventional love affair begins. Michael and Hanna’s affair is a synthesis of love and literature. At Hanna’s request, Michael reads to her from the novels and poetry he studies at school. Hanna’s inconstant temperament undulates between nurturing, brusque and vulnerable. She is at once a cu-

rious tension between physically communicative and emotionally detached. She hides a secret about herself and her past. Her sudden disappearance abruptly ends their relationship but not their story. Years on as a law student observing a trial for Nazi war crimes, Michael is reunited with Hanna who is on trial for her involvement as an SS guard. His realisation of Hanna's illiteracy and her refusal to reveal this, confronts Michael with a moral dilemma of whether to divulge the information that could change the outcome of the trial. His discovery of Hanna's past reawakens in Michael the intensity of his affair with Hanna and a renewed conflict of morality not solely for keeping her illiteracy secret, but for having loved a criminal.

Through Michael and Hanna's relationship, Schlink's fictionalised memoir richly evokes the friction between the actions of one generation and the inherited guilt of the next. As screenwriter David Hare observed, "It's about the question of how do you live in the shadow of one of the greatest crimes in human history?" (*The Reader* DVD interview). In both novel and adaptation, the narrative deftly explores themes of illiteracy, love, loss, storytelling, society, law, morality and the confronting and reflexive questions of self-determination and guilt. The adaptation is a perceptive cinematic interpretation of this story and explores and uncovers new perspectives on the aforementioned themes sensitively and artfully. The film narrative depicts Michael Berg as a grown man (Ralph Fiennes) struggling to connect emotionally with others and with life, since his encounter as a young man (David Kross) with Hanna Schmitz (Kate Winslet). His preoccupation with this experience is constructed through a split narrative, depicting his relatively solitary present life with the intermittent reflections upon his encounter with Hanna and the ensuing journey.

The novelistic Michael Berg says he is writing his story because he has "made peace with it" (Schlink 215) and the version we are reading is the one that "no longer makes [him] sad" but the one he feels is "true" (215). This is an interesting final disclaimer to the novel because the narrator's allusion to the process of writing and rewriting feeds into the notion of adaptation, of an evolving narrative with new perspectives, prioritized ideas, and insight enabled by time. Michael writes:

The geological layers of our lives rest so tightly one on top of the other that we always come up against earlier events in later ones, not as matter that has been fully formed and pushed aside, but absolutely present and alive. (Schlink 216)

This analogy parallels so intimately with the split narrative construction of the adaptation, which visually entwines his past and present in the vivid, real-time of film. The adaptation is a compelling visual interpretation of the non-linearity of human consciousness.

The following analyses are shared scenes and dimensions of both written and visual texts but how they unfold in film is of interest for what it reveals about the transition and construction of attributing character with a cinematic existence and the role of adaptation in illuminating “the self.”

Scene: Introducing Michael Berg

The Reader opens with an orchestral refrain as ‘1995’ appears on the screen. The opening image shows a hardboiled egg, being placed in its cup. Already used breakfast dishes are shown in the sink. Our central character, we quickly learn, eats alone. He places the egg in the middle of a neat table setting. The crisp sounds of silver on porcelain echo in the kitchen; this is a large house, or perhaps, empty. The coffee is poured and placed on a desk beside an open laptop; technology illustrates the modern present. Michael’s actions are tidy and systematic. We hear a woman’s voice, “You didn’t wake me.” A medium close up shows Michael, a tall, academic looking man with a vast bookshelf behind him. He wears a shirt, tie and braces. The mise-en-scene of the apartment is spacious and white, replete with the paraphernalia of modern living.

Woman: Does any woman ever stay long enough to find out what the hell goes on in your head? (Daldry’s *The Reader* 1:18)

Her nonchalant pose as she leans over the wide bench contrasts with his straight posture. Michael remains speechless, slightly affronted by her openness.

Woman: What are you doing tonight?
Michael: I’m seeing my daughter. (1:25)

Michael’s physical reserve already reveals his emotional one.

Woman: You’ve kept very quiet about her.
Michael: [...] Did you say tea? (1:28)

We are not told this woman’s name because she represents another baseless relationship. As she leaves, Michael smiles politely from his hallway and to the right of the frame, a slither of a bookshelf is seen.

Michael stands in the doorway of his bedroom, unimpressed. The camera looks back at him from the perspective of his unmade bed. This parallels a similar shot later in the film when as a young man he first enters Hanna’s Schmitz’s old and functional flat. He looks at her unmade bed. It seems to say something intriguing about her character. Upon a second viewing of the film, Michael’s impression of his own unmade bed now represents a messy life.

A close up of Michael’s side profile shows him staring intently out the window at a passing train and then beyond it. Its screeching sound morphs with the next shot and image, as a

tram rolls by: its window frames the shot. A teenage boy looks out, enquiringly, seemingly back at Michael. The window reflects winter: rainy and grey. Other figures can be seen in the tram but only the young man's face is in focus as he confronts the viewer until the tram is out of sight. A quick shot back to Michael in the present and he bows his head: he has been seen. There is something persistently though gently desolate about his expression as he looks out the window at his former self. The novelistic Michael Berg writes of his youthful self:

There was so much energy in me [...] such anticipation [...] is that what makes me sad? The eagerness and belief that filled me then [...] from life that life could never fulfil? [...] beautiful memories shatter in hindsight. (Schlink 36, 37)

Ralph Fiennes's arresting performance as the older Michael Berg captures this lost energy, a mind living in hindsight. The novel's description of his old self and the cinematic Michael exemplifies how each medium enlightens the other. The old hope Michael embodies is a prepossessing trait of both his literary and filmic self. As an audience we just come to the same conclusion differently.

This opening scene is a telling encounter between the different "selves" of Michael, both in the company of others and alone, but it is also an important first encounter between Michael and the viewers. From the outset, *The Reader* is immersed in complex descriptive story information. Michael's character is a conflicting binary of appearance and reality and the film narrative immediately explores this through the split narrative of Michael's internal and external reality. The mise-en-scene suggests an affluent and academic lifestyle, a monochromatic world of routine and cleanliness. This veneer does not prompt questions of Michael's life. His apartment is without any trimmings of family or informality. His emotional reticence is evident through his pensive gaze. He is preoccupied with "the self" of his past experiences, which in turn, scrutinize him in the present. The recurring image of the train has innumerable projections as a multi-faceted metaphor. Its very sound draws Michael in to the past. As a visual and aural emblem it reminds Michael of that pivotal day we have just fleetingly seen, important also because Hanna Schmitz was a tram conductor and it also represents Michael's journey, the quickness of time. Its recurrence shows Michael's past is never far from his mind.

Scene: Conflating Memory and Reality

A medium close-up of a young Michael shows him sitting thoughtfully with a soft smile. Only the sound of eating is heard. A cut to an extreme close-up of his father's mouth slurping on soup and then a reverse cut back to Michael, shifting in his seat unsettled. A similar close-up of his mother shows her having soup but looking skeptically at Michael.

These two shots immediately characterise the indifferent father and the concerned mother. A return to a close-up of Michael and his own thoughts are visualised: he and Hanna are making love at her flat. Back to the present, the camera cuts to a close-up of his brother eating. These close-ups are unsightly and confronting. The details of mouth and involuntary sounds of eating make a vivid coupling with his thoughts. Point of view shots show how vigilant Michael is of detail: the reality and the memory as lucid as the other.

The typical domesticity of the family dinner starkly contrasts with the private realm of David's thoughts and makes the secrecy of his encounter with Hanna seem to teeter into the public forum. Again the internal and external realities are constructed alongside each other to illuminate the nature of each experience. The sound of intense breathing that accompanies these images, gives a volume to his thoughts, almost as though his family might hear them too. As the family chew, Michael chews over his thoughts. The unexpectedness of the immense physicality of his encounter with Hanna is felt more acutely, revealed through the family's aloof dynamic and routine dinner. This scene reveals a loss of innocence for Michael, a new desire to be away from the auspices of home.

Michael: Dad, I've decided, I want to go back to school tomorrow.
(*The Reader* 16:20)

In Schlink's novel, this scene depicts him thinking of his family more sympathetically than they are portrayed in this film. He writes:

I was still there and I was already gone. I was homesick for my mother and father and my brother and sisters, and I longed to be with the woman. (Schlink 29)

The silence in the room represents the lack of affection in the family (despite the attempts of his mother) in the father's presence. The distance between Michael and his father will be explored further in the chapter.

This scene propels the narrative forward, shifting the story between Michael and his family and the burgeoning story of Michael and Hanna. His preoccupation with this new experience is an epiphany for Michael, which makes him see and feel differently. This is indicated through the changing rhythm of camera cuts and the magnified detail of shot duration and by placing the unfamiliar alongside the familiar. His desire to return to school after recovering from scarlet fever is indicative of his new "manliness", his 'coming-of-age' change. The real-time of film recreates his memory with the drama and freshness of the present.

Scene: Michael and Hanna's Literary Escape

Film's artful capacity to construct, slip between and mould contextual temporalities is commonly realised through montage and brings new intensity and pace to narra-

tive. This cinematographic technique propels narrative by compressing and collapsing time through a series of edited, assembled images, usually focusing on a character and their emotional and physical progression or “human time” (Bruner 6). The disparate images can acquire a narrative logic or provide cohesion to a character’s journey through various cinematic means.

Michael and Hanna’s developing relationship is connected in montage showing their journey through literature together as Michael reads aloud. An orchestral score meanders throughout these scenes, binding their pattern of development. As a creative device, montage overcomes the time constraints of film and yet still provides depth of character garnered by this artificial weight of passing time. Michael’s growing confidence is evident through the various scenes of his nuanced voice as he reads from literary classics. Michael’s enjoyment of storytelling and Hanna’s outward emotional vulnerability to hearing these stories is illuminated through these scenes. This thesis will continue to explore how significantly setting, lighting and space are used in *The Reader* to create environments that represent the characters’ psychological space. In this montage for example, the use of summery shafts of light coming through the thin pink curtains of Hanna’s flat, lend this montage a “rose-tinted” romantic hue. As Hanna discovers and is infatuated with a new world in these stories, Michael discovers a new world with Hanna.

The scope of emotional landscapes these narratives traverse personalises Michael and Hanna’s relationship. This montage is a cinematic approach to propelling time and unveiling Michael and Hanna’s individuality and their growing ease and comfort with each other. It also shows how storytelling facilitates or perhaps *is* their connection. This adaptation embodies and discovers new ways to understand narrative through cinematic character as the audience comes to know Hanna through her body language and interactions with Michael, not only through Michael’s novelistic account. Furthermore, we come to understand Michael’s early impressions of Hanna and thus something of his own “self”. On a cynical level, this montage could also suggest their connection is at this moment only built on the artifice of emotion in stories.

The German title of the novel *The Reader* is *Der Vorleser* that more accurately denotes to “the out-loud reader.” The adaptation then fulfils this element of the source text through sound and performance, and uses it as a means to further explore literary consciousness and “the self” of the central characters. This reinforces the dialogue between film and novel, reiterating adaptation as explorative, complementary storytelling through a filmic voice.

Scene: Michael Seeks New Stories

A further example of how film and literature can converse through the new perspectives of adaptation is demonstrated through another montage in *The Reader* when Michael seeks adventure with Hanna on a bicycling holiday. The non-diegetic orchestral score and Michael's voice-over cohesively connect the imagery as he reads a love poem by Goethe. In Schlink's novel, Michael recalls reading poetry to Hanna but as readers we are not privy to this poetry. The use of a poem as a voice-over in the film then, is an explorative and innovative dimension of the narrative that adaptation can exercise in its construction of the cinematic character. The stylistic and functional techniques of a poem and layered cinematic registers in the montage reveal Michael's changing "self", his deepening love while propelling the narrative.

A medium long shot frames Michael sitting at his bedroom desk with a magnifying glass, as he arranges his stamp collection. A close-up shows him smiling at its preservation. The film uses his collected stamps, books, lists, letters and memories to create a visual thematic motif of collecting and recording. His precision with his stamp collection visually characterises Michael's considered and conscientious nature but it also visually constructs and explores the narrative's temporal context. Each line of stamps is placed beside a year date. Michael turns back the page and in the middle of the frame is the year 1941. Beside this year are a few stamps imprinted with the Nazi swastika. The brief camera duration on this succinctly shows that Michael is part of the post-war generation, as well as foreshadowing his encounter with a member of the Nazi regime. Michael's voice-over narrating Goethe's love poem begins:

I'm not frightened; I'm not frightened of anything.
The more I suffer, the more I love. (29:20)

The camera cuts to Michael bartering with a shop retailer about the value of his stamp collection; Michael's encounter shows that he sells his stamp collection for less than it is worth. The love poem drowns out this disappointment, symbolic of his overriding endeavour. His voice over continues:

Danger will only increase my love.
It will sharpen it. It will give it spice.
I will be the only angel you need (29:32)

A long shot shows Michael leaving the store. The mise-en-scene is temporally descriptive. Two old bikes rest against a wall, foretelling the journey to come. The enclosed, weary setting is composed of the dark colours of the brick wall buildings, a rained on road, grey sky and passing cars. Michael's movement reveals the freedom his money enables. The voice over continues:

You will leave life even more beautiful than you entered it.
Heaven will take you back and look at you and say,
Only one thing can make a soul complete (29:43)

Michael runs among the cars, towards the foreground of the scene, laughing. As he exits to the left of the frame, the next image connects his movement as he re-enters the frame, biking in the country. This transition creates a steady pace, which matches the determined tone of the poem. The voice over concludes:

And that thing is love. (29:52)

The “heavenly” imagery of the poem coalesces with the literal imagery of the beautiful expanse. A long shot captures Michael and Hanna riding along the winding road through yellow fields, with the distant hills and trees in the background and a sweeping sky ahead. As the poem’s speaker anticipates a different world, so too does the montage coalesce with this epiphany and expand into a new, visually contrasting world. Michael’s happiness is externalised in the warmth and openness of the setting.

The orchestral music swells and we hear Michael and Hanna laughing as they ride. A medium close up shows Hanna from Michael’s perspective riding in front, wearing a summer dress that billows as she rides. She turns to look at Michael. This image is interesting as an almost direct visual reference to the novelistic Michael’s memories of Hanna. In the novel, Michael recalls memories of Hanna that he can “project” on a “mental screen” (Schlink 60):

One is Hanna putting on her stockings in the kitchen. Another is Hanna standing in front of the bath holding the towel in her out-stretched arms. Another is Hanna riding her bike with her skirt blowing in her slipstream. (Schlink 60)

These cinematic memories are all in the adaptation and reiterate the literary and visual exchange possible between both narrative mediums. The adaptation brings a new cinematic perspective to Michael’s “self” by actualising his eloquent memory. These scenes are intriguing because they arguably have a kind of “descriptive pause” (Chatman 38). As viewers, we understand through the focused framing of this shot and the close-up of Michael’s joy in what he sees, that this is an indelible image for him.

In a primarily visual medium, strong characterisation depends on effective use of setting and mise-en-scene. Unlike the novel, the filmic Michael’s relationship with Hanna only exists outside the confines of his home. This neatly demarcates the differences and visual signification of each setting. It compartmentalises the facets of his normal home life, from the escapism of his affair with Hanna. When Hanna disappears, it is her flat he mourns in, alone. He does not want to go home; Hanna is not part of his home.

The montage demonstrates how film can externalise the emotions and personalities of characters through setting, performance, music, camera editing and sound. The narration of the poem alongside the montage works stylistically and functionally to use the revelation of Michael's "self" (his interests, his new feelings) as a means to engage with the source text, explore the wider narrative world and propel the narrative's action. Compared with the previous montage that involved figurative travel, these scenes accompany their literal travel. In both mediums, Michael is motivated by love into action but the filmic interpretation injects the story with a new rhythm and invites the viewer into the personal space of his mind. As an opportunity for "zoomed in" and explorative storytelling, the projection of filmic Michael is imbued in every aural, oral and visual element.

Scene: Adaptation as a Challenge to Feel Differently

In *The Reader*, the filmmakers use the novel's bicycling holiday as an opportunity to construct narrative events that develop and illuminate "the self" of cinematic character and explore the wider implications of narrative. In the novel, Michael reflects fondly on this holiday, aside from an argument they had whilst on their trip where Hanna slapped him across the face with her thin leather belt. In the novel, this is one of her first irrational reactions, which suggests she has a secret. We do not know yet about her illiteracy. Michael writes:

I would like to report on our happiness. The fight made our relationship more intimate. I had seen her crying. The Hanna who could cry was closer to me than the Hanna who was only strong. She began to show a soft side that I had never seen before. (Schlink 55)

The adaptation explores this happiness on the bicycling holiday by reconstructing how Michael experiences Hanna's "soft side" (55). The film omits Hanna's physical violence. Arguably, it would be too potently visual in film. The filmmakers want to create a character who is ordinary in many respects but who polarises viewers and the brutality of this encounter might override any scenes depicting her warmth. Furthermore, Hanna's rage might reveal her secret too soon. Michael and Hanna's secret escape together stands out in this film for its distinctive editing and mise-en-scene, which lends these scenes a *golden era-feel* to their story. These scenes use the external reality of the literal outdoors to metaphorically explore Michael's feeling of an increasing openness and closeness between them.

Hanna's lifelong trial to hide her illiteracy from others predetermines every aspect of her life. The strain of keeping this secret, particularly from Michael, means she is often elusive, temperamental and frequently guileless. Her job as a uniformed tram conductor does not compromise this secret, cloaking her inability to read while she gives and takes or-

ders. Hanna's verbally uncommunicative personality is compelling in film because of her emotionally responsive personality. The adaptation explores the novel's questions of Hanna through the engaging visualisation of a secretive and visceral character. The film uses a captivating contrast in the way it constructs and conveys characterisation to illustrate "the self" of Michael and Hanna. Michael's enjoyment of words to express himself, as evidenced by Goethe's poem and Hanna's reactive nature at once attracts them to each other and divides them. Ralph Fiennes describes the film's portrayal of Hanna as "deliberately not generous in asking [its audience] to understand Hanna. We're asked to understand Michael [and his] journey [of] trying to understand Hanna" (*The Reader* DVD interview). In the novel, it is not what Hanna says that Michael recalls, but what she does. As a visual medium, the film can engage and explore this dimension of Michael's memory. Much like David's transparency in *An Education* about his business dealings are empty revelations hiding his personal life, Hanna's physical openness conflicts with the idea of secrecy. An innovated scene in the film depicts Michael and Hanna ordering from a menu on the biking holiday. Hanna says to Michael, "I'll have what you have" (*The Reader* 30:41). This is a telling piece of dialogue, the subtext of which resonates with the wider narrative of how her secret illiteracy dictates her choices and on a wider level, hints at one of the narrative's underlying questions of how thoughtlessly compliant ordinary people can be. This will be explored further in an analysis of the scene where Michael realises Hanna is illiterate.

Scene: Encounter and Epiphany in the Church

The following scene exemplifies how film can use the reconstruction of a character's experience as a vehicle for engaging with the text's themes of morality through the new perspectives the scene proffers. The camera pans along the dusty path as Hanna and Michael enter the frame, laughing and talking, as they wheel down a hill. The camera rests on a long shot as they ride towards a small village. The late afternoon sunlight, the chirping birds, the chickens being fed and the sound of farm animals create a pastoral-idyllic feel. Michael and Hanna stop in front of a large church, which has a fading glamour in a discoloured yellow, a large turreted roof and long glass windows. A medium shot from behind Michael, frames Hanna in the middle of the scene.

Michael: Here, let me show you where we are going. (31:37)

Michael's map is another opportunity to reveal his penchant for stories, recording and collecting.

Hanna: It's ok kid. I don't want to know. (31:42)

The dialogue's subtext elucidates character and foreshadows the future. Michael wants to read, understand and share whereas Hanna does not want to know where she is going because she feels she has no control over it. As viewers come to know how her story ends, she is perhaps justified in not wanting to know where she is going.

The camera follows Hanna as she follows the sound of a gently soaring chorus coming from inside the church. Michael follows after her. A point of view, medium long shot shows a young choir of girls and boys singing in beautiful harmonies in a lit enclave. Michael notices Hanna sitting at the end of a back pew. The wide medium shot takes in the emptiness of the seats. Hanna sits alone in her experience. Michael smiles when he sees her. A medium close-up reveals she has been crying but she smiles back. Hanna shakes her head gently in awe of the children singing. This choral music becomes an audio diegetic motif in the film, often on Michael's car radio, reminding Michael of his past. Beneath the music her wonderment is heard through her quick breathing. The religious iconography of the mise-en-scene is dense and although not used in the novel, in film this is a visually powerful way to render the narrative's themes of morality and forgiveness and to prompt questions of duty to an authority. The ornate embellishments of the Catholic Church surrounding the choir symbolically highlight their goodness, their innocence. This idea is crucial in Hanna's revelations to come. Gold, Corinthian columns frame a statue of Jesus, and to the right of the frame, Mary holds a wounded Jesus. Another medium close-up of Hanna shows her laughing and crying; the complicated emotions of a person capable of compassion but conflicted by their past.

The blank, paint-peeled background behind her, contrasts with the grandiloquence behind the choir. The camera cuts to continue zooming on Michael, mesmerised by Hanna in this moment. (If the cinematic Michael were to store images of Hanna as the novelistic one did, this would clearly be one of them). The camera's extended temporal duration on each character in this scene allows time to dwell and explore their individual reactions. The cinematic layers of metaphor visually engage and explore the source text's "big questions" of society and how ordinary people could do such atrocious things. It visually asks the questions that the novel can ask directly.

Hanna's tender disposition in this scene gains new meaning once her story is revealed later in the narrative. The distance between Hanna and the choir is a symbolically complex spatial relationship. The judgmental, sacrificial and moral imagery religion seeks to embody meaningfully faces Hanna here. As a former SS guard whose job it was to protect a group of girls and then help select which ones would return to the concentration camps,

this scene explores Hanna's morality and her debatable right to mercy from society. The church setting alone is crucial as it links the discovery of Hanna's role as an SS guard who kept prisoners in a burning church during the war. The image of Mary with a wounded Jesus metaphorically foreshadows the themes the court trial to come explores; Hanna is made the scapegoat among the prison guards. The judges, the public and the victims are content to have Hanna "sacrificed" for her peers. At this stage in the film narrative, her illiteracy impedes her full comprehension of her own actions. Furthermore, at this stage, Michael and the viewers are not aware of her past role in the war. Because the story information at this stage is restricted to Michael's perspective, we see Hanna's character as Michael does, ignorant of her past.

This scene is simultaneously expansion and exploration of the text's ideas of love, morality, judgment and human experience. Hanna's overwhelming experience in the church foreshadows the questions posed later in the narrative in the law seminar.

Through Michael's eyes, this scene furnishes Hanna's character with more shades of complexity in a very human moment, complicating the absolute and singular judgments made on normal people ordered to do horrible things. Not only does it reveal an emotional susceptibility in Hanna's character but we also come to see Michael as he sees her, before she acquires her criminal label. Unlike the novel, the adaptation challenges its audience to explore these character discoveries of Hanna's fragility and Michael's growing love for her through happiness instead of aggression. In reconstructing experience, the film visually complicates the divide between good and bad and fashions new insight on the thematic complexities through cinematic characters. Ultimately, this encourages a dialogue between literature and film.

Scene: Exploring the Physicality of a Character's Changing "Self"

The cinematic reinterpretation of Hanna's abrupt departure from Michael's life demonstrates how film discovers new methods to give form to a character's consciousness as well as the thematic consciousness of the narrative. The film again overcomes its time constraint and constructs the passing of time by realising the inner and external reality of the character's world. The montage is split showing Michael's desperation to get away from his friends to see Hanna, while she packs her bag and leaves. In the novel, Michael does not act on his instinct that something is wrong with Hanna. However, the film uses his epiphany that Hanna is troubled, as an opportunity for emotional impact in the present-tense/real-time unfolding of his discovery that Hanna has gone. As these case studies continue to illustrate, the adaptation process frequently restructures scenes to

confront the experience of epiphany and discovery to enhance and utilise the visual impact of film. Furthermore, this scene exemplifies how *The Reader* frequently unfolds the emotional consequences these narrative turning points have on a character's changing "self."

The novelistic Michael Berg writes: "We had not started a new book after the end of *War and Peace*" (78). The film uses this detail to manifold effect. After their argument, Hanna lifts the heavy book from her bedside table and says, "War and Peace, kid" (40:00). Her intonation suggests "War and Peace" is a way to move on from the argument to the escapism of storytelling but also that this is the nature of relationships. Furthermore, this dialogue penetrates to the core of the narrative itself: Michael and Hanna's pre and post-war backgrounds. This filmic detail exemplifies how adaptation can explore these pockets in the source material through cinematic character to discover new meaning in the narrative and new ways of unfolding narrative events to the strengths of storytelling film.

The emotionally complex experience for Michael of Hanna's disappearance is explored in both written and visual texts. In the novel, Michael reflects on the struggle and physical longing he had for Hanna. Michael's experience of life without Hanna is illustrated in his return to the now unpopulated river where he was with his friends before Hanna disappeared. The long shots of the riverbank and Michael, small in the distance, emphasise his aloneness and provide a visual exhale at the end of this montage. His warm clothing signifies the fading warmth. A cut to a medium close-up shows Michael split by his reflection in the water, possibly looking back at his old self. The variation in camera angles figuratively renders his changing perceptions. Michael takes his clothes off and folds them in a neat pile. This affectation subtly indicates Michael's desire for order and structure; an impression he achieves later in life as the film's first scene illustrates.

The motif of water and bathing in *The Reader* can take on many projections. One suggestion is that it is an allusion to Lady Macbeth's incessant "out damn spot" scrubbing to rid the indelible stain of guilt. But I would argue its multiple readings and valid interpretations illuminate again how one reading produces many particularly through the explorative, descriptive projections of character. Naturally, water and cleansing also suggests a catharsis for the characters, a need to be uncontaminated. Michael's submergence in the water could be his desire for this cleanliness, or to be reminded of Hanna. Furthermore, his floating in the river might be an attempt to recapture the summer with friends he nearly had or simply to literally and metaphorically tread water, to wait for the misery to pass.

The camera looms from an aerial perspective. Michael floats in the centre of the frame as the ripples of water burst around him in concentric circles. His immersion in the water is possibly a desire to feel weightless, forgetting the weight of his experience. There is an axiom about never stepping in the same river twice. Certainly Michael's frequent visits to the river make the river as a metaphor for continual and inexorable change a persuasive one. This memorable and beautiful visual of Michael treading water amidst the ripples is a cinematic exploration of character experience, a narrative pause, allowing the viewer their own interpretation. The water's green texture moves in pleats away from Michael, unusually creating a tactile experience for the viewer.

In a visually cinematic transition to the next chapter in his life, this prior image is reiterated in the following scene as Michael sits in the arched rows of a university lecture theatre. The rows create a concentric circle effect yet this time his law professor is in the middle. This is a poignant image to open the scene with, signifying the shift in narrative focus as Michael now sits in the outer "rings."

A New Chapter at University

This next analysis further demonstrates how a dialogical exchange between literature and film can produce an adaptation that rediscovers literary consciousness through a restructured character's journey. Michael's participation in a law seminar at university about the trials of war criminals and the questions the pre and post-war generations must face together reunites him with Hanna. The seminar and the trial raise the thematic questions of self-determination, society, secrecy, guilt, morality and law, which the narrative explores through the structural transition to cinematic character.

The adaptation explores one of the source text's central themes of storytelling through the visual motif of having books consistently in the mise-en-scene. This is not the only way of prompting the viewer to the importance of storytelling in *The Reader*, but it is an effective motif to explore the cinematic Michael's changing "self". For example, at university the books face him, open on his desk whereas, as a middle-aged man, his books are nearly always seen behind him, suggesting where he has come from, the stories he has finished.

Scene: Michael's Future Changes with Hanna's Past

An important narrative event in both written and visual texts of *The Reader* is when Michael discovers Hanna is on trial for war crimes. The reconstruction of this scene in the adaptation highlights how film narrative is driven by the impact of character discoveries

and plot revelations. The present-tense/real-time of film coupled with the visual dominance of the medium enhances the force of the isolation Michael feels in this moment. In the novel, Michael Berg describes his shock at hearing Hanna Schmitz's name being read out by the judge:

I also recognised the body, the head with the hair gathered in an unfamiliar knot, the neck, the broad back, and the strong arms...I recognised her but I felt nothing. Nothing at all. (Schlink 93)

The adaptation explores Michael's internal reality after this discovery: his numbness, emotional confusion and sudden distance from his peers. The inner emotional ramifications are externally rendered through the use of visual and aural contrasts in mise en-scene, particularly the spatial relationships between Michael and his peers, symbolic lighting, acting and Michael's appearance.

The scene opens with Michael, his professor and his seminar classmates sitting in the viewing dock in the courtroom. They are smiling nervously, pleased to witness this event. They wear ties and shirts, indicative of their shift into this "adult" world. Michael's coat is slightly too large for him, emphasising his eagerness to be seen as grown-up and assume a look of serious importance in this group. The camera lingers on Michael in a medium close-up as he hears the judge announce Hanna's name and the basic facts of her life, her birth date and age. Hanna is heard responding "yes" to each question. Already this is more information than Hanna ever revealed to Michael about her life. A point-of-view shot shows Michael now seeing Hanna from above, recognising her appearance as Schlink had described. The judge continues, "And you worked first at Auschwitz?" (51:08). A cut to Michael as he exhales and hangs his head hearing Hanna confirm this truth.

The camera cuts to the train ride back to university after the opening of the trial. A wide, medium shot shows Michael standing at the window. The lighting is dark and only the greenery outside stands out. The orchestral score matches the swift movement of the train and a melancholy clarinet plays a melody over the top of the score. Again the train is a metaphor for Michael's journeying transition into another new experience. Furthermore, and I suggest this delicately, the visual of the train so soon after the mention of Hanna's involvement with Auschwitz cannot be overlooked as stirring for its association with the camps. The effect of not seeing Michael's face in this image extends this metaphor to make him represent one faceless silhouette of the many million who were transported by train to the concentration camps. This fleeting but bold image briefly injects the narrative with a glimpse of the darkness and fear the trains and their destinations represent. The darkness of this image contrasts with the transparent light of the courtroom to visually convey the gravity of Hanna's involvement in this part of history.

In the same montage, the camera cuts to a medium long shot of Michael standing alone, with a drink and cigarette, in a rooftop garden outside his university hostel. Beyond Michael the lit windows of the university hostel each frames their own story: students cheer; drink; dance; kiss; make love. As Michael digests this rediscovery of Hanna, visual and aural cinematic techniques create a commentary on the isolating preoccupation of his discovery and the ensuing epiphany of what this means about his past. The spatial relationship between Michael and his peers visually indicates the distance he feels from them. While their reveling can be heard faintly beneath the solemn orchestral score, that the latter overrides this, aurally places his experience as the primary focus.

This montage is a departure in the film narrative to explore the emotional, physical and social consequences of Michael's discovery of Hanna's past and his changing "self". The novel describes Michael as numb but how does this feeling affect Michael's relationship to the wider world? The wider scope of film's *abstract narrator* enables the physical side of Michael's experiences to be actualised as well.

Scene: The Internal and External Reality of Epiphany

The adaptation of *The Reader* is fascinating for how it creates various "selves" of a character to realise a story of different temporal contexts bound in reflection and secrecy. It follows that a story with secrets will also be one of discovery. The adaptation of *The Reader* also illustrates how seamlessly film can slip between temporalities to depict the protagonist's flashbacks and thus their mindset, their consciousness. The real-time of motion pictures unavoidably means these flashbacks are portrayed with the freshness of the present so even in reflection, the sensory and emotive detail of unfolding experience feels unfettered by how time heals or conversely, forgets. The descriptive mise-en-scene in the adaptation visually reinterprets what Schlink describes as Michael's old hope through the contrast in colour within the different temporal contexts of the narrative. Michael's flashbacks from his childhood are almost all in vibrant summer colour, which symbolise his youthful energy. In his present life, within his monochromatic apartment, his grey suit, the beige courtroom, symbolically, the only colour really seen is in the glossy, gold spines of his books.

Hanna's trial is still in progress when Michael Berg, still a law student, realises Hanna Schmitz is illiterate. By comparison with its novelistic equivalent, the film's reinterpretation of this realisation immerses the viewer in the character's experience of discovery amidst the drama of the external setting. In the novel, Michael Berg writes:

[T]he place in the woods where Hanna's secret became clear to me. There is nothing special about it now, nor was there anything special then [...] nothing that would invite startling association. In thinking about Hanna, [...] in the same tracks weeks after week, one thought had split off, taken another direction, and finally produced its own conclusion. When it did so, [...] it could have been anywhere, [...it] didn't come like a bolt from the blue, but had been growing inside myself to be recognised and accepted [...] Hanna could neither read nor write. (Schlink 130/131)

Michael expounds on his realisation, reflecting on their time together when Hanna had reacted peculiarly when faced with the prospect of reading or writing. This epiphany is essential to the story because while it underpins the plot, shapes and reveals Hanna's character, her actions and her relationship with others, particularly Michael, it also reignites their contact, continuing their story. Furthermore, the trial reveals that Hanna had young prisoners read stories to her also. This is evidently painful for Michael to hear so while his realisation of her illiteracy does not excuse her actions, it goes some way to explaining her behaviour.

Michael's discovery unfolds with more melodrama in the film to convey the weight of the epiphany. Hanna sits in the middle of the courtroom, visibly distressed by the questions and encircling documentation that culminates to accuse her of her past. A report is being discussed which outlines why, after a bomb fell near a church setting it alight while the prisoners were captive inside, the guards did not unlock the doors. The judge informs Hanna that the other defendants have alleged that she was in charge, that she wrote the report. Hanna panics and looks at the defendants who are yelling in agreement.

Hanna: No [...] we all wrote it together [...] Does it matter who did? (1:08:31)

The judge requests a sample of Hanna's handwriting.

Hanna: My, my handwriting? (1:08:42)

Hanna's breath quickens and a clean, unlined notepad is placed on her desk with a pen in the middle. A point of view close-up shows Hanna looking at the intimidating simplicity of the pen and paper. The soft, emotive non-diegetic score aurally prioritises Hanna's experience above the court's whispers.

The camera cuts to a medium shot of Michael in the viewing dock, leaning down with his head near his lap and his hands clasped together. The music escalates as he suddenly flicks his head up, his eyes are more alert and he rises in realisation. The camera zooms in closer on Michael, moving the audience's to the inner vision of his epiphany: a medium point-of-view close-up frames Hanna lying on her bed as she declines his offer to read his book.

Hanna: I'd rather listen to you. (1:09:14)

A cut back to the external reality of the courtroom and Michael reveals the slightest of smiles as he stares in Hanna's direction. A cut to another flashback shows Michael and Hanna lying on their backs on her bed as he shows her his plans for their cycling holiday in his diary. Hanna takes the diary without looking at it from Michael's hands. At the time, her avoidance of Michael's notes had reflected more of his character, revealing him to be someone who enjoys planning and the prospect of a story. Now, the scene illuminates Hanna's rehearsed indifference. Hanna takes the diary and in slow motion, the camera captures the red diary falling in mid-air. This slower duration amplifies the new meaning her disregard of his writing takes on in light of Michael's epiphany. Michael now recalls sitting with Hanna at an outside café on their cycling trip. The point of view medium close-up shows Hanna as her eyes dart about the menu with the heavy breathing she now has in the courtroom faced with the writing pad. In contrast to the quiet observers of those around him, Michael fidgets in anticipation of Hanna's revelation. The camera returns to the empty pen and paper on Hanna's desk, bookending Michael's epiphany with this repeated image. As the music peaks, a cut to Hanna shows she is holding back tears and another cut shows Michael's intensely responsive engagement with Hanna's plight.

Hanna: There's no need. I wrote the report. (1:09:33)

The noise returns in the courtroom as the crowd takes in her admission, the other defendants and lawyers smile in their victory. The pen and paper are removed from Hanna's desk and the camera lingers on the empty spot where it once was, signifying the release and relief for Hanna. She hangs her head knowing she has sentenced herself.

This scene exemplifies another instance of an adaptation transitioning the discoveries of central characters to settings that increase the tension of their discovery as they balance their own emotional experience with their external reality. Constructing Michael's internal reality alongside the external reality again enhances the intimacy of his history with Hanna through the public and private contrast of setting and show that he finds it difficult to distinguish the public view of Hanna with his own. Furthermore, blending each reality in this way visually represents and complicates the two sides of Hanna we know. Unfolding Michael's realisation in this setting instead of while he is alone on a walk, pinpoints the importance of Hanna's illiteracy in the story and visually compounds the gravity of the situation in the formality of a courtroom among opinionated classmates and a respected professor and Hanna, his former secret love. The presence of these external factors all carry a weight of expectation and reveal Michael's "self" as it isolates him in his inner

turmoil. Hanna's decision not to confess also keeps in obscurity the devastating and misunderstood revelation as to why she had children read to her while she was a guard.

This reconstructed epiphany visually explores and casts new perspectives on the notion of secrecy Schlink portrays. The clarity and transparency of Michael's realisation is more acutely felt because it is not shared. Hanna's refusal to reveal her illiteracy also shows that Michael, to a large extent, does not understand her. Hanna seems to hear the steps of someone, Michael, leaving the courtroom. As he leaves, so does the truth of her real identity. "Silence, order" says the judge and Hanna's veneer remains just that.

Professor versus Father – Using Character to Explore Narrative

The film's characterisation of the law professor, Professor Rohl, is a key expansion of the adaptation process which uses his character as a vehicle to ask the narrative's wider questions and present the conflict: law versus morality. How do you approach such a horrendous attack on humanity with the detachment of the law? How do you judge someone for following the draconian laws of the time? In the novel, these seminars are crucial to Michael's time at university. This film enables the perspectives of other classmates to help us understand Michael as a first person written narrative cannot. One vehement classmate, questions the point of the trial if the defendants are merely six people out of the thousands who knew about the atrocities being committed and accomplice to the crime by association. "What are we trying to do?" (1:01:41) A medium shot shows Michael sitting arms folded in his seat. Michael exclaims: "We are trying to understand!" (1:01:42) He yells back seemingly more fervently than he had anticipated. Here, the dialogue resonates, as we know Michael is also trying to conflate the SS Guard Hanna with the one he knew.

Curiously, the role of Michael Berg's father is diminished in the adaptation process. Schlink's Michael Berg discusses the distant and uncommunicative relationship he has with his father who is a philosopher and university lecturer. It is his father who the novelistic Michael goes to when he is confronted with his moral dilemma. He writes:

I wanted to talk to the philosopher who had [...] occupied himself with moral issues. He should be well positioned to explore my problem in the abstract..." (Schlink 139)

Michael's interactions with his family are comparatively short-lived in film than they are in the novel. Yet his distance from his family is arguably still pronounced through their absence. The point of real interest in this is that Michael does not go to his father to discuss his moral dilemma in the film. Conceivably the comparative time constraint film must overcome means that this father and son encounter would require too much screen

time and override the primacy of the moral conflict. Their reticent dynamic is already conveyed earlier in the film and the father's small role in the film speaks volumes about the small role he plays in Michael's life.

The adaptation process shifts this discussion to Michael and his Jewish law professor (Bruno Ganz). This shifting of this character experience of Michael's appeal to his professor, places the narrative's questions in their physical context: a legal academic forum. Ultimately, the explored characterisation of the law professor is to "throw back this question of individual choice" (Ralph Fiennes *The Reader* DVD interview) and bring the philosophical and ethical themes Schlink's narrative poses to the foreground. It provides a visual demarcation to Michael's journey too; the challenges he faces are now beyond the hometown affairs of his youth.

Scene: Adapting Abstract Concepts in their Physical Contexts

The spatial relationship between Michael and Professor Rohl sitting alone in the lecture theatre represents the position of authority the latter asserts in this setting. Michael looks weary from his anxiety. He puffs on a cigarette.

Michael: I have a piece of information concerning one of the defendants, something they're not admitting.

Professor: [...] You have a moral obligation to disclose it to the court.

Michael: It happens this information is favourable to the defendant [...] It may even affect the outcome [...] but [...] the defendant herself is determined to keep this information secret.

Professor: What are her reasons?

Michael: Because she's ashamed.

Professor: Ashamed of what? (Daldry 1:10:34)

The dialogue again is working on two levels here, propelling the narrative forward but also penetrating to Michael's own shame for his involvement with Hanna. He does not answer this last question as though it is directed at him. The professor asks Michael if he has spoken to her and the camera zooms in slowly on Michael as he deals with the direct simplicity and emotional impossibility of this question.

Michael: Of course not. I can't [...] I can't *talk* to her. (1:11:46)

A reverse cut to the professor from Michael's perspective now zooms slowly in on him.

Professor: What we feel isn't important. It's utterly unimportant. The only question is what we do. (1:12:00)

This line resonates in this thesis both in terms of narratives themselves and on a meta-lingual level with how adaptation explores dimensions of source texts through the sensory physicality film brings to character. The professor returns to standing in front of Michael. A cut to Michael shows him looking up at his professor, sullen and straight-faced. The professor calmly continues:

If people like you don't learn from what happened to people like me, then what the hell is the point of anything? (1:12:09)

The left of the frame shows some writing on the board from the previous class, the word "action" can be seen just as the professor finishes entreating Michael to take this very course.

Scene: Visualising Relationships – the Reader and the Writer

An interesting perspective that cinematic character brings to *The Reader* is the correspondence Michael and Hanna share while she is in prison. Michael records himself reading stories and sends them to her. Without expectation, it is through this that Hanna teaches herself to read and write. An enchanting detail in the novel is not only Michael's surprise at receiving Hanna's first letter but how palpably hard she had been pressing the pen as the letters could be felt through the paper. The adaptation's visual interaction of Michael reading to Hanna and her in turn listening and responding creates a sense of passing time and again using literature to entwine their own story. In this way, the film proffers insight into how Hanna feels about Michael, not just the other way around and opens viewers to part of her journey towards becoming a reader also. Her nurturing of her letters, her small words and her large hope that he will reply from his own thoughts not through the words of an author, is evident in the close-ups of her writing pad that shows a variety of practised letters, strong simple thoughts, and the final sentence to be folded. The closer Hanna comes to understanding her own actions and reality through literacy, the more she seeks real contact with Michael beyond storytelling.

Hanna's scruffy letters are an intrusion to the semblance of his ordered world. In the novel, Michael writes:

Precisely because she was both close and removed in such an easy way [...] I had granted Hanna a small niche, certainly an important niche, one from which I gained something and for which I did something, but not a place in my life.
(Schlink 191, 196)

Michael's feelings about this development in their relationship is visualised in film through his changing spatial relationship with Hanna's letters. A medium close-up shows Michael with a glass of red wine and a determined indifference reading yet another letter from Hanna, asking him to write. The persistent orchestral score has now stopped. This signifies a slowing in the pace of their correspondence and Michael's seeming resolution to not share his emotional space anymore, to not let his contact with Hanna inhabit his life and set the rhythm. The camera pans quickly as he places the most recent letter in a drawer, with rows of other letters, in the same handwriting and the same coloured envelope. The camera pulls back to reveal the drawer is part of a small filing cabinet in the

corner of his study. Its compact size is immediately in contrast to the neighbouring bookshelf that nearly fills his wall. This image visually interprets and explores what Michael verbally expresses in the novel about his correspondence with Hanna and how he tried to restrict her to a confined space in his life.

Scene: Constructing an Identity through Art

Hanna Schmitz's last request before her death was that her savings of 7000 Deutsch Marks be given to the last remaining survivor, Ilana Mather (Lena Olin) of the church fire. Ilana, at the time a young girl, along with her late mother had written a book about their experiences in the camp. She testified against Hanna and the other guards on trial. Examining film's reinterpretation of this encounter between Michael and Ilana illustrates how narrative construction in film can stylistically and functionally create and reveal "the self" through the narrative implications of the worlds these characters represent. As someone who nearly lost her life because of Hanna, and Michael, whose own life has been in disrepair because of his complicated past with Hanna, this encounter is understandably tense and the subject matter, delicate.

By carving a story carved from a world, the adaptation delves further into Ilana's character through the external reality of the apartment's mise-en-scene. The camera pans alongside Michael as he walks into a grand, modern and light living room. The wide shot encompasses evidence of an affluent and cultured life. To the left of Michael a large expressionist painting almost covers the wall and beyond Michael we see a sculpture of a bust, various vases and scattered books. In the middle of the frame is the visual clue: a menorah stands on a cabinet. Michael pauses as he sees this emblem of Jewish heritage. Its central placing signifies that this is an important part of the daughter's identity. Ilana's appearance matches the refined aesthetic of her home. Interestingly and inconspicuously, she wears a gold necklace with a modernised star pendant, emblematic of the Star of David. The very considered and adventurous use of the mise-en-scene illustrates that this is a well-read character whose eclecticism indicates that she takes pleasure in a variety of things.

After discussing the trial, the surviving daughter asks Michael what the nature of his friendship was with Hanna. Michael tells her of his past with her and reveals Hanna's illiteracy. His heavy weariness and guilt shows through in his demeanour.

Daughter: Did Hanna Schmitz acknowledge the effect she's had on your life?
(1:44:10)

Her questions are direct and like the novel, she is portrayed as perceptive and matter-of-fact. A reverse cut to Michael and his expression shows a kind of painful relief in hearing someone else acknowledge the burden of his experience with Hanna. "She had done much worse to other people," (1:44:17) he says, "I've never told anyone" (1:44:25). The adaptation characterises this scene as Michael's first confession of his affair with Hanna in contrast to the novel where he has told women he has been with about Hanna in an attempt to be open with them. The narrative impact of keeping this a secret in the film though, propels Michael's journey and makes this encounter more poignant for both individuals and emphasises the seclusion of his private, vivid memory.

Ilana responds:

People asked all the time what I learned in the camps but the camps weren't therapy [...] We didn't go there to learn. One becomes very clear about these things. What are you asking for? Forgiveness for her? Do you just want to feel better yourself? My advice? Go to the theatre if you want catharsis, please go to literature. Don't go to the camps. Nothing comes out of the camps. Nothing. (1:44:30)

Ilana's reference to art and literature as catharsis is significant for it also alludes to the narrative's wider themes of escapism through storytelling. Her home, replete with art and signs of literature, are now seen as visual signifiers of her quest to find catharsis and escapism in art and storytelling. To not let her life be dominated by the "nothingness" of her experience in the camps, she has filled her life with the beautiful "somethings" of art and literature. Indeed her own experiences of the war were penned in a book, catharsis again found through storytelling. This resounds with how we have come to know Michael, as someone who finds colour in storytelling and yet hesitates to tell his own. These innovations in dialogue and the visual interpretation of a life through setting show how narrative can take on its own cinematic life. Furthermore, underpinning this thesis is the notion that how and why we use art and storytelling is to create, express and construct our identities. Ilana's dialogue and home embodies this idea of being able to choose how we tell and retell the stories of who we are through artistic narratives.

Michael places Hanna's tea caddy with the money inside on the coffee table between them. A medium close up shows two other trinkets of similar size but silver and much more exquisite already on the table beside it. Hanna's sole possession versus the daughter's many fine pieces metaphorically suggests the financial and/or moral wealth of each individual.

Daughter: When I was a little girl I had a tea can for my treasures [...] I took it to the camp but it got stolen. (1:46:00)

This revelation, however uncomfortable the association may be at this point, reiterates the sentimental side of Hanna.

Daughter: It wasn't stolen for its contents; it was the tin itself that was valuable. What you could do with it. (1:46:27)

The charged dialogue in the adaptation creates a comparatively stronger metaphorical shift in this encounter. The tea caddy not only represents Ilana's past but as a vessel, only recognised for what it was on the outside, it is emblematic of her own harrowing experiences as a child during the war.

Daughter: There's nothing I can do with this money [...] it seems like absolution and that's something which I'm neither willing nor in a position to grant. (1:46:45)

Michael and the daughter agree on donating the money in Hanna's name to a Jewish organisation to encourage literacy. The chapter in the novel ends here but the film's scene continues to simultaneously explore her character further by giving closure to her story and yet show that it continues.

Once Michael has left, the music returns to provide an aural commentary, spotlighting Ilana's next movements as indicative of her continuing story. She places the tea caddy on a dresser in between other sentimental pieces, a trinket and a photo frame. The camera zooms in on her looking at her family photo: the photo is a happy image with the tea caddy in the left edge of the frame. The return of the tea caddy does not absolve Hanna, nor does Michael want it to but it goes some small way to giving some memory of happiness from her childhood back to Ilana. While the camera remains on the photo, a creaking sound is audible. The camera cuts to her as she walks, head high, out of the room. As we are left looking at the past, Ilana has already left before the viewers realise. This signifies that while this experience is a central part of her life, it does not wholly define her, she remembers and then keeps going. The tea caddy is now one of many things in her house, representing an important story but only one of many. The new projections of this tea caddy the adaptation creates, is an interesting dialogue between literary and filmic text. This scene's extension by way of the tea caddy becomes a way to further explore the cinematic character and the narrative's broader themes of the relationship we have with the historical past and our former "selves".

Scene: Telling and Retelling – Keeping and Continuing the Story

In the final chapter of the novel *The Reader*, Michael Berg discloses his feelings of guilt for loving a criminal, for not disclosing her illiteracy, for "whatever she had done or not done" (216) and the consequent path his life had taken. He finishes by saying how he went to Hanna's grave: "It was the first and only time I stood there" (216). Michael's final note is that telling has been his catharsis, to remember it, to be free of it and importantly, to share the story (215).

The final scene in the film engages with the novel's ending but uses Michael's character as a platform for casting a filmic perspective on the themes of storytelling and journeys, which are woven throughout both written and visual texts. This final scene not only closes the story but speaks to the wider purpose of adaptation itself, of holding onto perspectives and experiences and finding new perspectives, new meanings in the important re-telling of our stories.

The scene opens with an extreme long shot of a German landscape. A subtitle says, "January 1995". A Germanic home can be seen in the middle of the frame and this is Michael's homecoming. This notion of the Odyssean homecoming fascinates Bernhard Schlink in his writing. The adaptation draws upon this literary concept earlier in the film when Michael's schoolteacher says to his class, "Everyone believes Homer's subject is homecoming and in fact *The Odyssey* is a book about a journey. Home is a place you dream of" (36:08). The ending of the film seizes this idea of one journey ending and another beginning as Michael seeks to find peace: a home with his past. A long road stretches across this landscape, and a car travels along it, nearly out of frame, signifying that we are near the end of this story. The sound of birds can be heard as well as the recurring musical motif of the choir. The camera cuts to inside the car with Michael and his daughter, Julia and we hear the music is actually coming from his radio; the music is an aural cue, foreshadowing the church as their destination and Michael's disclosure to come.

Julia: Where are we going? (1:48:48)

The camera pans alongside the car until it parks outside a church. A medium long shot shows that the church is the same one Michael and Hanna visited on their bicycling trip. Their presence here is very different from Michael's experience with Hanna in the ignorant bliss of that Summer. It is winter. The greyness of the season seems to age the mise-en-scene.

Michael and Julia stand in the graveyard behind the church, connecting the novel's final setting with the film. He removes the leaves from the gravestone as Julia reads, "Hanna Schmitz. Who was she?" (1:50:03) The camera cuts to a medium close-up of Michael from Julia's perspective. The camera returns to Julia looking at her father looking at the grave. She senses the gravity of the story.

Michael: That's what I wanted to tell you. That's why we're here.

Julia: So tell me. (1:50:08)

The point-of-view shots from Julia's angle figuratively suggest that Michael's story, once told will now take on a new perspective, that she will see her father differently but also

that the story will now share her perspective. The camera cuts back to a medium close up of Michael and the piano score returns. This music has been a motif throughout the film, a backdrop to the emotional current of each scene. It sounds slightly different to the score at the beginning of the film when Michael first reflects alone. This technique provides a continuity and closure to the film. As Michael begins to recount his story, we can hear the rain, much like how it rained when Michael first met Hanna. These subtle details provide the film with a strong pattern of development, a coherent sense that a journey has taken place.

Michael: I was fifteen. I was going home from school. I was feeling ill. (1:50:35)

Michael's succinct sentences reveal how clearly he now sees his story. His dialogue echoes the opening point of the novel that starts with this encounter. As the camera fades to black, Michael continues, "And a woman helped me" (1:50:47). It is significant that Michael introduces Hanna to his daughter as someone who helped him. Much like Hanna ultimately determined her own fate, Michael now determines how Hanna, and their story, will be remembered.

This final scene is a compelling piece of cinema in its layered engagement and exploration of the literary narrative coupled with the cinematic reconstruction of this final standing point. Furthermore, Michael's entreating of his daughter here shows that he is seeking something special in his relationship with his child that his father never had with him. The film's ending to this narrative revisits this idea of *Der Vorleser* as *the reader aloud*. In the novel, Michael writes his story but the cinematic Michael, unlike Hanna, *shares* his story aloud. From an adaptation perspective and within the world of the narrative itself, in giving a voice to Hanna, Michael reveals and acknowledges his true "self" and gives his consciousness a form in the retelling of his story.

Chapter Five Case Study:

An Education

Encounter and Epiphany and Rediscovering “the Self” of Experience

“Action is character.

*I think it means if we never did anything,
we wouldn’t be anyone.”*

– Jenny, An Education

An Education (2009) is illustrative of the import of how and why we retell stories through film adaptation. In 2009 it was released to much critical acclaim and in 2010 *An Education* was nominated for eight Bafta awards including Best Adapted Screenplay as well as receiving three Oscar nominations also including Best Adapted Screenplay. *An Education* exemplifies how adaptation, in conversation with its source text, is an opportunity to explore “the self” of experience and cast new, cinematic perspectives on the wider thematic implications of a narrative through the unfolding of a central character’s journey.

This case study will analyse significant narrative events involving encounter and epiphany and how the film’s structural interpretation of this journey is propelled by character and plot discoveries to reveal “the self” of character and bring cinematic form to literary consciousness. Furthermore, considering how *An Education* engages with and explores its source text through these reconstructed scenes helps facilitate our understanding of narrative construction in film and why the adaptation process should embrace a dialogical exchange between written and visual mediums. The transition from literary to cinematic character is a vehicle for rediscovering “the self” and the narrative world and a valuable way that adaptation can contribute to our understanding of storytelling in film. On a wider level, we see that adaptation is an opportunity to contribute to the record of human experience through the artistic narrative form it gives to human consciousness.

An Education had its genesis as an autobiographical essay by journalist Lynn Barber in *Granta* magazine (“Life’s Like That”, 82: Summer, 2003). In this essay, Lynn Barber recounts her experience of life in the early 1960s as a mature and ambitious sixteen year-old girl studying towards being accepted to read English at the University of Oxford. Lynn’s final year at school took a drastically unconventional turn when she met an older

man, 'Simon', ² who introduced her to a world startlingly different from her own, seemingly replete with the cultural adventures she longed for. It was not until Lynn was engaged to Simon and was on the verge of sacrificing her education that she discovered he was already married.

Writer Nick Hornby was struck by Lynn Barber's "funny and painful" memoir (*Creative Screenwriting Magazine* podcast 22:27) and believed her story "had all the ingredients for a film" (Hornby *An Education* screenplay 1). In the introduction to the published screenplay of *An Education*, Hornby writes on the challenge of adapting memoir for the screen:

There were no problems with the essay itself [...] which did everything a piece of memoir should do; but by its very nature, memoir presents a challenge, consisting as it does of an adult mustering all the wisdom he or she can manage to look back at an earlier time in life. Almost all of us become wiser as we get older, so we can see pattern and meaning in an episode of autobiography – pattern and meaning that we would not have been able to see at the time. Memoirists know it all, but the people they are writing about know next to nothing. (3)

Adaptation as a process and product of exploration and discovery then is reiterated here. To engage with Barber's former "self" and explore the narrative's wider ideas, Hornby created a compelling, youthful voice in the present-tense to convey the weight of Barber's former experience. To recapture the emotional potency and consequences of this affair with an older man, Hornby denied his subject Barber's wisdom and "insight, otherwise there's no drama, just a character understanding herself and avoiding mistakes" (5). Her retrospective self is characterised through the astute and eager sixteen year-old Jenny Mellor (Carey Mulligan) so her "sixty year old self [did not] seep into every brushstroke of the self-portrait" (4). The present-tense/real-time of film attributes the unfolding of a character's experience with a new emotional immediacy and uncertainty. Analysing narrative turning points demonstrates how film illuminates the "the self" of cinematic character and creates pattern and meaning in film's editing and mise-en-scene that explores the dimensions of the source text without impinging upon the instinctive "self" of Jenny. On portraying how Lynn Barber's "education" shaped her future, Hornby writes, "I couldn't worry about my character's future. I had to worry about her present, and how that present might feel compelling to an audience" (5). Hornby expands on writing character in the adaptation process:

I think if you're going to adapt a memoir then the first thing you need is a memoirist who understands that if it's ever going to be a movie, then you have to take liberties with the life. It's no good saying, it wasn't like that – because things take on a life of their own when you're writing a screenplay. (Hornby *Creative* 28:20)

² 'Simon' is the pseudonym Lynn Barber has given the older man to protect his identity

In her essay, Lynn Barber recalls her experiences of her schooling, growing up in post-war English suburbia, being the only child of thrifty and shielding parents and her youthful ambitions for culture, sophistication and worldliness. The film adaptation gives these experiences and this world, a cinematic existence. *An Education* is set in 1961, at a time when there were limited opportunities for women so education was a valuable path enabling independence and choice. Barber's predicament of being involved with an older man and on the verge of forfeiting her future by giving up her education is embroiled in the social and cultural values of the time. The film also almost completely rests upon the social climate of post-war Britain as the protagonist confronts her society's restrictive gender roles and seeks colour in the post-war gloom. Hornby paints a London that is "Britain in the 60s before the 60s happened" (Goldsmith 24:05) and has more of a "resemblance to its wartime self" (Hornby *An Education* 17). *An Education* seeks to render Lynn Barber's changing "self" amidst the external reality of lifeless normality in suburban 1960's Twickenham and through sensory, cinematic realisation, reinvigorate her coming-of-age experience in the real-time of film.

This case study will demonstrate how in conversation with its source text *An Education*, uses the transition to cinematic character as an opportunity to remove the distance of time in the memoir's narrative voice and explore and cast new perspectives on the individual's experience and the external reality of the narrative context. The following analyses of turning points involving are all dimensions of Barber's memoir and thus ripe for analysis for how they are realised in film adaptation to be driven by character and plot discoveries. Through deconstructing the editing techniques, mise-en-scene, figure behaviour, acting style, costume, make-up, point-of-view and camera shots that help comprise characterisation and narrative atmosphere, we can enrich our understanding of the strengths and sensibilities of storytelling in film. This end is important as it contributes to the constructive shift in film and adaptation discourse that asserts film adaptation as valuable storytelling medium that should interact with and "play" with its literary counterpart to find new, cinematic perspectives on human experience. Through the retelling that film adaptation facilitates, we can preserve and progress our narratives and continue to record and shape human consciousness through storytelling

Scene: Jenny's Journey Begins with Encounter

Jenny's first encounter with David³ (Peter Sarsgaard) in *An Education* is necessarily offbeat because it initiates an intrusion into the conventional routine of Jenny's suburban world the film has been prompt to establish. Through Jenny's encounter with David we gain rich visual and aural story information about each character and the wider narrative world, which so soon in the film, already cinematically engages with thematic and plot dimensions of the source text.

This encounter is also a point of interest for how it relates to Lynn Barber's account. She recalls meeting 'Simon' (and his Bristol) after one of her local amateur drama evenings and he asked her out for coffee. The adaptation uses this suburban 1960's backdrop with its richly, domestic connotations and establishes visual and aural motifs to bring thematic cohesion to the wider narrative. While the particulars of their first encounter unfold quite differently in film, the adaptation uses this encounter to reveal Jenny's innate ambitions and in doing so, explore the youthful "self" Lynn Barber recalls in her memoir.

The scene opens with a medium long shot framing Jenny in the rain, standing at the bus stop after an orchestra rehearsal. With cello, satchel and a folder of work in hand, she seems to have accepted the permeability of the rain. According to Jack (Alfred Molina), Jenny's father, successful people (ostensibly according to the Oxford admissions board) are seen to "join in." As a cellist in the youth orchestra this is Jenny's "interest or hobby" and a way that she can show she "joins in" too.

The mise-en-scene replete with rained on concrete road, the brick wall, the bus stop and Jenny's grey uniform coalesces with the dim lighting to suggest a world without colour. The rain is loud and dominates the scene. In his interview with *Creative Screenwriting Magazine*, Hornby notes, "I think 1961/1962 had more in common with 1945 [...Britain] was this sort of exhausted, impoverished grey country where food rationing had stopped [...] five years before [...] [it wasn't] t-bird and fun, fun, fun, we weren't having any of that. We were waiting at bus stops in the rain" (24:25). Furthermore, Jenny's encounter with David whilst she is at the bus stop instead of a theatre club figuratively represents Jenny's innate desire to move beyond her high school life. The bus stop is a symbol of transition, of wanting to go somewhere beyond where you are. David charms her so easily, because she is so willing to leave.

³ In the film *An Education*, David represents Lynn Barber's older suitor, 'Simon.'

The camera cuts to a medium long shot from behind Jenny as she watches a mother with a pram and a young boy crossing the road. The son's gumboot falls off in the middle of the street as to the right of the frame, a tinge of sunlight appears amidst the grey, and a man in a car approaches. Jenny looks on hopelessly. The drawn out process of the mother and son serves an important narrative function. Not only does it allow the slowing down of time for the driver of the car, David, to see Jenny waiting in the rain but it also functions as sly foreshadowing. The driver of the car we discover momentarily is David, Jenny's impending suitor. However, unbeknownst to the audience and Jenny (unless the memoir has been read prior), David has a wife and child. This imagery then figuratively hints at the obstacle keeping David and Jenny apart and foreshadows this familial discovery to come.

As David approaches Jenny in his car, the non-diegetic music begins to stir. The orchestral theme entitled *David and Jenny* and its shifting flourishes capture the tone of their encounters. This time the theme strikes a pleasant note: this cannot then be a sinister stranger. Jenny looks skeptical as he winds down the window, a kind of I-know-not-to-take-rides-from-strangers expression.

David: Hello, look if you had any sense you wouldn't take a lift from a stranger but I'm a music lover and I'm worried about your cello...so what I propose is you put it in my car and walk alongside me. (05:30)

He is framed in a medium close up by the windows of his maroon Bristol: an appealing shelter from the rain.

Jenny: How do I know you won't just drive off with the cello? (05:38)

David is stumped and reveals pounds from his pockets that might make up for it if he drives away. They laugh and instantaneously with this brief encounter, we have crucial insight into their characters. Jenny is a quick thinker, curious but skeptical. David has money and is bold, generous and charming. He dashes out of the car to place the cello in the back seat. They shake hands and a burst of thunder rolls: ominously timed. David chatters on about music and joins in on Jenny's boredom with playing Elgar in orchestra.

David: Anyway, Elgar and the Jews don't mix very well

Jenny: I'm not a Jew

David: No I am. I wasn't accusing you. (06:50)

Nick Hornby states in his interview with *Creative Screenwriting* that the decision to keep David Jewish like that of Lynn Barber's Simon, was a case of being "socially accurate" (1:04:11). Interviewer and magazine editor Jeff Goldsmith intimated there had been some informal criticism that the depiction of David is anti-Semitic because he is depicted as Jewish *and* corrupt. Hornby explains it did not make any sense to not have David as a Jew. This is part of what made him appear somewhat exotic to Barber and there was a type of "Jewish gangster" (1:04:29) at this time of Peter Rachman's notorious business dealings in

England. Hornby also notes that Danny, David's friend and business partner, is also as money-hungry and corrupt and is not Jewish so the claim to prejudice does not stand. Jenny joins her cello in the Bristol.

Jenny: I've never seen a car like this before. *C'est tres chic!* (07:12)

As David lowers the gear to lengthen the short ride, we glimpse a flash of his large, shiny, silver watch. David presumes Jenny, as a cellist, must go to a lot of concerts.

Jenny: Oh we don't go to any concerts, we don't *believe* in them (07:49)

Jenny embodies the views of her father. "Oh they're real", David confirms (7:50mins). Their conversation moves quickly and naturally. The camera quickly cuts to a close-up of the open glove box as David retrieves a cigarette. We briefly see a stack of letters and a cigarette pack with a telling brand *Bachelor*. This shot initially feels merely stylistic to accommodate the realism of movement and interaction. However, it is the glove box which holds David's last secret. Beneath the pack of *Bachelor* cigarettes are letters addressed to him and his wife. Jenny continues sharing her father's views on life, which includes prohibiting going to concerts because they "don't help you get on" (08:18mins). Coolly letting the cigarette burn, David responds, "Which of course is what's so wonderful about them" (08:20mins). There is a glint in Jenny's eye that his philosophy has impressed her.

Jenny: If I go to university, I'm going to read and listen to what I want, and I'm going to look at paintings and watch French films and I'm going to talk to people who know lots about lots. (08:25)

She smiles at the very thought of her own desires and independence, all facilitated by her university education. In reciprocal expression, David leans back impressed with her determination to experience culture and her confidence that she will. The conversation staggers somewhat when David reveals, "I studied at what they call the University of Life. And I didn't get a very good degree" (08:48).

A wide, medium shot frames a semi-detached house as the Bristol pulls into the frame. The rain has stopped. We have an immediate sense of the uniform world Jenny longs to escape. The soundtrack opens to Juliette Greco's *Sous le ciel de Paris*. The music is an early transition from Jenny's express desire to *be* French to the following scene showing Jenny lying languidly on her bedroom floor singing, subsumed by the enjoyment of the French lyrics. The music mimics these desires, beginning as non-diegetic music to conjure the atmosphere of the world she seeks and turning into diegetic music, literally part of her world as she sings. Jenny lives happily in her head. This aural transition from the end of one scene to the beginning of the next is used throughout *An Education*. This continuity

editing with the music creates a strong cohesion between scenes but it also reveals how our protagonist thinks. The French accordions conjure the blue heights of the Parisian sky in distinct contrast to the grey skies we see as Jenny gets out of the car.

This first encounter between Jenny and David is a prime example of how quickly film works to establish and reveal character using the narrative world. We leave the scene now knowing how vital university is for Jenny as a vehicle for a fulfilling life. She happily interacts with people, namely David, who seemingly already enjoys the experiences she hopes for. Already David contrasts keenly with her stilted encounter with her smitten peer Graham after orchestra practice. Graham clearly likes her but does not yet have the confidence to be so at ease with a smart and pretty girl.

Furthermore, this first encounter between Jenny and David establishes a crucial recurring image in both written and visual texts of *An Education*. The Bristol and the winding road serve stylistic and narrative functions representing literal and figurative travel. Barber's text constantly refers to the different world the rare and luxurious Bristol sports car represented. The Bristol suggests its owner's wealth and difference especially in the temporal context of suburban post-war London. The film's depiction of this car is in line with Barber's experiences then, as it cinematically becomes an emblem for encounter and epiphany but it also reveals David's character. As a cinematic way to explore and engage with the experience of an individual, the significance of the Bristol and the road that winds throughout *An Education* will be discussed further in this case study.

Film employs a variety of techniques to provide the viewer with certain perspicacity through the particular narrative voice and tone. Like most art forms, it is difficult to separate form from content. Screenwriters and filmmakers work hard to create a narrative connection between what is seen and how it is seen: the successful coupling of which can illuminate "the self" in new ways, creating new meanings and readings.

An Education's soundtrack utilises "languaged tracks" (Stam and Raengo 20) and orchestral themes to enrich and enhance the drama of character experience. Speaking with Lynn Barber about the music she listened to as a teenager, confirmed Hornby's suspicions that she and her peers thought pop music was "for stupid people" (Goldsmith 1:13:53). While writing the screenplay, Hornby had a strong "aural aesthetic" (1:13:18) in mind for Jenny "that everything had to sound older than she did" (1:13:29). As Lynn did not want to be a teenager, so neither does Jenny and the film narrative's accompanying music explores this ambitious voice and the narrative's wider temporal and thematic context.

David and Jenny' orchestral theme stirs and swells in different tempos and timbres to emphasise the uncertainty, unexpectedness and close proximity of their relationship. The soundtrack presents the narrative's subtext as well as places the narrative in a temporal context. Hornby notes that the soundtrack needed to have "cachet among the young, clever middle classes [to] help place Jenny precisely in her cultural context" (Hornby *An Education* screenplay 18). Most often the music provides a lyrical and melodic commentary such as Ray Charles's *Tell The Truth*, which plays in a bar during one of Jenny and David's nights out. The tracks derive from the early 1960's era but also conjure the sophistication Jenny longs for; the music represents a world beyond her normality and experiences she is at yet too young to have had.

Scene: First Encounter between Graham and Jenny's Parents

Lynn Barber recalls the "grillings" (Barber 34) the "Hampton Grammar boys" (34) would endure when they met her father. She writes that her father's "greatest fear was fecklessness, which seemed to mean any form of fun" (31). The interrogation process involved knowing "what marks they got [...] what universities they were applying to. He practically made them take an IQ test before they could take me to the flicks" (34).

The following scene explores this ritual through the character of Graham (Matthew Beard), who is the same age as Jenny and a fellow member of the youth orchestra. Much like Michael's classmate Sophie in Stephen Daldry's *The Reader*, Graham is a character who almost exists simply to accentuate the age gap between the central protagonist and their older love interest. Furthermore, pleasant and youthful characters like Graham and Sophie not only represent a contrast in age but also in experience. They represent the conventional light-hearted "crush" option for the central protagonist: a path that will not lead to commotion.

This encounter between Graham and Jenny and her parents takes place during Sunday lunch at the Mellor home. Jenny has forewarned Graham to wear his "Sunday best" (*An Education* 04:24) and prove he is "un jeune homme serieux" (04:30). The screenplay has Jenny using French phrases interchangeably in her conversation. It reiterates the filmic principle that action is character. Jenny wants to *be* French. She smiles when she speaks it, she is comfortable in this mode. Jenny's bursts into French language are a clever dimension of her characterisation that realistically mimics the eager high school student's willingness to share their knowledge. In doing so, Jenny's "self" is also further explored.

The scene opens with a medium long shot through the French doors of the Mellor dining room. The camera zooms in on Graham, in tie and blazer, sitting at the dining room table. This camera angle places him between Jenny and Jack, as though preparing for an interview. The room has bland, grey walls and very little light apart from a distant window and a few dim lamps. Even their tidy, uninspired clothes seem to match the walls. Jenny's mother, Marjorie (Cara Seymour), offers Graham Battenberg cake. The piece crumbles and he mumbles that he prefers the crust anyway. The clock ticks loudly in the background and Jenny smiles sympathetically. Jack asks Graham to which universities he will be applying. Graham makes the mistake of revealing he is unsure, that he is considering travelling. At the very word travel, the camera cuts to Jenny who flinches, knowing too well that this is not the correct thing to say. As viewers, we also know that Jenny would not disagree with Graham's plans but she is canny enough to not express this in front of her father. Jack's smile disappears. The prospect of travel is unimaginable in the enclosed room.

Jack: You know she's going to Oxford, don't you? [...] So while she's studying English at Oxford, you'll be the wandering Jew. (10:32)

Jenny looks embarrassed at this last comment.

Graham: Mr Mellor...I'm not a teddy boy. I'm an *homme serieux. Jeune*. No. Yeah. I'm a *homme jeune serieux homme*. (10:45)

Marjorie smiles politely though emptily and we see Jack glance at Jenny to express quiet protest with Graham. The camera returns to the scene's opening frame, bookending the encounter in a kind of circuit that reaffirms Barber's remark of the typical routine for any interested boys. Graham takes a sip of tea and the sound of the china cup on the saucer rings softly. The round is over. Graham is knocked out.

This is a crucial scene not solely revealing the process Jenny's "love" interests endure but also exploring the Mellor's home life and thus the world that has defined Jenny. The medium close-up angles of Graham from Jack and Jenny's perspective and the dull mise-en-scene all work to isolate and compound Graham's awkward experience. The compact room creates a figurative sense of having very little room to move in; the setting actualises Graham's feeling of entrapment. Furthermore, the scene develops the roles each member of the Mellor family assumes: the protective, hierarchical father; the apologist, domestic mother and Jenny the child, knowing how to play her cards while quietly seeking her individualism. This scene again emphasises the nature of Jenny's world and the import of a formal education. This encounter deliberately creates the impression that this manner is typical for her father and thus helps accentuate the surprise as our expectations of character and circumstance are challenged when Jack and Marjorie meet David.

This scene also establishes a pattern of development in Jenny's journey through stylistic and narrative contrasts in setting, characterisation and mise-en-scene that will follow in the film and be explored further in this case study.

Scene: First Encounter between David and Jenny's Parents

Lynn Barber's memoir scathingly reflects on how readily winsome her parents considered Simon. Part of the intrigue in Lynn Barber's affair with a con-man, is how easily her parents were drawn in by his charm despite their conservative social lives, their practical and stringently run household. The adaptation of *An Education* explores this dynamic through the characterisation of Jenny's parents and the excitement David's world seems to proffer. The film does not apologise for the parents' role in nearly sacrificing their daughter's education but the portrayal of their social circumstances, largely through their dialogue and the mise-en-scene of their conventional home life, proposes how and why they were disarmed and captivated by a character like David. Barber's questioning of her parents for being conned as easily as she, a teenage girl was, is in a sense, addressed then in the adaptation. Barber's incredulity is an opportunity for the adaptation to cast new perspectives on her narrative. As a teenager, Jenny feels the biggest obstacle to her life is her father and David's ease in overcoming this, takes her life, the narrative, in a drastic new turn.

The scene opens with Jack adamant that the concert David has asked Jenny to go to in St John's Smith Square is too far away. As she tidies, Marjorie interjects with directions and adds, "I had a life before we were married" (14:34). Jenny dryly responds, "He soon put a stop to that" (14:35). A medium shot frames two open doors: Marjorie in the left kitchen doorway and to the right, Jenny stands in the hallway doorframe, ready to leave. Here, the mother and daughter are symbolically separated by what they each expect of life. Marjorie's domestic life is placed alongside Jenny's desire to leave. Jack says, "And how do you suppose to get there? RAF helicopter?" (14:52). Marjorie is presented as the sympathetic member of this family, the buffer state between Jack and Jenny. Jack's dialogue throughout the film is witty in its frequent hyperbole but it also fills the Mellor household with a sense of paternal and insurmountable opposition to living differently. The use of dialogue here not only illustrates how conventional and stubborn Jack is, but it also helps the audience realise what a momentous feat David's triumph is in securing Jack's trust. Jenny forewarns her father about David:

Jenny: David's a Jew. A wandering Jew. So watch yourself.

Jack: What does she mean by that? [...] It's just an expression. I've got nothing against the Jews...

David: Glad to hear it. Hello. (15:15)

Jack quickly tries to justify his comments as David enters the room. David's confident body language as he spins his hat already provides a distinct contrast in maturity to Graham, the recent fumbling memory of him still fresh in viewers' minds. David faces Jack but diplomatically moves on from a confrontation and instead turns to Marjorie: "You didn't tell me you had a sister, Jenny" (15:37). Surprisingly, Marjorie giggles; she clearly has not been flattered in a long time. Jenny stands in disbelief at the trite remark and his early facile victory over a suddenly coy mother. David remarks, "You're a lucky man, Jack" (15:47). David is socially canny. His audacity overrides Jack's dominance. David is a man. This may be a simple statement of fact but it transforms the dynamic in Jenny's home. From this point on, Jack seeks David's opinion, rather than solely giving his own. David's smooth and experienced talk, contrasts with Graham's boyish manner. This contrast also reveals something of Jenny's personality. She is mature for her age and already appears to get along better with David than with the awkward but well meaning Graham. A medium long shot captures them as they all sit on the sofas. The room itself is bland and poorly lit and the four of them sit almost crowded. The clock ticks loudly.

David: This is lovely. (15:59)

The observation is twee, particularly following David's clichéd remark to Marjorie. This encounter does take place in a slightly larger room with a window that provides a natural light. The increase in lighting and space conveys a stronger sense than there was with Graham that David will be accommodated. As homemaker, Marjorie thanks David; recurring scenes of Marjorie's domestic efforts go unnoticed by Jack. David's "This is lovely" also sets up an important parallelism, which illuminates character to be echoed later in the film. This will be discussed further in the chapter.

The first of a series of lies begins in this scene. David asks for Jack's permission to take Jenny to supper with her Aunt Helen after the concert. This will mean breaking Jenny's curfew and Jack is instinctively hesitant. Helen is actually glamorous and girlfriend to David's friend, Danny. She is more concerned with trumpery than being anyone's chaperone. As viewers we feel the lie might not have been necessary if Jack were more lenient. The lie feels harmless enough, to allow Jenny the escape she desires to the light we see outside and to appease Jack with a conservative plan.

Again, film employs its visual narrative strength: contrast. In his dapper suit and hat, and his "Jewish" intrigue, David is a point of difference in the sunless Mellor household. He represents a different type of experience with his knowledge of concerts and ease with

friendly conversation. He seals this impression as he and Jenny leave and he kisses Marjorie on the hand: a true gentleman.

We see the unexpected success of this introduction in Jenny's eyes as she leaves the living room with David, bewildered to have her father's consent. Jack is nervously assuaged by David's open manner and charm. It is this charm which means David makes his own conditions. This winsome encounter then, paves the way for Jenny and David's relationship to continue, a necessary turning point in Barber's experience and the film narrative.

Escapism and Evasion in *An Education*

In *An Education* David initially represents a world of escapism and he encourages Jenny to live out her desires for music, art, travel, whim and fancy. The contrast from normality to the outside world with David is elevated through the sensory registers of the mise-en-scene such as performance, lighting, space, colour and the accompanying soundtrack. These transitions are pivotal indicators of the film's development and distinguishes the two lives Jenny starts to lead.

The following examples of scenes in *An Education* engage with the adventures Lynn Barber recalls in her memoir and how this encounter placed her in vastly different, colourful and peopled contexts. The editing and mise-en-scene in these scenes work to present an alluring external reality for Jenny, one that begins to shape her changing self. The space in the setting of these scenes is in contrast to the closed in walls of Jenny's home or classroom. This physical dimension of film is used to illustrate and explore a world beyond the frame, beyond what Jenny has known. Furthermore, these scenes demonstrate how visual and aural filmic contrasts and parallelisms can function to demarcate experience and setting and reveal the personalities of characters in each world. Perhaps most interesting in these scenes is the recurring image of Jenny within the crowd. As an explorative storytelling medium, the adaptation rediscovers these experiences Barber refers to through narrative events that deliberately place Jenny in the midst of a much busier, larger world.

As this thesis continues to show, film adaptation regularly structures narrative turning points to ensure the individual's experience is understood by contrast to the surrounding reality. The external reality then, not only illuminates "the self" but also explores the wider implications of the narrative such as the values of the temporal context and the themes and ideas in the narrative through the stylistic signifiers of the surrounding world.

Scene: Jenny's Romantic Escape to David's World

A long high-angle shot frames Jenny and David laughing, as they run along the road to the theatre. It is a fresh scene for the film thus far: the sense of escapism is realised in the expanse of the cityscape, the moody blue hue of the evening sky lit by street lamps and car lights. The camera moves quickly as Jenny and David approach the steps; the pace of this world is already different. Danny (Dominic Cooper) and Helen (Rosamund Pike) stand a step above Jenny as they turn to meet them. Danny wears a tuxedo and Helen's white silk and fur coat practically glows in the evening air. There is an immediate desirability about them in their modern elegance. Jenny's delight when Helen puts her hand out so they can go inside together feels like the best kind of societal acceptance.

As viewers we understand why Jenny wants to enter this world too. Jenny instinctively reaches to touch Helen's coat and embarrassingly Helen sees her do this.

Helen: It's lovely isn't it? (17:50)

Jenny's contrasting appearance (plaid dress and straight hair) is indicative of her youth and conventional upbringing. Jenny's simple gold locket is muted beside the glittering, bejewelled Helen. On a figurative level, costume functions through *An Education* to separate and reveal character through their social experiences.

Jenny: C'est beaucoup trop cher pour moi. (18:17)

Helen pauses and Jenny seems the more unusual for this outburst.

Jenny: I just said...it's too expensive for me.

Helen: No you didn't. You said something completely different. (18:24)

Jenny and David catch each other's attention from across the room through the bustling crowd. Their smiles indicate their mutual pleasure already in the evening and each other. A technique used throughout this film is the racking and pulling focus of the camera. This adjusts the perspective of who is seen clearly in the frame and who is blurred. The technique is useful as a way to direct the audience's attention to characters' actions, reactions and interactions: a visual conversation. This technique helps propel the narrative forward, prioritising characters' expressions within a busy scene and is another way to reveal characters' mindsets. In this case, Jenny may be talking to Helen but she is distracted and thinks of David. This image also functions symbolically, as David is gradually becoming the person Jenny seeks and vice versa.

After the concert, the group go to Club Juliette's so as not "to end the evening reflecting on their own mortality" (19:50) after listening to so much classical music. Jenny smiles excited to be with people who "believe in concerts" and speak like this. The bold attitude of a trumpet and saxophone interject and introduce the atmosphere of the next scene before

we have arrived. Interestingly, this music is again briefly non-diegetic and sets the tone for the coolness of the romantic atmosphere before becoming a diegetic and central part of the following scene.

The scene at Juliette's opens with a medium shot of the singer (Beth Rowley) and her band, placing the song in its diegetic context. She stands at the microphone in a beguiling black sparkling dress with golden trim. Her hair is curled in a Marilyn Monroe-esque blonde wave. She begins, "I wanna Sunday kind of love" (20:05) as the drum kicks in a slow, scooping beat, the rhythm of the music seems to coalesce with Jenny's peripheral intake of the club. The camera pulls back from the stage to reveal the atmospheric lighting catching the glittering chandeliers reflected in the large mirrors, the glossy instruments and the rich navy and golden furnishings. The camera pans around the room, revealing the breadth of the lively setting. The fluid camera movement and longer shot durations emphasise the leisurely pace of this new world, replete with glamorous people. The room has a magical cave-like feel in a sparkling kind of haze. The camera passes by a column that has the brief effect of a fade-in and fade-out to show Jenny on the other side admiring her surroundings. The camera movement, lighting and mise-en-scene work to construct a sense of Jenny's mesmerised experience. Again, her unadorned appearance in stark contrast to the setting and the singer accentuate the "newness" of her experience. A medium close-up frames a wide-eyed Jenny as the background blurs as it shimmers. A steady strain of chatter from the happy crowd persists and Danny's voice is heard as the camera pans towards their table. Their conversation is overflowing with cultural references as Danny, Helen and David leisurely smoke their cigarettes. Jenny looks overwhelmed and happy.

The confusion between Helen and Jenny's tendency to speak French soon resurfaces when Danny says the best place for Jenny to see her favourite French singer, Juliette Greco, is in Paris.

Danny: David will take you.

David: I'd love to. You'd fit right in. (20:46)

Helen touches Jenny's hand supportively, "Better than here, really" (20:54). Jenny quickly learns that though Helen is beautiful and very friendly, her consideration does not go far beyond the creation of an aesthetic. This is a direct engagement with the text as Barber says of Helen, "I hardly liked to use the word about my goddess – she was thick" (Barber 41). This scene effortlessly develops more of each character and their group dynamic, as Helen sits quietly while Danny and David impress Jenny with their cultural knowledge. Helen looks shocked when Danny begins speaking French too, as though it were catching.

David revels in Jenny's enthusiasm. "There is so much I want to show you" (20:57), he says. The mood shifts slightly at the double entendre. Danny mentions a Burne-Jones he is "desperate to get his hands on" (21:10) at an auction. This excites Jenny who is also passionate about the Pre-Raphaelites.

Jenny: A real one? (21:17)

Jenny's dialogue holds her two conflicting worlds in one brief question. She is passionate about the arts and has, perhaps unusually, ripened tastes for someone so young. But that she asks if it is "a real one" reveals she is not accustomed to the wealth nor the cultural priorities that would see someone buy an original piece of art. Impressed, Danny suggests they all go to the auction together and Jenny reacts, incredulous that her new friends are so relaxed in this enchanting world.

The band begins a love song, clearly familiar to Helen and Danny who start singing. As viewers, we get a strong sense that this social glamour is a routine part of their lives. The camera moves to a medium long shot of the club, reiterating the wideness of this new world for Jenny. The shadows in the room create an atmosphere of excitement and uncertainty for what the lights hides and reveals. Danny reengages with Helen who has been unable to contribute to the conversation. "You got me wrapped around your little finger" (22:13), they sing, leaning into each other affectionately. The camera frames Jenny in between them, an enamoured onlooker, from across the table. Danny and Helen represent an idea of romance that Jenny seems impressed by. The camera moves to David, also framed between Danny and Helen. As the singer continues, "If this is love" (22:21), David looks down thoughtfully and then to Jenny, who coyly puts her head down. "It's everything I hoped it would be" (22:30), continues the song. The blurring sparkle of the singer in the background contrasts with the unworldly shyness Jenny exudes. The music forms a lyrical commentary. A point-of-view shot frames Danny and Helen, entwining their fingers while David and Jenny sit apart and laugh nervously. The spatial relationship between Danny and Helen coupled with the song pose an experience of romance Jenny would like to have, but the spatial relationship between her and David reveals that it is one she is yet to have. She becomes a spectator to the romantic evening as we are.

A recurring theme in the source text is this notion of false impressions and the adaptation visually explores this through the construction of narrative events that focus on Jenny's isolated experience in this new, alluring world. A final close-up of Jenny shows her beaming and the image fades to black and again the music softens and trickles into the next scene as Jenny walks into the dark hall of her home. It morphs with a jarred, dream like

quality as Jenny opens her front door, creating the effect of recalled music, showing that the evening is on her mind.

Marjorie is scrubbing a casserole dish in the kitchen when Jenny enters, clearly waiting for Jenny to come home. Jenny says, "Best night of my life" (23:25). Marjorie does not say anything to this and her lack of response is unmistakable. This silence is an engagement and exploration of the emotionally distant relationship with her parents Barber speaks of in her text. It is the appropriate time for a mother and daughter to connect with each other but instead the silence only serves in accentuating her burgeoning social life from her home life. As the case study will continue to explore, the mise-en-scene in either setting, particularly through lighting and space, creates the impression that the new life, is emotionally a much warmer and easier world than her Twickenham suburbia and this impression helps shape Jenny's changing "self" while heightening the drama of her journey.

Scene: Danny's Apartment and the Warm Light of Choice

The setting for escapism is again reinforced by the mise-en-scene of Danny's apartment in contrast to the mise-en-scene and cinematography that constructs Jenny's suburban Twickenham life. The cultural sophistication Barber writes that she longed for as a teenager and initially felt was possible through her relationship with Simon, is cinematically realised in the film's demarcation of setting. Characters are shaped by and reflect their settings. The warmth and light in Danny's apartment for example exudes a life that suggests choice and possibility, which in turn is reflected in Danny's cavalier character. The opening wide shot from inside Danny's apartment reveals the large living room: a freedom in the space. Jazz music trumpets quietly on the record player and David sits waiting on an elegant, silk sofa.

Danny: As you can see I just love things. (26:53)

Danny bounces a ball as he and Jenny walk into the room of his refined toys: a large lamp, gilded mirrors, wooden floors, polished classical and oriental furniture. The most striking observation is the change in light. The furniture is cream, as are the high walls and ceilings. The sunlight streams through a large window from the left. There is a marked polarity between the space and the light of Danny's living room compared with the dark, cotton closed curtain living room of Jenny's home. Danny's comment that he just "loves things" parallels effectively with a later scene where Jack lambasts Jenny and Marjorie for suggesting they pay for private Latin tutoring. Jack points to their room's adornments, sarcastically saying, "All of this is free. This vase is free...that chair, this sofa, it's all free. We

don't have to pay for anything!" (31:28) Seated on the plush sofas, Danny suggests they take a trip to Oxford together the following weekend.

Jenny: (to David) I wouldn't be allowed to do that.

David: I'll talk to them. (27:43)

David is confident he can persuade Jack to let Jenny go away for the weekend with him.

Jenny: I'll bet you can't.

David: How much? (27:57)

In the background behind Jenny, Danny warns, "I'd be careful if I were you Jenny. You don't know who you're dealing with" (28:02). Again the camera racks and pulls focus to highlight the importance of Danny's advice. The focus is pulled back to Jenny in the foreground who has not taken notice of Danny's sage warning of David's true character, not yet aware that she need have paid attention. Ignoring this remark reveals something of Jenny's own "self": her willingness to immerse herself in the promise this new world appears to offer.

These scenes are carefully constructed to present a new world for Jenny of light and expanse with the symbolic connotations of culture and independence and forging a new life. The contrasts in mise-en-scene: props, lighting, performance and even the languid movement of David, Danny and Helen present a contrasting walk of life. Jenny sits in the centre of these settings but still a schoolgirl in her dated and conservative dress. Helen's makeover of Jenny marks a new milestone in Jenny's journey and the narrative takes on a new pace. As Barber suggests in her essay, looking and feeling like a mature young woman du jour does not mean that one is a mature woman. The more Jenny explores this guise, the more she looks part of the cultural ensemble and the deeper entrenched she becomes in this other sphere.

The Oxford trip in the film exemplifies how adaptation can use the external reality to reveal the character's inner "self" and vice versa. Jenny's changing appearance conveys the impression that her "self" is changing also. However, as the Bristol pulls up outside Oxford University, we see a close-up of Jenny beaming as she looks up to the steeples of the college. She looks quite unlike herself with long mascara-lashes, pearl earrings and stylish clothes but her willingness to be amongst this setting is palpable. The orchestral music soars as Jenny smiles; Oxford looks picturesque on this blue, sunny day.

Jenny: Can't we get out and have a look around?

David: Later. If we have time. (37:44)

The maroon sports car is out of place. The camera cuts to Danny and Helen in the back-seat. They shudder at the thought of spending three years there regardless of Jenny's presence. Jenny may be staged physically at the centre of the frame throughout these

scenes but this is the first glimpse of Jenny as not being able to assert any influence in the apparent freedom of David's world. Furthermore, her disappointment at not looking around Oxford is evident and proves that her inherent aspirations are at odds with her new appearance.

Lynn Barber describes the temporal context or social climate of her story as "before the advent of feminism" (Barber 47). Her father, who was initially adamant that Lynn would go to Oxford, changed his mind after Simon proposed to her. Her parents adopted the view that she would not need a university education if she had a good husband. Barber's memoir raises valuable questions about the expectations inherent in these gender roles at the time and this is explored throughout the adaptation in the characterisation of adults who surround Jenny.

An Education shares an important thematic trait common to most coming-of-age narratives: choice. Jenny is surrounded by adults who each represent different decisions in life and thus represent possible fates (Aronson 162). In *An Education* these choices are actualised through several characters such as: the conventional, uneducated female roles of Marjorie, Helen and David's wife who are all dependent on their husbands; David and Danny who offer an unfulfilling and corrupt life with a veneer of ease; the school Headmistress (Emma Thompson) who is educated and strong but uninspired and Jenny's quietly passionate, considered and perceptive English teacher, Miss Stubbs (Olivia Williams).

Barber explains the narrow options she felt she was faced with as a teenager were either to stay in school and spend the Summer studying alone or yield to the combined pressure from her parents to accept Simon's marriage proposal. The memoir's thematic notion of choice and direction and how this constructed and defined Barber's past and future "self" is explored throughout the symbolic signifiers in the adaptation's recreation of this journey.

Again, the film structures its narrative events to illuminate the sensations of the central character's experience. The descriptive properties of the mise-en-scene and editing mould the external reality to reveal and play off the character's internal reality while exploring the narrative's wider implications. The following scene engages with its source text, exploring the experience of "the self" and the new perspectives that arise from cinematic interpretation.

Scene: A New Juncture

Barber recalls how Danny and David purported to be “doing business” and went into an open home under false pretences and stole an antique map from an elderly woman. This incident was her first real understanding of Simon’s duplicity and though upset, she eventually chose to accept his justification and ignore what it really meant about his character.

The following analysis of scene occurs post the theft of the map. Jenny is furious with the group’s deceit and attempts to leave David. This narrative turning point explores Barber’s concern but eventual submission. Her compliance in this scene creates an interesting parallel between the supposed freedom she believes (at this stage) that being with David brings, versus the restricted role she sees her mother as having, which she wants to avoid. David and Jenny’s conversation recreates the two different worlds and philosophies Barber suggests divided her and Simon but it also explores how their relationship awkwardly teetered between mutual understanding and close proximity and extreme personal differences. Furthermore, the scene visually explores the *role* each assumes in the relationship and the guise both Simon and Lynn, and David and Jenny perpetuate by veiling who they really are or in Jenny’s case, how she really feels.

Newly aware of this group’s underhanded dealings and their acceptance of it in order to make money, the return to Danny’s grand, neo-classical apartment building takes on a new feel. Jenny now knows the compromises made to drive sports cars, bid on masterpieces and live in resplendent places. Jenny storms out of the car, striding in her high heels, looking older with this new truth. David walks after Jenny who eventually stops to listen to him. They stand in the middle of the road; a visual motif in *An Education* and regular meeting ground for David and Jenny is the road as an extended metaphor for their journey. David attempts to justify the map theft.

David: Poor dear didn’t even know what it was [...] It shouldn’t spend its life on a wall [...] It should be with us. We know how to look after it properly. We *liberated* it. (*An Education* 44:48)

Behind David, the frame captures the monumental buildings and expensive cars, as though their presence rationalises his actions. The subtext of his dialogue resounds with Jenny, also a liberated wallflower, out of her plain suburbia to where she thinks she belongs. Jenny remains incredulous.

David: Don’t be bourgeois, Jenny. You’re better than that. (45:05)

This argument touches a nerve with Jenny because she so wants to break away from the mould of her routine monotony. In her memoir, Barber recalls how trying to be sophisticated meant not asking questions because it showed you were “naïve and bourgeois”

(Barber 37). The “self” of the source text is cinematically rendered through the characterisation of Jenny as unquestioning because she is impatient to belong to a sophisticated world. In a previous scene at a café with her friends, Tina and Hattie, Jenny had been discussing the themes of existentialism in Camus’s novel *The Outsider*. “Feeling is bourgeois...Being engagé is bourgeois,” (12:00) says Jenny in affectation.

David: We’re not clever like you, so we have to be clever in other ways because if we weren’t, there would be no fun. (45:19)

Jenny rolls her eyes and smirks at the flattery. David sees this and relaxes somewhat. He takes the opportunity to reveal more of his unconventional business tactics to do with Peter Rachman involving buying flats cheaply from “old ladies” (45:33) who leave their apartment buildings scared of the new “coloured people” (45:35) David has helped move in. He continues:

David: But these weekends, and the restaurants and the concerts...
They don’t grow on trees. (46:02)

David’s analogy using trees directly parallels with a recent outburst from Jenny’s father.

Jack: That’s the beauty of life, you don’t have to pay for anything [...] There’s a lovely Oxford tree growing in the garden [...] a whole orchard of school trees, so that school is free [...] I think there’s even a private tuition tree [...] There might be a man with deep pockets growing out there. Because God knows you’re going to need one. (31:42)

Jack’s trees and David’s trees grow different possibilities stemming from different philosophies about money and life. This immediate contrast in dialogue is an effective way to reveal the internal psychology of each character but it also presents Jenny with two options. Jack is understandably concerned for the financial security of his family. He uses the proverbial trees to express the uncertainty of the future and why they must compromise now to achieve their goals later. Contrastingly, David believes in making ethical compromises to embrace the present while you can: a small sacrifice for a life of indulgence. Ironically, David is a combination of the “wandering Jew” and “man with deep pockets” Jack both fears and hopes for.

This dialogue is another example of how parallelism functions in film to create cohesive distinctions between characters and setting and thus plot the development of the central protagonist’s journey between the different worlds. As viewers we see Jenny is beginning to feel her life is the *one or the other* decision David and her father propose. “This is who we are” (46:08), concludes David. The stirrings of non-diegetic orchestra music called *Waltz in the Street* (Paul Englishby) begin. Its somber and trepidatious timbre adds to the uncertain atmosphere, conveying the seriousness of Jenny’s decision of whether to accept David’s explanation. Their confrontation on the road is a powerful image that metaphori-

cally renders the uncertainty of Jenny's journey, her choice of direction and whether they will take the same one together. She eventually smiles and stomps her foot: an unconvincing sulk that engages with Barber's revelation that she was adept at this teenaged temperament. Jenny has chosen David's trees. The music lightens as he swirls her around and brings her in for a hug. David smiles in relief and the camera pulls back to show a medium long shot of them dancing in the street and laughing. A high-angle shot cuts to Danny and Helen leaning between the large columns of the balcony. "C'mon you two", says Helen, clinking two glasses together. "You can have my olive," (46:50) says Danny. Danny and Helen standing atop the pinnacle of luxury and sophistication is a rather outrageous image in its decadence. Jenny and David look up to them and move to join them again.

Narrative Turning Points and the Changing "Self" in *An Education*

Discoveries of plot and character are central to propelling action and developing character in film narrative. As these two case studies have illustrated, a series of plot revelations or character epiphanies carry the protagonist's journey forward, illuminates the character's "self" and brings a certain weight to experience. These scenes are emotional turning points and a crucial narrative device for projecting the internal reality of a character and thus vital to creating an engaging story. As this thesis has argued, the film adaptation process frequently restructures how the source text's emotional turning points unfold on screen. This is necessary in transitioning a literary "self" into a cinematic character and recreating an experience that uses the strengths and sensibilities of film's multiple registers and narrative construction.

Narrative climaxes are an opportunity for adaptation to explore "the self" of character and cast new perspectives on the wider implications of narrative through the cinematically interpretative realisation of the character's external reality. The present-tense/real-time of film is utilised in the unfolding discoveries to conjure an emotional authenticity that comes with living in the moment. These charged scenes show how film is as much about the journey as the destination. Considered in conversation with Barber's memoir, these adapted narrative turning points, are interesting for how they are structurally interpreted to unfold in line with film's storytelling strengths, and place the protagonist in the thick of the drama. In manipulating the character's experience, the film manipulates the viewers' emotions, heightening their investment in the narrative.

Scene: The Bristol Epiphany: Action is Character

A medium long shot frames David and Jenny as they pull up in the Bristol outside her house. David's recent revelatory speech to Jenny has resounded with her and she believes she has discovered what she wants for herself.

Jenny: You have no idea how boring everything was before I met you. (47:23)

David remains quiet and seemingly happy that Jenny has now taken the reigns in the conversation.

Jenny: Action is character, our English teacher says. I think it means that if we never did anything, we wouldn't be anybody. And I never did anything before I met you. (47:32)

This is a dexterous piece of dialogue. It not only pinpoints Jenny's new feeling of momentum in life because of David but from a narrative construction perspective, *action is character* is the essence of creating and understanding a cinematic "self." Furthermore, it is an underlying premise of this thesis that argues storytelling is how we construct our own characters. Jenny's thoughtful dialogue, their close proximity and the near silence of the night time setting creates a positive tension proceeding a series of fluctuating emotions on the Oxford trip. A close-up of a kiss is noted in the screenplay as "gently and tenderly" (Hornby 121). David's different world has prompted Jenny to reassess the path to an interesting life. The moment signifies Jenny's changing perceptions through the trust she has come to have in David. As a moving and quiet example of epiphany, this is also one of the few moments in the film where Jenny and David interact as equals both new and (seemingly) sincere to the experience of each other. This scene artfully intersects as encounter and epiphany. In a later scene, a rare moment shows Danny and David talking without Jenny. "This is the one, Danny" (1:04:50), David says. This is a "textbook" case of what Aragay suggests is imperative in a romantic film: more than one perspective is necessary to create the chemistry and tension of a romantic connection (Aragay 251). Regardless of David's duplicity, this "off-guard" remark arguably affirms his feelings for Jenny are authentic if misplaced.

Scene: Jenny discovers David's Secret

The most climactic scene of discovery in both the memoir and the film *An Education* is the discovery that Simon is already married. Having already accepted his marriage proposal, Barber had to leave school, thus relinquishing her chance to go to Oxford and the fruits of a life she envisaged through her education.

From an adaptation perspective, what is most notable about this epiphany scene is how transformed it is in perspective from Lynn Barber's memoir. Considering this moment of

discovery in the source text alongside the film, encapsulates how the transition from page to screen is an opportunity to explore the psychological core of the character's experience.

Lynn Barber recalls how she discovered the letters in the Bristol glove box shortly after their engagement. "It was something I could have done on any one of a hundred occasions before," she says, "The result was instantaneous" (Barber 49). When Simon returned to the car though, she did not confront him about his wife. It was not until she concocted a ruse to ring the address on the letters that her discovery of Simon's infidelity was confirmed. Mrs Goldman answered the telephone and Lynn made an enquiry about the Bristol, to which Mrs Goldman said, "Oh, is he selling it?" (50). This was confirmation enough for Lynn who also heard a child in the background. She visited Helen who confirmed that Simon was married with two children. "I'm sorry," Helen said to Lynn, "I wanted to [tell you.] The other night when you said you were engaged, I told Danny we *must* tell you, but he said Simon would never forgive us" (50). Lynn then "raged at her parents" (51) who were "white with shock" (51) particularly as they had no idea that Simon had ever behaved in an underhanded manner. Lastly, it was Lynn's father who confronted Simon when he turned up at their house. It was her father who "tried to punch him" (51) and yelled, "You've ruined her life!" (51). Lynn looked on from her upstairs bedroom window. The adaptation's cinematic reinterpretation of this event is fascinating for how it engages with Barber's account but places her at the centre of this confrontation. In doing so, the adaptation creates a cohesive narrative that projects a new perspective and approach to depicting a character's journey while still revealing the emotional and practical consequences of Barber's experience.

David is taking Jenny and her parents out for a dinner (presumably a celebratory engagement dinner). They stop at a petrol station and David gets out to make a call. The non-diegetic long, isolated violin strings arouse an unusual tension, an ominous effect in contrast to how normal the scene appears to be. Jack and Marjorie sit in the back seat of the Bristol. Jenny sits confidently in the front in her new mode of sophisticated dress, glamorous earrings and make up. Barber recounts how Simon would often buy her clothing. The adaptation actualises this detail of their relationship into an important visual signifier of Jenny's journey with David and changing "self". Her outward appearance is an attempt to belong to this new sophisticated world. Yet as the memoir and the film both explore, the outward appearance, the external reality can reveal an interesting commentary about the inner truth of a character. This will be explored further shortly.

Jenny opens the glove box to find a cigarette. A close-up of the *Players Bachelor* packet, a visual motif, shows it is empty: a telling sign. Jack is babbling nervously about whether he should help pay for the petrol. He fiddles anxiously with the features in the car and a piece of the window handle snaps: the symbolic effect of this is instantaneous. Jenny finally notices the letters in the glove box. These are addressed to David and his wife. David sees Jenny looking at them and is immediately at her side. She assertively calls for silence and tells David to take them home.

Journeys in the Bristol: Vehicle of Experience

Lynn Barber regularly mentions Simon taking her places, her first and last rides in the Bristol. After her relationship with Simon came to a dramatic close, Barber recalls, "Once or twice I saw the Bristol parked at the end of the street, but I was never remotely tempted to go to it" (Barber 52). These visual details in source texts are an effective way for the adaptation process to express and engage wider ideas and themes in the narrative. It is easy to see how Lynn Barber's frequent mention of the Bristol becomes a recurring visual emblem with pattern and meaning, enabling a literal journey as well as a figurative coming-of-age journey.

David's Bristol is a shell for the outside world: an appearance of social status and financial security where David can exude confidence. The recurring image of Jenny and David in the Bristol together is symbolic of their journey that eventually takes Jenny back to where she started: at home with her initial dream of Oxford and a revised version of the experiences she longs for. The Bristol is where Jenny first meets David and learns of his world of concerts and travel; it is where she slyly smokes cigarettes away from her parents notice; it is how she first sees Oxford and where David stores his dubiously "adopted" antiques; it is where Jenny announces that life was boring before David came along and where they share a first kiss; it is where he proposes to Jenny; it is where Jenny's parents experience the thrill of luxury and take a back seat to their daughter's new place in the world and finally, it is where Jenny discovers that her fiancé is a fraud and already married. The ease with which Jack then dismantles the car is telling. It is the beginning of the demise and the end of this ride. David's crumbling car is a symbolic blow to the journey he has invited Jenny to take with him.

Scene (continued): Jenny's Discovery and the Drama of Confrontation

Once home, Jenny moves out to the footpath. Indicative of the faith that her parents have in David, Jack asks, "You can take care of this can't you, David?" (*An Education* 1:16:57) There is no response. Jenny again asserts that her parents go inside. She stands

in the dark, her cream and gold dress glowing in the night now like Helen's had upon their first encounter. Jenny wears a white cardigan over her dress. It is too big for her and makes her look like she is in dress-ups. As she shuffles through the letters, Jenny repeats:

Mr and Mrs David Goldman...You're married! (1:17:09)

In his guilt, David hesitates to speak and this contrasts with Jenny's impatient confrontation.

Jenny: You were living with your wife, all this time...round the corner
[...]It's no wonder we kept bumping into each other then is it?
[...]

David: Don't be like this. Come on. (1:17:29)

His attempts to soothe Jenny echo his recent justifications of the theft of the map. Then, they were also arguing on the street and the compromise Jenny made to be with David then, reverberates cruelly now. "This is who we are", he had said at the time, but of course, it was not completely who he was at all. Now the argument bears more consequence. Without the presence of the looming grand apartment building and the distracting paraphernalia and promise of a "fun" life, Jenny and David face each other with only the fact of themselves. The setting is almost completely dark except for Jenny and David who are alternately shot in close-ups, illuminated by the Bristol's lights. Now we see who David is. "Everything will turn out for the best" (1:18:05), David says, prophetically predicting Jenny's future but not his own.

Jenny: I have nothing. I didn't take my exams. I left school.
Where's it all gone, now? (1:17:49)

David says he will get a divorce. She begs him to not leave her alone to explain this to her parents. He asks for a moment to get some Dutch courage. The camera cuts to Jenny inside her house, patting her heart. A medium close-up frames David crying into the steering wheel, after taking a swig of alcohol. Jenny's parents wait literally and figuratively in the dark, sitting opposite each other on the sofas. Jenny sits further away, at the dining room table, waiting. A car engine ignites and Jack moves to the window. The headlights of the Bristol illuminate Jack, Marjorie and Jenny as David drives away. It is an interrogative light. Jenny looks starkly white in the headlights. There is something clownish about her red, red lips and the streaks of running mascara. She suddenly looks like a young girl in costume, wanting to be a woman.

The narrative changes made to this scene are exemplary of how the adaptation process can discover new perspectives through its reshaping of material prioritising the experience of "the self", "human time" and what makes a story cinematically poignant. *An Education*, film and memoir, is told from the same perspective. It follows then that the adaptation will restructure this discovery to continue exploring Jenny's emotional experi-

ence, which is at the core of this narrative. This scene of discovery in *An Education* illustrates how the adaptation process frequently transitions literary “characters” into cinematic ones through restructuring narrative turning points to have the central character confront their character and/or plot discovery. This brings a new sensory physicality to the cinematic “self” of narrative.

If we tell stories to share, shape and understand experience, then fidelity in adaptation does not encourage storytelling in film because it encourages duplication rather than creation. Arguably, if Jenny’s discovery of David’s marriage had remained “faithful” to the source text, it might have been more factually accurate but not capture the realistic emotion. Without confrontation, it would be a cinematic anti-climax. Throughout *An Education*, Jenny is at the centre of emotional discovery; her experience is how we, the audience, experience. Hornby’s characterisation of David has lulled the audience into an unusual sense of security, as David is fairly open about his unorthodox money making methods. Lynn’s telling of her discovery absorbs and surprises the reader but in a way that is innate to the solitary nature of reading.

Film enables a real-time, sensory expatiation on life transforming situations. Unlike the text, the presence of others at this crucial moment explores the external reality of Jenny’s experience as well as the core. Hornby’s depiction imagines the experience for her parents as well as for David. In the film, Jenny is with her parents in the car when she discovers the truth about David. The shot frames them behind her: a visual metaphor for their support of her actions. Her parents’ presence also serves as a constant reminder of Jenny’s youth and the security she had prior to the relationship. Her immediate confrontation of David is in keeping with the characterisation of her as an impassioned young woman. David’s exit leaves Jenny in the spotlight. Because Jenny has fooled her parents in the past means that they were not in a position to protect Jenny from being fooled herself.

The adaptation places Jenny at the centre of action as she is the narrative’s vehicle for understanding “the self” of experience. The youthful Jenny returns; her recent confidence exposed as a guise for her naïve desire for sophistication. The falsity of the character David encouraged her to play, that she was willing to play, feels awkward. The family still stands apart. The personal has had a very public unraveling: film’s method for manipulating emotion and illuminating character interiority.

Scene: A New World in Miss Stubbs's Flat

At the end of Lynn Barber's personal essay, she recalls how her former English teacher offered to tutor her free to help her prepare for the exams she missed having left school. Though Barber does not elaborate, this suggests that her talent was recognised by the teacher and there was a positive relationship behind this offer of tuition. The adaptation explores this dimension of Barber's narrative and uses it as an opportunity to further develop Jenny's changing "self" as she realises she has perhaps more damagingly misjudged another person, Miss Stubbs.

Throughout the film, Miss Stubbs is determined Jenny not give up her ambitions for a university education. "It's because of people like you that I plough through illiterate essays by Sandra Lovell about her pony" (1:01:07), Miss Stubbs reveals when she learns of Jenny's relationship with an older man. She stands out in this narrative as the sole adult who encourages Jenny to pursue her ambitions and lead a fulfilling life by being herself. Even Jenny, in chatting with her friends, talks about her future "self" as though it is someone else. Jenny's reaction to Miss Stubbs's warning ruptures their constructive relationship.

Miss Stubbs: You can do anything you want. You know that.
You're clever and you're pretty.
Is your boyfriend interested in clever Jenny?
[...] I'm telling you to go to Oxford. No matter what.
Because if you don't, you'll break my heart. (1:02:00)
[...]

Jenny: Well you're clever. And you're pretty. So presumably, clever Miss Stubbs won. [...] Maybe all our lives are going to end up with pony essays or housework and yes, maybe we'll go to Oxford but if we're all going to die the moment we graduate, isn't it what we do before that counts? (1:02:15)

This ignorantly premature assessment of Miss Stubbs's personality clearly hurts her, particularly given Miss Stubbs's obvious enjoyment in teaching a capable student like Jenny.

Miss Stubbs: I'm sorry you think I'm dead. (1:02:49)

The residual memory of this cold encounter taints the initial stages of their reunion at Miss Stubbs's flat.

The mise-en-scene of the flat immediately punctures Jenny's unfair expectations of Miss Stubbs living in a boring world. A wide, medium shot encompasses the living room, enhancing the openness of this self-contained world of art and culture. The sunlight and pastel walls give her home the glow of Danny's apartment without the ostentation. Indeed, Jenny looks more at home in this flat than in any setting we have seen her in yet.

Jenny: This is lovely. (1:27:55)

This dialogue parallels with David's first visit to Jenny's home where he delivers the same dialogue but with an air of token flattery. The parallelism in dialogue reveals the contrast between Jenny and David. Miss Stubbs stands in the middle, surrounded by the souvenirs of her interests and experiences: books, art, a piano, and photos. "Paperbacks and post-cards" (1:28:04), Miss Stubbs says, as though finally making her point. "That's all you need, isn't it?" (1:28:07) Jenny replies. As Miss Stubbs moves to sit at her piano with the score of music open, her interested and interesting character with a life beyond teaching is visibly apparent. Jenny's understanding of this unfolds in the warm light of the room.

This scene constructs an epiphany for Jenny as she now sees that there is a third way. A quiet but palpable realisation is evident in Jenny's body language, as she takes in her surroundings that the cultural experiences and individualism she longs for is attainable without personal compromise. Jenny spies a print of a Burne-Jones on a cabinet.

Miss Stubbs: Do you like him?

Jenny: I do. Still.

Miss Stubbs: Still? You sound very old and wise.

Jenny: I feel old. But not very wise. (1:28:41)

The Burne-Jones print parallels with Danny's extravagant purchase of the original painting and serves to contrast the different personalities of Danny and Miss Stubbs but also, as Jenny perceives them. In Miss Stubbs's flat the print is placed amongst the rest of her worldly possessions whereas in Danny's apartment, it becomes just another "thing." The external reality actualised through the mise-en-scene of Miss Stubbs's flat, reveal "the self" of who she really is and why Jenny's remark was so scathing. Jenny is there to ask for Miss Stubbs's help in preparing for her exams. Miss Stubbs is relieved that Jenny has regained her ambition and is earnest in her desire to help.

Scene: The Prospect of a New Story

Interestingly, the final scene in *An Education* works in contrast to how the previous scenes of epiphany and discovery have been constructed, where Jenny has been the individual in the crowd, experiencing her journey in relation to the new and contrasting settings and characters around her. This scene still depicts the individual experience of the central protagonist but in symbolic isolation from those around her.

A medium shot frames Jack, Marjorie and Jenny at the breakfast table. Jenny reads her book and Marjorie reads a magazine. Marjorie's character parallels artfully with the depiction of Helen who is consistently encouraging Jenny to read magazines instead of books and is also at the behest of her male partner. This parallelism in characterisation highlights the narrow prospects Jenny feels with those around her. The dialogue and set-

tings in this film function to create a contrast of two worlds: normality and escape. The film connects with Barber's memoir to foreground the importance of individual curiosity as enabling experience, education as enabling choice.

As Jack leaves for work, he kisses Marjorie and ruffles Jenny's hair affectionately. The warmth and ease in his body language marks a progression in the narrative, indicating that their family ordeal has, at least to a certain extent, been redressed. The shot lingers in the kitchen as Jack returns with a letter for Jenny from Oxford. Letters are obviously an important aspect of Barber's memoir and the adaptation. This last letter parallels with the earlier scene where David's letter had redetermined Jenny's life. Now, without hesitation, Jenny reads the letter and casually places it on the table, leaving the room. The camera cuts to Jenny sitting in her pyjamas at the bottom of the staircase. The non-diegetic orchestral score swirls to match the zenith of the emotional climax. The camera slowly zooms in on Jenny smiling on the stair as we hear her mother read the letter:

Marjorie: It is my pleasure to inform you that your application to read English at Oxford has been accepted. (1:30:53)

Throughout the film, Jenny has been pictured amidst the crowd or surrounded by other adults representing her coming-of-age experience. The nuance of her emotional experience has been largely seen and felt by way of contrast to her setting and the actions and reactions of the surrounding characters. As a strongly conclusive point of difference then, Jenny's separation from her parents is a final moment of epiphany and symbolically poignant. Her isolation in this moment creates a sense of the achieved independence she sought and the physical and metaphorical distance from her schoolgirl self that this acceptance to Oxford means. As a talkative character, Jenny's happy silence and solitude indicates change. Jenny sitting at the bottom of the staircase symbolically represents the beginning of another journey. The narrative ends on an opening then, with the direction Jenny has earned and most importantly, chosen for herself, imminently ahead.

CONCLUSION

“Portraying a state of mind is ‘the most interesting thing about adapting a book...

I think that probably is the secret of adapting:

how to stand outside a character

whom you’ve got to know from the inside.”

-Writer and Film Director, Richard Curtis

For too long, film adaptation has been measured through a literary lens; adaptation has been assessed by how it has told a book not by how it has told a story. The premise of this thesis is motivated by a will to find a way to talk about film adaptation that celebrates “play” and reciprocity between literature and film, using a dialogue that makes productive comparisons that do not result in hierarchical conclusions but rather illuminate and encourage new perspectives, innovation and creativity in cinematic narrative.

The ubiquity of narrative, in any guise, is testament to its centrality in our daily lives as a means to both share and create a personal and collective identity. It is through narrative that we seek to express and understand each other and ourselves; narrative is a template for human consciousness. Literature and film are rich contributors to this record of human consciousness, the conventions of which offer a paradigm for us to embody “the self” and experience and evolve stories as we ourselves change. Furthermore, and perhaps more organically: we like to read and we like to watch films. Indubitably, this is linked to the aforementioned need to discover and rediscover our experiences through narrative.

How we talk about literature and film is indicative of how we experience narrative. The hierarchical discourse that pervades the field of film adaptation concerns itself predominantly with issues of fidelity: the literary sovereignty has authority over the filmic colonies. In particular, the “public trial” (Cobb 28) of film adaptation that takes place in the media discourse reinforces this hierarchy and damagingly hampers the potential in the practice and theory of adaptation. The moralistic criticism that deems adaptations as betrayals to the text, plagiarism or a simplistic approach to narrative, stems not solely from this purist and hierarchical discourse but also a lack of understanding about the narrative construction of film and more importantly, adaptation’s vital role in storytelling. This stagnant discourse is peculiarly unique to film adaptation, because imitation, homage, parody, metaphor, rediscovery and of course inspiration itself are innate in all art forms, in every narrative and necessary to the evolution and expression of ideas.

Current adaptation scholarship acknowledges the emptiness of the fidelity discourse as a measure of merit but it still remains a prevalent force in formal and informal considerations of adaptation. This thesis proposed that the notion of fidelity is inescapable with good reason: we need it. At the very least, it prompts the question of discerning the interpretative direction of an adaptation and illuminates differences between the narrative complexions of each medium. Moreover it is an important discussion to have simply because it reaffirms the impossibility of fidelity to a text in film. Even if fidelity to a text were possible, this thesis argued duplication would philosophically conflict with the foregoing reasons as to why we tell stories and retell them. Regardless of whether we are viewers new to a story or reader-viewers rediscovering a story in the cinema, adaptation is about proffering a new perspective, a new way of seeing and understanding.

In our urgency to give equal rights to film adaptation, we should not shy away from comparison between source text and film. To really accommodate the potential of adaptation this thesis has sought a discourse of conversational exchange between literary and filmic text both in the discussion of narrative construction and in the application of these ideas in the case studies. This argument is underpinned by a theoretical and thematic premise of: encounter and epiphany. From a theoretical perspective, encounter and epiphany is a useful structure through which to create a dialogue between literary text and film adaptation that is both receptive and constructively critical. We can consider adaptation as an encounter between a written and visual text, which invites comparison, engagement and exploration of the discourse, terminology, theory and practice that distinguishes each medium; epiphany in the adaptation process is the realisation of adaptation as an opportunity for explorative storytelling that requires a discourse premised on an understanding of film narrative construction and a dialogical exchange between written and visual texts as evidenced through the practical examples in the case studies. From a thematic perspective, the case studies considered a character's journey and changing "self" as structured through these concepts as narrative turning points. Moreover, as these case studies illustrated, the differences between how these thematic turnings points transpire in each text, illuminated fascinating differences about storytelling in film from a functional and an aesthetic point of view.

Essential to understanding the adaptation process and enriching the experience of film narrative, is an awareness of narrative construction. The divisions in Chapter Two were deliberately contrived as a means to look at different angles of how adaptation can transition and create character to produce new narrative experiences. In essence, these compo-

nents cannot be so easily divided (particularly in film) as the techniques to create narrative atmosphere, tone, character and plot are interwoven. Surveying the expansive scope film has through its multiple registers and techniques to render narrative, this discussion established how differently shared components are actualised in either medium but it also showed how such choice can complicate, challenge and invigorate the adaptation process. The extensive scope of film's descriptive and interpretative properties and possibilities, further illustrates how one reading produces many.

The case studies revealed that the adaptation process frequently restructures the unfolding of narrative turning points to the strengths and sensibility of storytelling in film. These turning points for cinematic character demonstrate how adaptation is an opportunity to explore the wider implications of narrative through the restructuring of character experience. The scene analyses deconstructed pattern and meaning in the mise-en-scene to show how form and content coalesce. In my wider reading, viewing and research of the transition to cinematic character in film adaptations, I have found this idea of "the individual in the crowd" to be a frequent change made in the adaptation process. A narrative turning point for a character is often restructured in adaptation to unfold in a setting that represents a thematically loaded external reality, challenging and illuminating the central character's inner experience. Storytelling in film is largely built on the commentary these contrasts provide. Cinematic character becomes an opportunity to not only explore "the self" but also the wider implications of narrative. The inseparability of world and character in film makes it an apt medium to explore new perspectives on the non-linearity of a literary character's consciousness and different "selves".

These restructured scenes of narrative turning points illuminating a character's changing "self" also take advantage of the present-tense/real-time of film, attributing emotional experience with an immediacy and an undigested feel that heightens drama. The physicality of film proffers new perspectives on character and narrative through their appearance and their spatial relationships with the mise-en-scene and other characters in the frame. Actualising the "world" of the narrative is a valuable way that filmmakers can reveal and explore new perspectives on "the self" through the subjective and objective view of the internal and external reality.

I began this thesis with the notion that human experience is a "storied affair" (McAdams 30): the culturally pervasive premise that through narrative we share and understand ourselves and each other and our experiences of and to the world. In this way, we seek to project and give form to the intangibility of "the self". I discussed the notion of *qualia*,

which is the phenomenological character of our sensations (abstract experiences) as central to consciousness studies. Language facilitates our understanding of these abstract experiences, like *qualia*, through metaphor. By using metaphor to translate these intangible sensations into another form, not only do we seek expression and shared understanding of the original experience, but we discover new perspectives on our experience in the light of a new context. Rich evocations of the intangible experiences of “the self” seized in metaphor are at home in the poetry and prose of literature. But if giving a voice to the intangible experiences of “the self” is a vital way that we come to understand and construct human consciousness, then film adaptation’s contribution is material. Metaphor as a means for simulating and stimulating ideas through another form is meta-adaptation and adaptation, as it retells and rediscovers ideas in a new form and generates further readings, is in turn, metaphor. Film adaptation is a process of matching and creating a dialogue between two ideas, in this instance, the rediscovery of the internally conjured world of literature through the sensory, technological and physical language of cinema.

This thesis has endeavoured to show how adaptation is an opportunity to contribute to the records of human consciousness through rediscovering new perspectives of the “self” in the language of film. This has been demonstrated through analyses of adaptations that, like metaphor, both preserve ideas in narrative and produce new readings in their retelling. The focus has been on the transition from literary to cinematic character as a vehicle for both the experiences of “the self” and exploring the wider dimensions of a narrative world. The “polyphonic potentialities” (Stam and Raengo 21) of film enable a new approach to conveying the human consciousness in narrative form. Understanding the functional importance of the transition from literary to cinematic character is an integral way of understanding the adaptation process, its value and potential in its retelling role.

Screenwriter Linda Aronson writes, “Fiction is about the journey, film is about the destination”(155). On the contrary, this thesis has endeavoured to show how film narrative is about the journey of discovery: it is a medium propelled by character and plot discoveries. The case studies argue that film adaptation is an opportunity to both discover the experience of narrative in a different language *and* unfold the experience of discovery. Film accommodates realism, like life, it presents us with *the surface of things* but what we see always has the potential to represent more than its surface form. Interpretations, inferences and perception shape the stories we share. The filmic image, then, is made poignant through its possible projections. The more readings and interpretations we accommodate through an open dialogue between mediums, the more we can endeavour to refine our expression of the particularities of diverse human experience.

To encourage a shift in the adaptation discourse away from literature as an axiomatic authority, this thesis aimed to contribute to the field by establishing a dialogical exchange between source text and film. Adaptation, after all, invites comparison between the written and visual texts and it is through this intersection of “play” in storytelling that film adaptation ignites new light on both how we can construct and understand “the self”. Furthermore, being open to understanding the possibilities of adaptation coalesces with an understanding of the language of storytelling in film. Ultimately this will enhance and refine our capacity to continue to communicate ideas and seize perspective through visual language. As *The Reader* and *An Education* elucidated: action is character. We come to understand character in film through action and we create character through the action of experience. Ultimately as we tell and retell narrative we shape and reshape “the self”, we adapt narrative to given form to human consciousness.

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