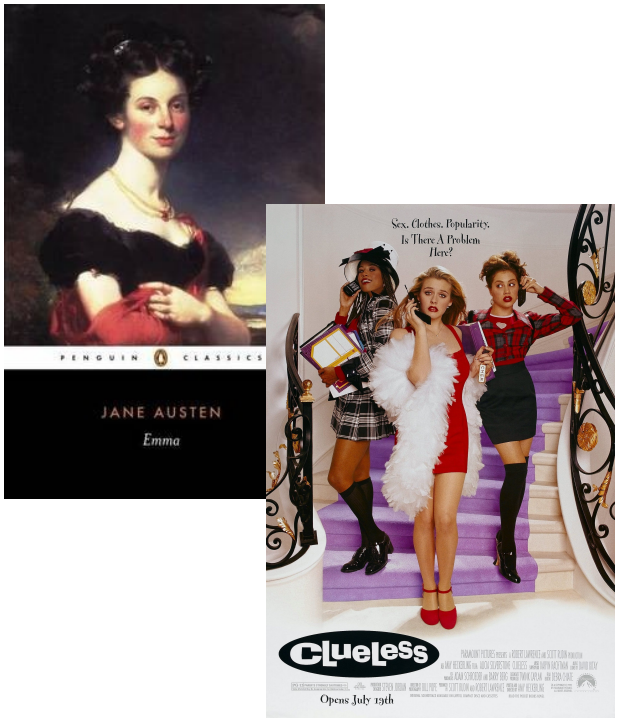
UNIVERSITÉ TOULOUSE Jean Jaurès

Année universitaire 2021-2022

Master Langues, Littératures et Civilisations Étrangères ou Régionales, parcours Études Anglophones

GROWING UP AS WOMEN AND THE DUAL PERCEPTION OF THE HEROINES IN *EMMA* AND *CLUELESS*



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Mémoire de Master 2, à l'Université Toulouse Jean-Jaurès

TABLE OF CONTENT

"Jane Austen is one of the great writers who enjoy a steady, faithful, enthusiastic following among intelligent, cultivated men and women who regularly read and re-read her books for pleasure." (234)

Norman Page testifies on Austen's renown and displays in his article "A Short Guide to Jane Austen Studies"[1] all the different anthologies and reviews written by scholars and critics during Jane Austen's time and throughout the nineteenth century up until the mid-twentieth century. The numerous and almost infinite critics and reviews demonstrate her fame and timelessness. The author died in 1817; however, 205 years later, she is still one of the most influential authors of her time. Her novels and stories are still read and reinvented through movies, she is celebrated in a festival, and she even has a museum to her name in Bath. Her most famous novels, *Pride and Prejudice (1813), Sense and Sensibility* (1811) but also *Emma (1815),* have been readapted multiple times on screen, from TV shows to movies for the cinema. *Pride and Prejudice* is her most well-known novel. Still, *Emma*[2] has no fewer than four movie adaptations and has been the subject of eight series from 1948 to 2020. The latest *Emma*[3]'s adaptation was directed by Autumn de Wilde and was starring Anya Taylor-Joy as the lead character. As proven by the many recent adaptations, Jane Austen's novels are still famous nowadays. In *A Theory of Adaptation*[4], Linda Hutcheon states that adaptations "keep that prior work alive, giving it an afterlife it would never have had otherwise." Would Jane Austen be so famous if not for Keira Knightley in an adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice* in 2005 and Colin Firth in *Bridget Jones's Diary*? Nevertheless, one of *Emma*'s first— and most surprising— adaptations is *Clueless*[5], directed by Amy Heckerling in 1995.

When writing *Emma* in 1815, Jane Austen declared, "I am going to take a heroine whom no one but myself will much like."[6] The novel starts with a description of Emma Woodhouse, the main character; she is "handsome, clever, and rich, with a comfortable home and happy disposition," and she "seemed to unite some of the best blessings of existence" (7) and therefore is, altogether almost perfect. Emma has everything to be happy; a home, money, balls to go to, and her father. Therefore, how could one not like Emma? Even if she has everything anyone could ask for, she is bored.

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[1] Norman Page, "A Short Guide to Jane Austen Studies" *Critical Survey*, vol. 3, no. 4 (1968): 230–34.

[2] Jane Austen, *Emma (*1815; London, Penguin Books, 2009).

[3] *Emma,* Dir. Autumn de Wilde, Universal Picture, 2020.

[4] Linda Hutcheon, *A Theory of Adaptation* (London: Routledge, 2006): 177.

[5] *Clueless,* Dir. Amy Heckerling, Paramount Pictures, 1995.

[6] James Edward Austen-Leigh, *A Memoir of Jane Austen* (London: Macmillan, 1906): 243.

Moreover, because a woman of her time and rank could not do much, she decides to play the matchmaker with the inhabitants of Highbury, the little English village where she lives, to create new relationships. However, throughout the book, she, who is so clever, misreads every sign around her and ends up matching characters who do not belong together. She even misses her neighbour and friend, Mr. Knightley's, signs of attraction. In the novel, Emma is so sure of herself that she never questions her actions, yet, she is almost always wrong.

Emma's cinematic adaptation, Cher in the movie *Clueless*, directed by Amy Heckerling and released in 1995, is also characterised by these same errors. Cher is blond, rich, and the popular girl of her Beverly Hills high school. She is also very clever but lacks discernment concerning boys, as she never took interest in dating. After matching her teachers, Mr. Hall and Miss Geist, she decides to match her school friend Tai with uninterested boys, and just like Emma Woodhouse, she fails to see her brother-in-law's signs of attraction.

As mentioned before, *Emma* had four adaptations, and they are all different from one another. Therefore, one can notice that different kinds of adaptations exist. Specialists working on film theory adaptations tried to classify adaptations through specific categories or lists. As a first example, Dudley Andrew, in *Concepts in Film Theory*[7], differentiates three kinds of adaptations with the help of verbs, to better understand the different acts of adapting a book. The first is borrowing, which, for him, means that "the artist employs, more or less extensively, the material, idea, or form of an earlier, generally successful text." Therefore, the film borrows most of the elements from the source text. The second kind of adaptation intersects with the original text. He argues that "the uniqueness of the original text is preserved to such an extent that it is intentionally left unassimilated in adaptation" (99). Thus, the filmmaker transforms the literary text into images and sounds, and it keeps, as much as possible, everything from the novel. The last one is transforming, in which "it is assumed that the task of adaptation is the reproduction in cinema of something essential about an original text." In this way, there might be some similarities with the book, but not always. However, this categorisation seems simple, and many adaptations do not fit in any of the three categories listed by Andrew. To go further, Thomas Leitch in *Film Adaptation and Its Discontents from "Gone with the Wind" to "The Passion of the Christ"*[8] proposes ten new forms of adaptations. These ten new types are more diverse and precise. Nonetheless, these categories

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[7] Andrew Dudley, *Concepts in Film Theory* (London: Oxford University Press, 1984): 98.

[8] Thomas M. Leitch, *Film adaptation and its discontents: from Gone with the Wind to The Passion of the Christ* (Baltimore: JHU Press, 2007): 93-126.

were not imagined to label all adaptations strictly. Therefore, some could correspond to one, multiple, or none of the categories. *Clueless*, because it is set in a new context, in a modern, contemporary era, could be designated as a revision. Revisions update the text and modernise it. As Leitch describes it, "they seek to rewrite the original, not simply improve its ending or point out its contemporary relevance" (106) and "unlike adaptations that aim to be faithful to the spirit rather than the letter of the text, however, revisions seek to alter the spirit as well" (107). In *Clueless*, the text is rewritten, and the characters and settings have changed. In the same way, the movie also corresponds to the definition of analogue because it evokes the plot and the characters. However, it is in a modern version, with a different context. If not mentioned, many viewers would not acknowledge the similarities with the original book, however, they would immediately recognise the sameness if they read *Emma*. Emma turns into Cher Horowitz, a beautiful, young, rich teenager living in Beverly Hills in the mid-90s. She spends her time shopping or gossiping with her best friend Dionne (a character not present in the original novel). It is the same storyline but happening in the 90s in California. Furthermore, as Andrew Dudley describes it, the film intersects with the book. Linda V. Troost, in her chapter "The Nineteenth Century Novel on Film: Jane Austen,"[9] uses the term "Imitation" to talk about *Emma*'s adaptation's *Clueless* because the movie keeps "novel's plot and character but updates the setting to focus on a modern-day highly structured society." Like *Emma*, *Clueless* has become timeless even in a shorter period. Twenty-six years after its release, the movie is considered a classic and had a spin-off television sitcom broadcasted as well as a series of books based on the film, and Paramount Pictures has announced a remake.

As mentioned by Norman Pages, countless studies and research have been conducted on Austen's works, by academic researchers and her numerous fans worldwide. Jane Austen, a woman writing about women's lives, has been thoroughly studied in context to talk about the position of women in Austen's novels at the beginning of the 19th century, along with their education as David Monaghan and others write in *Jane Austen in a Social Context*[10]. In the chapter "Jane Austen and the position of women", Monaghan argues that "while she rejected many of her society's feminine stereotypes, so intelligent and sensitive a person as Jane Austen appears to have been almost entirely satisfied with the restriction of women to domestic and polite functions" (106). Her female characters are indeed free from feminine stereotypes, yet, in *Emma*, they do not cross the barrier of

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[9] Linda V. Troost, and Sayre Greenfield, *Jane Austen in Hollywood* (Lexington: U of Kentucky, 1998): 76.

[10] David Monaghan, *Jane Austen in a Social Context* (London: Macmillan, 1981).

domestic life. In a more recent work, *The Cambridge Introduction to Jane Austen*[11], Janet Todd discusses essential information about her life and influences, which impacted her writing and the way she viewed women. Jane Austen's treatments of women is not her only specificity, as she is also known for the way she writes.

Wayne C. Booth, in a chapter dedicated to *Emma* in his book *The Rhetoric of Fiction*[12], looked for her innovative writing technique, which Austen used in particular, in *Emma*. He argues that in the novel, "the chances for technical failure are great indeed, we find at work one of the unquestionable masters of the rhetoric of narration" (244). Many critics have looked for this technique and its effect on points of view and on the reader, such as Edward Branigan in his chapter "Narrative management: Point of View"[13] whom focuses on the points of view in Jane Austen's works. He discerns six different points of view, and he highlights the effect of irony but fails to account for the indirect discourse and subjectivity. Monika Fludernik and her work *The Fictions of Language and the Languages of Fiction*[14] has been one of the most influential researches on the free indirect discourse and its theory, which is now one of the names given to Austen's technique.

Amy Heckerling and her movie *Clueless* have been reviewed multiple times, in review magazines and many books about Jane Austen's adaptation. For instance, Sue Parrill in the book *Jane Austen on Film and Television*[15] analyses closely the main differences between the book and the movie. Furthermore, Melissa Mazmanian in her article "Reviving *Emma* in a Clueless World: The Current Attraction to a Classic Structure"[16] examines the modern aspect of the movie, through the clothes and sexuality of the characters. Thomas Leitch and Andrew Dudley examine the kinds of adaptation, showing that there is no precise word to define an adaptation and that specialists tend to use many different ones. The form of the adaptation, a teenage movie, has been discussed —see *Generation Multiplex* [17] written by Timothy Shary— as well as women's empowerment, with

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[11] Janet Margaret Todd, *The Cambridge Introduction to Jane Austen* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

[12] Wayne C Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010).

[13] Edward Branigan, *Narrative Comprehension and Film* (London: Routledge, 1992).

[14] Monika Fludernik, *The fictions of language and the languages of fiction* (New-York: Routledge, 2003)

[15] Sue Parrill, *Jane Austen on Film and Television: a Critical Study of the Adaptations* (Jefferson, N.C: McFarland &, 2002): 107-147.

[16] Melissa Mazmanian,"Reviving *Emma* in a Clueless World: The Current Attraction to a Classic Structure", *Persuasions Online Occasional Papers* 3 (1999).

[17] Timothy Shary, *Generation Multiplex: The Image of Youth in American Cinema Since 1980* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2014).

Suzanne Ferris in *Jane Austen in Hollywood* who writes about the feminist aspect of *Clueless* and *Emma*, and she argues that, to some extent, the book is more feminist than the movie.

While 180 years apart, the two works have the same storyline and also the same issue: a popular, rich, and intelligent character who chooses to play the matchmaker with people around her. Nonetheless, both girls have very high self-esteem and are oblivious to the love signs around them, or simply ignorant of them. Comparisons between the two works exist and numerous critics have shown how the narrative is adapted to the screen. Despite the hundreds of articles on the link between *Emma* and *Clueless*, very few deal with their education as women being completely different. Yet, the audience can see that even if they were not educated the same way, they make the same mistakes. Their education may have impacted the way they grew up as women; thus, as the audience is plunged into the protagonists' subjectivity, their worldview is potentially biased. This reflection on women's education leads to a question; to what extent do their education and their position as women have consequences on their reactions and subjectivity? In addition, constraints such as patriarchy and women's rights have evolved, but the heroines behave similarly, which stresses the movie's lack of feminism, as it is supposedly more progressivist than its literary source.

This project aims at linking even further the novel and the film than it has been done before. The first thing the reader and audience can notice is the gap between the heroines' perception and reality, leading them to commit many errors. Thus, this project will look into this "double perception", and how it is perceived and shown in the book and the movie. In addition, it will be linked to their education, in the nineteenth century and at the end of the twentieth century. Naturally, one question can be asked. Why, even if they had a very different education, do the heroines behave the same way and reproduce the same errors? And furthermore, why does this story written two hundred years ago work in a modern context? Therefore, it links these questions with their feminine conditions, and thus, a feminist aspect of their education. This project intends to question the relationship between growing up as a woman and its consequences on their worldview.

The first part will focus on growing up as a woman. It will explore what it meant to be a woman in the nineteenth century and the nineties and see if the rules and conventions applied to women in the 19th century were the same in the 90s. Education in the nineteenth century is characterised by conduct books and their impact on women's consideration of themselves. In the nineties, education, and higher education, were possible for everyone, thus the representation of teenagers in the cinema, especially the representation of women, is crucial to understanding how they represented themselves (and were represented). It will also examine the constraints linked to being a woman through the domestic novel, the genre of the chick flick and the feminist criticisms

of women's friendship in the novel and the movie. The second part will show how the reader and spectator are immersed in the mistakes of the heroines by targeting the heroines' internal point of view through the technical elements, such as the free indirect style and the camera. This part will also point out "false clues", or wrong clues, that lead the reader and spectator in the wrong direction. In other words, passages and scenes that confirm the heroines' beliefs and convictions. In addition, it will ask why this subjectivity is feminine, and if it is linked to the education they received. Finally, the last part will question the heroines' viewpoints by analysing the clues to the reality, a reality that contradicts the protagonists' subjectivity. To finish, it will consider the limits of women's education and how feminism and patriarchy are depicted in the two works.

I - Growing up as women.

A. Being a woman in the 19th century and the 90s.

Being a woman in the 19th century and the 90s is unquestionably different. Rules and conventions imposed on women in the two periods are various, and this part will examine what it was like to grow up at the beginning of the 19th century and the end of the 20th century.

In Monaghan's chapter "Jane Austen and the Position of Women", he assesses that "the notion that women not only are but should be the intellectual inferiors of men was so fundamental" (105). Society considered them inferior to men, intellectually and in all aspects of life. The cause was the lack of education for women, as they did not have access to proper education as men did. Women had very little education, and according to Monaghan, "piano-playing, drawing and dancing for intellectual pursuits" (105) were the only activities they could have. These activities were expected from every future wife and were called "the accomplishments". Thus, they did not have access to any intellectual endeavour but to artistic ones. One way to get some sort of education was through conduct books, in which men wrote the rules women had to follow so that they would be perfect wives and women of their time. Vivien Jones, in her book *Women in the Eighteen-Century,*[18] suggests that "The concern of all eighteenth-century 'conduct' manuals for women is how women might create themselves as objects of male desire, but in terms which will contain that desire within the publicly sanctioned form of marriage" (14). In other words, women had to be virtuous and inferior to men. The fact that conduct books were heavily read by women is interesting, as conduct literature was created specifically for women, by men. In this way, men could ensure that women followed their beliefs and learn what they expected them to do. Thus, one of the activity women learned to do was to read, in order to read conduct literature. One of the most famous conduct books is *A Father's Legacy to his Daughters,*[19] written by John Gregory. In his conduct book, he indicates: "You will more readily hear than talk yourself into [men's] good graces" (Gregory 124) and also "Be even cautious of displaying your good sense. It will be thought you assume a superiority over the rest of the company" (Gregory 124). In other words, he encourages women to appear less intelligent and less wise than their male company because it was an outrageous mistake to think of themselves as superior. Thus, because women did not need to be

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[18] Vivien Jones ed., *Women in the eighteenth century: Constructions of femininity* (New-York: Routledge, 2006).

[19] John Gregory, *A Father's Legacy to His Daughters* (London: Strahan, 1774).

clever and rational to stay at home and raise their children in the private sphere, they did not need to be educated.

In the chapter "Education", Vivien Jones offers different texts from contemporary writers of the eighteenth-century writing about how women had to be educated, challenging ideals. She explains that "theorists disagreed on how to define the qualities and potential of the female mind, on how girls' education should differ from that of boys, and on the social roles and intellectual rewards available to the educated woman" (99). From this explanation, it could be deduced that there were dissimilar opinions on what to do with women. Thus, it was discussed how women should be educated as a way for men to benefit from this process. Jones assesses that "By the mid-century, the pressures of an expanding bourgeoisie and competitive marriage market had established some degree of education as the norm for daughters of the middle class, but the issue remained contentious" (99), which highlights that Jane Austen was part of this process and, therefore, her writing was influenced by the expansion of women's education. Nonetheless, it was reserved for a small part of the population, the richer ones. Hester Chapone, in *Letters on the Improvement of the Mind, addressed to a Young Lady*[20] in 1773, suggests that "The faculty, in which women usually most excel, is that of imagination; and, when properly cultivated, it becomes the source of all that is most charming in society." This sentence speaks volumes because, as much as she celebrates the accomplishment of reading, learning languages, and writing, she praises a faculty that does not need studying and for which education is not needed. It could also be seen, texts in which women agree that women had to be educated but on specific subjects. Laetitia Mathilda Hawkins writes, "In general, and almost universally, the feminine intellect has less strength but more acuteness; consequently, in our exercise of it, we shew less perseverance and more vivacity."[21] She does not refute the idea that women do not have intellectual capacities, but she insists on the idea that women do not have the same capacity as men. On the contrary, Vicesimus Knox, in *Essays Moral and Literary,*[22] wrote in 1779, testifies that "learning is equally attainable, and, I think, equally valuable, for the satisfaction arising from it, to a woman as a man." The distinction between a woman and a man is interesting because men were still considered superior, and therefore, women had to obtain this ideal, but he considered women capable of obtaining it. Overall, the debate on the education of

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[20] Hester Chapone, *Letters on the Improvement of the Mind,: Addressed to a Young Lady* (London: H. Hughs, 1773): 106.

[21] Laetitia Matilda Hawkins, *Letters on the Female Mind: Its Powers and Pursuits. Addressed to Miss H. M. Williams, with Particular Reference to Her Letters from France* (London: Hookham and Carpenter, 1793): 82.

[22] Vicesimus Knox, *Essays Moral and Literary. The Eleventh Edition.* (London: Charles Dilly, 1779): 109.

women was very divided. It was divergent on what women should study, but also, if they could be as intelligent as men. It also shows that Mary Wollstonecraft was not the first one to establish the benefits for women to be educated.

In her pamphlet *A Vindication of the Rights of Women,*[23] Mary Wollstonecraft is against the idea that women are intellectually inferior to men and calls for women and men to be equally educated. She call for women and men to be educated the same way, but she also points out how men infantilise women and why women feel the need to marry as their only way to be accomplished. She asserts, “Let woman share the rights, and she will emulate the virtues of man; for she must grow more perfect when emancipated, or justify the authority that chains such a weak being to her duty” (520). Wollstonecraft believed that if women accessed education, not only would it be beneficial for them, but it would also be valuable for society as a whole. In being educated, she considered that they would be better women, especially better mothers, and help men in work areas. She adds that she “dismiss[es] then those pretty feminine phrases, which the men condescendingly use to soften our slavish dependence, and despis[es] that weak elegancy of mind, exquisite sensibility, and sweet docility of manners, supposed to be the sexual characteristics of the weaker vessel” (50). This sentence echoes Jones’s statement that "it has been argued that this dominant ideal of femininity, with its emphasis on morality and feeling (the ‘softer virtues’ again), was one of the most powerful factors not only in establishing a sense of middle-class identity, but in bringing about a general ‘feminization’ of culture" (11). Those values, being soft, kind, and pleasant, were stereotypes of women, and Jane Austen’s characters are in contradiction with this ideal, and with the idea that women are inferior to men. Monaghan indicates that “Jane Austen operates on the assumption that women are inherently as intelligent and rational as men" (107), which shows that she disagreed with her peers, especially toward the subject of marriage and those “feminine” virtue. Her feminine characters are more independent than regular women at the time, but they have no desire to rebel or contradict their positions. To summarise, Monaghan suggests that Austen “does not demand a complete reorganisation of society but "takes a clearsighted look at the functions performed by women and finds that, regardless of the very low esteem in which their sex is held, they are given a role substantial enough to satisfy the needs of such intelligent and capable people” (121). Education for women in the 19th century was considerably lacking. Even if women such as Mary Wollstonecraft tried to change society’s mind, they did not have access to intellectual pursuits

[23] Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Men and A Vindication of the Rights of Woman and Hints* (1792; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

as much as nowadays or thirty years ago. Nonetheless, as Monaghan insisted, Jane Austen thought that women were as rational as men, which explains why Emma is more ingenious than her male counterparts, such as her dad.

Jane Austen, in the first lines of the novel, writes that Emma "lived nearly twenty-one years in the world with very little to distress or vex her." With this sentence, the reader learns about her age and her condition, that she does not have a hard life of labour, does not work, and she always has everything she wants. The reader then gets an idea about her family; she has one older sister, and a "most affectionate, indulgent father". The adjectives "indulgent" and "affectionate", associated with the superlative "most" display the image of a happy family; although the mother is missing. Emma's mother died when she was little and she is "mistress of his house from a very early period", a mistress as in, a woman taking care of the entire house. Even if Jane Austen's feminine characters are as intelligent as men, they are not entirely free from conventions and rules. Emma does not work and she represents the "angel in the house" image. However, she is from a wealthy family and she only needs to take care of her father, she has servants to take care of everything else.

In chapter VII, Emma convinces Harriet not to marry Mr. Martin, which shows her ability to convince only with her words, and therefore, her intelligence, or manipulation skills. She argues to Harriet,

"I lay it down as a general rule, Harriet, that if a woman doubts as to whether she should accept a man or not, she certainly ought to refuse him. If she can hesitate as to 'Yes,' she ought to say 'No' directly. It is not a state to be safely entered into with doubtful feelings, with half a heart. I thought it my duty as a friend, and older than yourself, to say thus much to you. But do not imagine that I want to influence you." (51)

By clever argumentation, she manipulates Harriet into thinking that she doubts it and does not want to marry Mr. Martin. When she says, "But do not imagine that I want to influence you", Emma uses a preterition, a rhetorical technique consisting of mentioning something but professing to omit it. This device shows Emma's skills in manipulating words, as she manipulates Harriet. This creates a sort of irony as Emma argues that she does not want to "influence" Harriet when this is really what she is doing. Later in this chapter, Emma says "I said nothing about it, because I would not influence" (52), which shows how clever with words she is with the repetition, once again, of the verb "influence". Throughout the whole chapter, Emma, by saying that she has no words to say

about Harriet's decision, confuses the girl and therefore, testify her influence's skills through discussion.

In another instance, in chapter IX, Mr. Elton writes a riddle for the two girls, which Emma guesses very quickly, while Harriet does not. Emma "cast her eye over it, pondered, caught the meaning" (70). The accumulation of actions depicts a rapid process, while Harriet does not find the meaning and starts to wonder and keeps asking questions "what can it be?", "What can it possible be?" "Do you think it is a good one?" (70). The repetition of interrogative questions highlights Emma's intelligence and contrasts with the plain and effective answers she gives to Harriet: "That it court", "That is ship" (71). Emma's cleverness is shown through multiple examples, especially in comparison with other characters.

As seen previously, only the more prosperous women were educated, and it is proved by the comparison between Harriet and Emma. Harriet is firstly described as "the natural daughter of somebody" (25), implying that she is an orphan as she does not know who her parents are, and, therefore, did not grow up in a middle-class environment. Since she is an orphan, it is no surprise that she did not access the same education as Emma, which explains why she is less clever and quick-minded. The first time Emma and Harriet spend time together, Emma "was not struck by any thing remarkably clever in Miss Smith's conversation" (26), which shows that Emma feels wiser than her new friend, and once again, her intelligence is highlighted.

All these examples show that Emma is depicted as an intelligent, knowledgable, and clever character. However, she does not always positively use her skills and manipulates her friends in order to achieve her aims and ideals. Following this idea, it could be argued that Emma, to some extent, has a sense of liberation from the Regency ideals as she follows her own ideas.

Compared to the beginning of the 19th century, education evolved a lot in the 20th century, as it opened to all women in Western countries. Teenagers' place in society, especially teenage girls', also took some importance in the few decades since the mid-fifties, with the rise of the genre of teen movies. In his book *Generation Multiplex,* Timothy Shary argues that teenage movies emerged after World War II because "Gradually the age between childhood and adulthood came to be codified, debated, celebrated, and perhaps most significantly, elongated" (3). In addition, the rise of automobiles and more pocket money led teenagers to have more independence to go and see movies. To make more profit, Hollywood continued to produce teenage movies for teenagers. After World War II, teenage films celebrated youth and depicted a joyful and liberated youth. Then, as Shary explains, "the important so-called "Miracle Decision", which opened the door for depictions

of a wider range of moral issues on-screen, by the Court in 1952, brought certain First Amendment protections to films. This development attracted young people to the theaters where they could view more "adult" dramas than they were available on television (4). The evolution of teenage movies brought more depth to the subjects shown on screen. By the 80s "teens in the '80s were then able to go to the mall and select the particular youth movie experience that most appealed to them" (6). Sub-genres in teenage movies, such as horror movies, science films, or school pictures, depicted many youth cultures and styles, leading the industry to also evolve in representing teenage girls. With the rise of the production of teenage movies at the end of World War II, teenagers finally had a proper representation, and adolescence as a proper moment in life started to be studied. These teenage movies had an impact on girls, as they finally had representations on screen, and in turn, it impacted their education as they could draw experiences and lessons from the movies.

It is easy to comprehend teenagers' place in society through the different genres presented in cinema in the 90s. Adrienne Boutang and Célia Sauvage, in their book *Les "Teen Movies"*[24], conclude that teen movies in the 90s became more dramatic, more serious as a consequence of the post-AIDS period (22). Nonetheless, *Clueless* does not correspond to this description and depicts a very happy world, in which the teenagers' only occupations are school, friends, and parties. Tom Doherty, in his article "Clueless Kids"[25], argues that teen movies in the 90s "display a generous, good-natured attitude, rejecting the in-group smugness and revel in humiliation that typified their predecessors. Oppressive adults and violent peers are banished, or peripheral" (14). This characterisation of the teen movie resembles *Clueless*'s plot. An analysis of the first scene in the movie will highlight Cher's seemingly glossy and perfect teenage life, and her education, showing a representation of what it was to be a teenage girl in the 90s.

The movie starts with quick editing of multiples shots [00:20]. Firstly, a high-angle shot of some people in a car and a tilt down to follow the car, and zooming in to allow the spectator to see that the Jeep is occupied by girls. The fast movement emphasises the rapid speed of the car. The next scene is a lateral tracking shot and a medium shot of Cher, showing her leaving a luxury clothes store with numerous bags in hand. The framing allows us to see that Cher has a good sense of fashion. She is almost dressed as an adult because she wears black & white, and neutral clothes, which gives the spectator an idea of her personality. Next, the camera shows a medium shot, tilted, with a sort of freeze-frame rendering an idea, again, of a fast pace. Cher and Dionne, her best friend, are walking in focus, under the light while everyone around them is blurry, in the dark,

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[24] Adrienne Boutang, and Célia Sauvage, *Les "Teen Movies"* (Paris: J.Vrin, 2011).

[25] Tom Doherty, "CLUELESS KIDS." *Cinéaste*, vol. 21, no. 4 (1995): 14–16.

portraying their popularity. Then, the camera shows people at a pool party. It is easy to discern that they are wealthy. Boys are playing while girls are tanning, painting their toenails. The camera follows the fall of the boy to reveal the girl polishing her nails in a blue, white, and red star bikini, probably referring to America's flag. The low-angle shot of young people drinking milkshakes with the tracking left shows girls and boys; therefore depicting friends having fun doing typical activities of young people. The steady cam shows only fractions of the shots: girls' legs, faces, girls' group again, and then the car again. The camera movements of the tilt-up and the pan are focused explicitly on girls' bodies, revealing that the image of women given in the movie is linked to their bodies. It seems like the scene is shot and made for the male gaze, since it concentrates on women' bodies and objectifies them. This is linked to the chick-flick genre, which I will talk about in more depth later on.

This first scene [00:54] portrays the environment in which Cher grew up and currently lives. Her first sentence refers to Noxzema, a beauty product, and more specifically a skin cleanser. She expects the viewer to recognise what it is and know what she refers to. She also says that it looks like a "commercial" and in this way, it evokes Emma's seemingly perfect life from the outside. A commercial means that it looks perfect, as on T.V. whereas she has a "way normal life for a teenage girl", which she directly assesses while the camera shows her in a medium-shot of her looking at herself in the mirror: she has flawless skin, perfect blond hair and in sum, she is handsome, just like Emma. The medium shot of her father shows him opening the doors at the top of the stairs to a vast hall while Cher's voice-over is still present and she presents her father. This shot, linked to her voice-over shows the spectator that Cher is in control in the house, and she is the boss of authority, when it should be her father. Undeniably, he is very different from Emma's father. Mr. Horowitz works very hard and is a litigator, and she uses the words "scariest", "terrified of him", "fights", which contrasts with how Mr. Woodhouse is described, (friendly and amiable). In addition, he earns $500 an hour; clearly stating that he is rich. The camera's lateral tracking shot follows Cher and her father's fast pace in the kitchen during the morning: Cher follows her father around the counter while talking to him "daddy you need your Vitamin C", "they're your parents", "don't try..." and reminding him of his medical appointment. She is acting like his mother, or carer, just like Emma. Emma and Cher are both in control in the house, giving them power and authority. It is especially worth noticing for Emma because during her time, women did not have any rights and had to ask their fathers or husband to manage money or do anything outside the private sphere. In this way, we can note Emma's independence as she has the authority in her house. Both girls are in control in their houses and have authorities over men, even if it is only their fathers.

Being a woman in the 90s is very different from Jane Austen's time. The teen movie and the environment Cher grew up in are mainly represented at school. In the scene where Cher presents the different groups at Bronson Alcott High School to Tai, the viewer can witness that all this tour represents stereotypes of high school groups. The scene [22:51] starts with an establishing shot and a track-in; rendering the idea that we are watching the scene with Cher's eyes, walking in the crowd. The lateral tracking shot associated with a zoom-in shows the presentation of different groups; just like a zoo visit. All the groups are stereotypical, in the way they are dressed, like the 'Persian mafia' with the boys' hair slicked back, sunglasses, and wearing all black, and also because Cher argues that 'You can't hang with them unless you own a BMW.' For these reasons, the movie presents stereotypes of teenagers in high school, and Cher's capacity to discern different types of people. This acknowledgment of the differences puts Cher in a superior position and this behaviour can be seen in *Emma*. In chapter III, the author presents the main characters in the Woodhouses' life and argues that "Not unfrequently, through Emma's persuasion, he had some of the chosen and the best to dine with him" (26), demonstrating that Emma judges and chooses whom they should spend their time with, and the adjective "best" confirms that Emma is careful about the type of people she spends her time with. The first group mentioned is composed of Mr. Knightley, the Westons and Mr. Elton. Then, the reader gets a description of the second group, Mrs. and Miss Bates and Mrs. Goddard, three ladies of the village. Miss Bates is described as "a woman neither young, handsome, rich, nor married" (27), recalling Emma's description at the very beginning, and emphasises Mrs. Bates who "had never boasted either beauty or cleverness." (28). Mrs. Goddard is then "a plain, motherly kind of woman." The descriptions of the three women render an idea of ordinary and dull women, and the narrator, shows that Emma judges them as quiet women (30). Thus, Emma is set outside of these characters, especially other women, and is put in the position of a superior feminine character.

The scene [19:45-20:01] after the first matchmaking also shows that the movie offers stereotypes of young adults in high school. It starts with a medium-full shot of Cher leaving the cafeteria. The lateral tracking shot follows her, and she finds herself in the middle of the other students, all clapping at her. The full shot of Cher in the middle highlights Cher's popularity. She is in the middle and she is the only one standing, emphasising her reputation. Her fashion sense, as well as her wealth, is also pinpointed by her tartan dress, tartan coat, high-knee socks, and her beret, all very fashionable items—which are still on-trend nowadays. Furthermore, she is wearing red, which stands out from the other teenagers. Another girl on Cher's right is wearing a tartan patterned

skirt, accentuating Cher's popularity and influence in her school. The camera with the pan to the left allows us to see the big crowd of students cheering and applauding Cher. As well as being popular, and having a good fashion sense, Cher is undeniably attractive. She is blond, relatively tall, and thin, which is accentuated by a long shot, showing her in full length. In addition, her outfit also underlines her thin shape. Cher looks like a stereotype of the dumb blond girl when in reality she is clever, in her own way. She has good grades but like Emma, she manipulates the teachers to get better grades. She argues, "I told my P.E. teacher an evil male had broken my heart, so she raised my C to a B" and "Then I promised Miss Giest I'd start a letter writing campaign to my congressman about violations of the clean air act" which shows her argumentative skills and manipulation to get her own way.

In both the novel and the movie, the heroines' are described and shown as pretty, rich, and clever girls. Their education is reflected through these features, however, the distinct educations of the different times are not echoed in how they are represented, as they are defined with the same attributes. In such a manner, we could argue that the fact that they are wealthy might impact their lives much more than their education, or the lack of education since the heroines end up doing the same mistakes. Nonetheless, Emma and Cher face constraints, such as spacial ones, but because they are women, that have consequences on their behaviour.

B. Constraints.

In addition to the lack of education, 19th century and 90s women had other constraints. To start with, *Emma* is known to be a domestic novel. Domestic novels focus on restrained spaces, and as Julie Pihard discusses, it is done in order to "analyse all of the protagonists in depth"[26] (17). When discussing this specific novel, she assesses that "The upper-middle-class of the time, its preoccupations and its leisures are depicted with more precision, humour and authenticity than in her previous ones" (28). For Peter Garside, Austen's domestic realism consists of "explor(ing) the ways in which life might, indeed, imitate fiction—in less spectacular, though necessarily less alarming, ways"[27]. This genre of the domestic novel restricts Emma to a small town, and her world revolves around Highbury. The constraints of the village are barriers to her understanding of the world. In the book, the description of Highbury in the first chapter gives an idea of the village and

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[26] Julie Pihard, and Anne-Sophie Close, *Jane Austen Et Le Roman Domestique: Entre Peinture Sociale Et Analyse Psychologique* (Bruxelles: 50 Minutes 2015): 17, my translation.

[27] Peter D. Garside, "Jane Austen's Domestic Realism", *The Oxford History of the Novel in English Volume 2 English and British Fiction 1750-1820*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015): 283.

its constraints. The narrator indicates that Highbury is a "large and populous village, almost amounting to a town" (6) which can be understood as ironic. The "populous" contrasts with "almost a town", meaning that there are not that many inhabitants in the village, even if Hartfield seems disconnected from the village because of some fields. Yet it still belongs to Highbury and therefore, the same people are living there. The sentence "All looked up to them" refers to the Woodhouses' social status; they are at the top of the social ladder of the village and "She had many acquaintance in the place" implies that she knows everyone and everyone knows her. This suggests that Emma is social, but her social skills are limited to the Highbury inhabitants, who are all inferior to her in terms of social class. Emma's world revolves around Highbury, she has never been to London and her populous village is everything she knows.

The constraint of the restricted area can also be found in *Clueless*. Just like Emma, Cher is restrained by the barriers of Los Angeles. Even if it is more significant than Highbury, Cher's environment does not go further than the surroundings of her high school, the mall, and her house in Beverly Hills. Moreover if she does go further than Beverly Hills, it is to go to a party in the Sun Valley, an area still part of Los Angeles. In the scene [29:18] at school between Cher, Dionne, Tai, and Travis, who invites them to a party, Cher argues that "it's in the Valley. The cops usually break 'em up in less than an hour, and it takes that long to get there," which renders the feeling that it is very far away and on the other side of the world because the police take a very long time to arrive. Furthermore, when she goes outside of Beverly Hills, bad situations happen to her as she gets robbed of her phone in an isolated gas station, strengthening her wish to stay in the comforting environment of her home, but also making her a prisoner of her own situation. Like Emma, Cher only knows the place and people she grew up with, therefore it is limiting her understanding of the world and people.

Hilary Radner, in *Neo-Feminist Cinema: Girly Films, Chick Flicks and Consumer Culture*, defines girlhood as "typically depicted as a period of flux and development, in contrast with the fixity of womanhood, in which the female subject finds her place most notably through marriage."[28] She describes the chick flicks as "neo-feminist films" that are "considered ones that women especially enjoy watching with other women" (36). She pinpoints and summarises significant aspects of girly films or chick flicks. The first one is the heroine at the center of her universe, which targets a primarily feminine audience. This applies to *Emma* and *Clueless*, as the novel starts with the description of Emma Woodhouse, who, "handsome, clever, and rich, with a comfortable disposition, seemed to unite some of the best blessings of existence." The accumulation of

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[28] Hilary Radner, *Neo-Feminist Cinema: Girly Films, Chick Flicks, and Consumer Culture* (New-York: Taylor & Francis, 2010): 53.

adjectives, all of them positive, emphasises her physical, mental, and her wealth qualities. Her beauty is taken into account, her intelligence and wealth too. The movie also states at the beginning that Cher is the main character. In the first scene analysed in the first part, the first voice the spectators hear is Cher's voice in a voice-over, clearly stating that she is the main character.
Another trait is the ambivalence on specific issues, such as the "role of romance, marriage and work in a woman's life" (37) and the exact geographic location, easily recognisable but in which the characters are prisoners.

These characteristics are constraints to the heroines' development, and just like Emma's rural barriers, Cher's life is "ultimately and irrevocably constrained by the ethos of a modernity expressed through a pervasive urban culture for which there is no antidote" (38). Girls in teen movies, through the genre of the high school movies and even more through the sub-genre of the chick flick, are represented in a particular way. Adrienne Boutang and Célia Sauvage, in their book *Les "Teen Movies,"* try to define the main characteristics of teen movies and focus on chick flicks. They demonstrate that the chick flicks "claim a superficial state of mind, associating the feminine identity to their appearance, positioning her between a mockery and a performance" (55) [my translation]. Therefore, the heroine can only be seen as an appearance, and her intelligence or other qualities are erased. As seen previously with Cher, she is presented through her body and her appearance with the mirror and her outfits. Here, the arguments of Judith Butler's argument on gender, sex and identity in *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*[29] can be useful to deal with the subject of appearance and performance in depth. She argues that gender is performative. There are norms of behaviour, how girls should talk, walk and how they should dress to appear like 'normal' women. She assesses that "This association of the body with the female works along magical relations of reciprocity whereby the female sex becomes restricted to its body, and the male body, fully disavowed, becomes, paradoxically, the incorporeal instrument of an ostensibly radical freedom" (86). In this sense, women assess their femininity through their bodies and actions, while men do not have to do anything to be considered as men. In the movie, this idea can be found in the opening scene, women' bodies are at the centre and teenage girls, including Cher, are characterised as women because we see their bodies. To highlight this remark, Valery Hey claims that "Performativity is double-edged in another sense too because, while gender identity is inscribed as if to suggest its 'fixity', this is not a once and for all effort but is repeatedly enacted,

[29] Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (London: Taylor & Francis, 2011).

constructing the literally questionable nature of how our 'bodies are made to matter'" (446)[30]. It is the repetition of style, movements, languages that makes Tai considered a woman, and a subject of desire, by the others. Tai's makeover is mainly superficial. She becomes a "woman", only when she is transformed. Cher and Dionne focus on changing her hair colour, doing her makeup, and changing her clothes to more fashionable ones. This scene [26:22] is very quick, with rapid editing of the many transformations Tai goes through and the audience does not hear her talk as non-diegetic music is added, the song Supermodel by Jill Sobule with the lyrics saying "I'm gonna be a supermodel". The two best friends also want to change Tai's body as they oblige her to do a fitness class on TV called "Buns of Steel". It is only at the end of her physical makeover that Cher remarks that "We've got to work on your accent and vocabulary" but once again, it is only to appear more sophisticated and adult than to really be more intelligent. In addition, when they compare the non-school books they are reading, Cher argues that her book of the week will be "Fit or Fat" and Tai "Men are from Mars, Women are From Venus". Even if the audience does not know any of the books in details, it is clear that they are not "classics" or literature but "wellness" ones. Superficiality is therefore omnipresent in the movie as Tai's makeover is based solely on her appearance and looks. To pick Boutang & Sauvage's quote up again, *Clueless* associates the feminine identity of its characters to their appearance, as Tai is only considered worth dating Elton after her makeover into a more "feminine" look, wearing skirts and not her oversized t-shirts and baggy trousers. In this case, her appearance is a performance of femininity, reflecting Cher and Dionne's own femininity as performances too. As Butler explains, "Within a language pervasively masculinist, a phallogocentric language, women constitute the unrepresentable. In other words, women represent the sex that cannot be thought, a linguistic absence and opacity" (81). Therefore, women express their gender through their bodies, constricting them from being seen and not heard. Consequently, the feminine characters' views on the importance of appearances are a constraint to their education and their development of their identities, as women but also as capable human beings. This idea can be found decades before with Mary Wollstonecraft, concerning women's education and the fact that women were considered through their sex, inherently their bodies, more than through their abilities to think. Wollstonecraft demonstrates that "they [women] are only considered as females, and not as a part of the human species, when improvable reason is allowed to be the dignified distinction, which raises men above the brute creation, and puts a natural sceptre

[30] Valerie Hey, "The Politics of Performative Resignification: Translating Judith Butler's Theoretical Discourse and Its Potential for a Sociology of Education." *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, vol. 27, no. 4 (2006): 439–57.

in a feeble hand" (46). Thus, in her statement, women are only considered as female because they are reduced to their bodies, and men are men, and above women, because they are supposed to be reasonable and therefore more intelligent. This distinction is found again in Butler's argument as shown earlier. As Jane Austen was aware of these ideas, it can be seen through the jealousy of Emma towards Jane, competing to be the only woman noticeable in Highbury.

Found mainly in *Emma*, a feminist criticism of how women have to compete with each other is presented by the author. In an article on interrupted friendships in *Emma,* Ruth Perry shows that "Austen's ironic undercutting of romance in this novel, together with the unresolved but repeated plea for friendship between women, constitutes her subversive message."[31] This is especially true considering Emma's female friendships with Harriet and Jane Fairfax in the novel. There is a satire in *Emma* on the competition in appearances, showing the criticism of this superficial bias in women, which explains why Emma is biased in her judgment of other women. Emma feels superior over Harriet and is jealous of Jane Fairfax when they could be close friends. In the novel, Jane Fairfax is seen by Emma as a potential threat and Emma does not like her, even without knowing her. When Jane Fairfax comes back to Highbury, Emma refuses to visit her, "Why she did not like Jane Fairfax might be a difficult question to answer; Mr. Knightley had once told her it was because she saw in her the really accomplished young woman, which she wanted to be thought herself; and though the accusation had been eagerly refused at the time, there were moments of self-examination in which her conscience could not quite acquit her" (156). The second sentence can be understood as Emma being narcissist, and her wanting to be the only talented woman, adored by everyone. But it also can be understood as the constraint of the impossibility of being two accomplished women. The success of only one young woman in the little village of Highbury is enough, and Emma feels that there is no space for the two of them. This feeling might be induced by patriarchy and misogyny, forcing women to be in competition and only one can be victorious. Thus, after describing Jane Fairfax's features, the narrator portrays Jane by stating that "It was a style of beauty, of which elegance was the reigning character, and as such, she [Emma] must, in honour, by all her principles, admire it" (157). This observation goes back to the idea that women were competing on a superficial bias and to the criticism by Jane Austen on Emma's superficiality. It is reinforced by the irony in the sentence "in honour, by all her principles" because Emma is forced by her standards to admire Jane's beauty, but it does not mean that she genuinely accepts and appreciates it.

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[31] Ruth Perry, "Interrupted Friendships in Jane Austen's *Emma*." *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature*, vol. 5, no. 2 (1986): 200.

Emma's superiority over Harriet is also present and prevents her from being a good friend to Harriet. She feels superior to her and in many instances, Emma uses Harriet for her own ego. Harriet was "desiring to be guided by any one she looked up to" (30). The verb "guided" implies that she is lost and she needs someone to lead her, and in this case, it is Emma, who feels that she needs to be useful to Harriet. After Elton's revelations to Emma, she feels very shameful and repeats three times "poor Harriet" (210, 216) and "poor girl" (216). The insistence on the adjective "poor" highlights Emma's remorse, but it would not have happened if she did not take this endeavour. Thus, her superiority over the young girl granted her permission to mess with her life and Harriet is the one who suffers from Emma's decisions. In this way, Emma cannot be considered a good friend to Harriet and even if Emma wants the best for Harriet, she does not listen to her and does what she wants. Another example would be after Harriet's description of Mr. Martin, Emma wonders "what was the value of Harriet's description?—So easily pleased—so little discerning;—what signified her praise?" (270), showing that she still thinks that Harriet is not clever, and that her judgement is not worth to her.

The competition between the two women is emphasised after Harriet confesses to Emma that she is in love with Mr. Knightley. The narration alternates between Harriet's views on Mr. Knightley and their recent exchanges, in which she "had begun to be sensible of his talking to her much more than he had been used to do, and of his having indeed quite a different manner towards her; a manner of kindness and sweetness!" (650). The exclamation mark points out Harriet's discourse, indicating that it is her opinion. At the same time, "Emma felt them to be in the closest agreement with what she had known of his opinion of Harriet. He praised her for being without art or affectation, for having simple, honest, generous, feelings" (650). As a result, it gives the reader an idea of competition, as both girls' opinions are put side to side. The contest to win Mr. Knightley's heart is pointed out as the narrator argues, "Emma had never known how much of her happiness depended on being *first* with Mr. Knightley, first in interest and affection" (670). Accordingly, being at the top is Emma's main goal and, therefore, shows Emma's competitiveness, even with her friends. Even if it is not based on superficiality, Emma is still in competition with Harriet for a man. In this way, it shows that friendship between women is more often than not a competition.

The same thing can be found in *Clueless*, specific to chick flicks. According to the authors of *Les Teen Movies*, these movies present rivalry and little schemes in girls' popular groups as the main themes (56). *Clueless* shows the importance of being an adolescent, especially female, through popularity, biased looks, and judgments. Adolescent characters construct each other through the look of the other, and popularity plays an important role. Being popular means belonging to a group and many teen movies show that social status often correlates with higher popularity and beauty. These traits are notably induced by patriarchy and misogyny and are, once again, another constraint to feminine characters and their development in life. The scene at school in Physical Education [20:37] where Cher and Dionne meet Tai is a good example. The scene starts with a lateral tracking shot of many school girls on their phones or braiding each others' hair, signifying their apparent disinterest in the tennis class. They are all dressed in fashionable tight workout clothes with known brands like Adidas. The medium-full shot of the girls allows the spectator to see some tennis courts in the background as well as cheerleaders training, implying that they are in Physical Education class but they are not here to train or do any physical activities. This class only means for them to show their fashionable clothes. Furthermore, the non-diegetic song *Girls Just Wanna Have Fun* emphasises this idea; these girls just want to have fun. But it also reinforces the stereotypes of popular girls in high school, typical of teenage movies, only interested in clothes, boys, and gossip. Cher's voice-over starts before the lateral tracking shot shows her and she argues that she wants to do "more good deeds" (Heckerling 1995), paving the way for the rest of the scene.

The medium full-shot of Dionne and Cher shows them talking and not taking care of the teacher; we can hear her voice but she is not shown yet. When Cher realises she is called, she hands her handbag to Dionne. This movement highlights the discrepancy between the actual context, a P.E class, and Cher's love for fashion. The following medium-full shot of Cher doing her speech about the uselessness of P.E and the immediate full shot of all the girls cheering reveals the importance of diet culture in the 90s. The fact that all the girls cheer for Cher highlights her popularity and her natural charisma when she speaks but more importantly, the idea that all girls agree and live with this diet culture. Teenage girls in the movie talk a lot about calories and doing "sports" to eliminate those. In this case, we can see that it contradicts the idea that women are in competition. In this scene, their disinterest in the P.E class brings them together.

On the contrary, the lateral tracking shot offers Tai's first appearance and she looks lost, revealing the difference and competition between the school girls and Tai, looking different from them. The medium shot of all the girls reveals that they are all looking at her with disdain. There is a contrast between the girls and Tai and establishes that she does not belong. All the girls wear black

and white clothes whereas Tai wears colourful and baggy clothes. Furthermore, Amber's comment about Tai being a farmer stresses out the image of the city girls versus the countryside. Cher then argues "my mission is clear" while the camera tilts up with a close-up of Tai's outfit, from toe to head; emphasising her "bad" fashion choices. Tai is different from the other girls and Cher's mission is to transform her to be in the norm, so that she can please the male gaze. At the same time, Cher is still talking and asserts that "she is Clueless" (Heckerling 1995) (It might be important to notice that toe-up is a word invented for the movie by the director Amy Heckerling meaning ugly. Cher acknowledges her popularity as she states that Tai is a "good cause", as if Tai was a charity mission, which demonstrates Cher's superiority over Tai. She also calls her as if she was an animal when she says "come here". The shot-reverse-shot of the girls talking reveals that on the contrary, Tai might be superior to Cher and Dionne, as she knows more than them. She talks about herbal refreshment meaning weed, but Dionne's answer underlines that she did not understand because she talks about lunch. Furthermore, she argues that they do not have tea but coke, meaning Coca-Cola but Tai gets really excited as she thinks about the drug. Cher and Dionne are the ones clueless here, they still have their innocent minds while Tai is more experimented (in terms of drugs and as we later see, sex).

In another instance, the rivalry between Tai and Cher is shown through popularity. While Cher and Dionne never fight and do not compete to be the most popular, Cher feels threatened by Tai's newfound popularity [1:09:15]. After Tai's "brush with death in the mall," as Cher explains in the voice-over, Tai gets all the attention. The camera zooms-in on the group, allowing the audience to see the table surrounded by many teenagers. In the middle, Tai is the centre of attention, and she talks about what happened to her with Dionne at her side. The camera then presents Cher in a medium-long shot coming alone to the table, while a girl interrupts her to ask "Hey, Cher! Is it true some gang members, like tried to shoot Tai in the mall?" This small question demonstrates that Cher is now just a witness to Tai's life, therefore, she is not the main attraction she used to be. This is even more confirmed when Cher arrives at the table, and Tai asks the boys to move down for Cher to sit. Implicitly, it presents Tai as the person everyone listens to when it used to be Cher. The camera focuses on the group before showing Cher's face in a medium close-up. This way, it obliges the spectator to see that Cher tries to talk about her experience, but she is interrupted by a boy who wants to listen to Tai, and Cher's face seems sad and disappointed. While this scene presents Cher still being selfish as she tries to lead to conversation back to herself, it also shows that Tai has replaced Cher. The competition between the two girls seems even more powerful because Cher lost Dionne. In this scene, Dionne does not talk to Cher once, and she ignores her.

The climax of their tension is revealed when Tai reveals that she is in love with Josh [1:14:42]. The scene takes place at the end of the movie and Tai has completed the makeover and even surpassed Cher in her popularity and way of being. She is dressed in a very feminine way, with almost the same outfit as Cher at the beginning, with a pink tweed skirt and a blazer (Cher's outfit was yellow). She talks like Cher, and has worked on her accent and vocabulary. Just like Emma with Jane Fairfax, Cher feels threatened by Tai's popularity. The shot reverse-shot with the medium close-up of the two girls' faces allows the spectator to see the emotions on their faces. Cher tries to convince Tai that she does not belong with him because he is a "school nerd" and in this scene, Cher is not as convincing and her only other argument is "I—I just… don't think you mesh well together." The fact that she is stuttering shows that she is not as confident and on the contrary, Tai answers with wit. She returns "Why am I even listening to you to begin with? You're a virgin who can't drive," which seems like the ultimate insult to Cher because she just failed her driving test and her eyes are watering, signifying that she is about to cry. In this scene, Tai leads the conversation since she recommends "just talk when we've mellowed" and finishes with "I'm audi", an expression already used by Cher before, meaning that she is leaving. In this scene, rivalry and jealousy are intense. Cher is confronted with a new version of Tai, more empowered but at the same time, meaner. The competition, to be the most popular and the most liked by everyone, shows how teenage girls in the 90s were constrained to compete with each other. To this extent, this rivalry creates a constraint on their education and understanding of the world.

How women are educated and the many constraints they face undeniably affects their worldview, and thus, their subjectivity is at stake.

II - Immersion in the heroines' mistakes.

A. The heroines' internal point of view.

The heroines' point of view is a theme that comes across frequently in academic articles and is often studied by critics. In the novel, Emma's subjectivity is conveyed by the narration. With the subtle technique of the free indirect discourse, Jane Austen introduces Emma's point of view in the narration, which leads the reader to confuse it for omniscient narration, and, therefore, assume that it is facts and not biased. The technique is less subtle in the movie, and the spectator can see or hear Cher's subjectivity more easily. With the voice-over, Amy Heckerling manages to voice Emma's thoughts. The subjectivity factors, namely the free indirect speech and the voice-over, make us wonder to what extent the reader and the audience forget reality and are immersed in the characters' point of view. Graham Hough, in his chapter "Narrative and Dialogue in Jane Austen"[32] shows that "there is a large intermediate area, formally narrative, which in fact represents the thoughts, spoken or unspoken of the characters, and goes far towards reproducing their actual mode of expression- their vocabulary, syntax and rhetorical ordonnance, rather than those of the narrator." (203). Consequently, there is a confusion between the dialogues, very present in *Emma*, and the narrative. He distinguishes five kinds of discourse in the novel and the two most interesting ones are the coloured narratives, a "narrative or reflection or observation more or less deeply coloured by a particular character's point of view" (204) and the free indirect style. The difference between the two is that the coloured narrative consists of only a few sentences, while the free indirect style "is a concentration of what I have called coloured narrative." (205). According to Monika Fludernik in her book *The Fictions of Language and the Languages of Fiction*, free indirect discourse is a literary device "whose purposes prominently include automatic gear shifting between narration and characters' minds, usually in the interests of empathy and narratorial inconspicuousness.". In other words, the character's thoughts and the narration are embedded, and sometimes hard to untangle. Thus, it is hard to discern it, as she explains that "free indirect discourse comes to stand between indirect and direct speech: with regard to grammatical form (subject to the concordance of tense and to the referential shift) it is closer to the indirect; with regard to syntax and mimetic truthfulness (syntactic independence, preserving a large set of expressive elements), closer to the direct" (71). She adds that free indirect discourse usually corresponds to internal focalisation. To go even further, Daniel P. Gunn assesses that FID (Free Indirect Discourse) is "an imitation of figural speech or

[32] Graham Hough, "Narrative and Dialogue in Jane Austen" *The Critical Quarterly*, vol. 12, no. 3 (1970): 201–229.

thought, in which the narrator echoes or mimics the idiom of the character for the purposes of the fiction" (37)[33] and that "The character's language is no longer merely the character's, even in the limited sense that quoted discourse is the character's; rather, it is embedded in a new utterance spoken by the narrator, where it takes on new accretions of meaning and implication" (37). Then, FID is not just the character's thoughts embedded in the narration by the narrator, but it is an imitation of the character's speech. Since the narrator imitates the character's thoughts during long paragraphs, it becomes difficult for the reader to perceive the character's subjectivity. This difficulty is why the reader is led to think that everything said in the narration is neutral. As Hough assesses, "We do not as a rule recognise these errors as they are made. Sometimes we do, but in the more important cases, we are misled with the characters, only discovering the true state of the case when they do." (206). The readers are immersed in Emma's mistakes and judgments without noticing them.

Most of the descriptions of the characters are made with hints at Emma's judgement and Emma's criticisms. As Hough calls it, this paper will use the term "coloured narrative" because it only hints at Emma's thoughts (and not whole paragraphs), making it harder for the reader to discern that it is not the "all-knowing" narrator talking. The sentence "Mr. Elton's situation was most suitable, quite the gentleman himself, and without low connections." (36) is preceded by verbs evoking Emma's feelings, such as "She thought", "She feared", indicating openly that this is Emma's perception of the situation. She praised Mr. Elton to Harriet and these are the words she used to depict him. However, the sentence quoted does not have any introducing verb to highlight the character's judgment. After this first sentence, "only too palpable desirable, natural and probable" and "much merit" are also markers of Emma's speech. Emma is proud of herself for making the match and her high self-esteem pervades the text when the narrator says "It was not likely, however, that any body should have equalled her". Nonetheless, the sentence "quite the gentlemen himself" is a little unusual and could be understood as Emma's vocabulary and way of talking. The reader may or may not discern that it is Emma's perception, signalling how it can be challenging to distinguish what is Emma's own perception and what is the reality. Furthermore, the insistence on his status, his "comfortable home," also indicate Emma's point of view, as the reader knows that she is very class conscious and judges people on their status in society. In this way, the reader is wholly absorbed in the narration and is immersed in her point of view without noticing it, believing that everything written is omniscient and the reality. Thanks to FID, it is easy to notice

[33] Daniel P. Gunn, "Free Indirect Discourse and Narrative Authority in *Emma*", *Narrative* 12.1 (2004): 35-54.

that Emma has a good judgment of Mr. Elton's character. She deduces that because he has an independent property he has "a very sufficient income" and he is a gentleman. However, when it comes to love and marriage, she is clueless. She chooses Mr. Elton for Harriet only because, in her mind, they would be "an excellent match" because he is respectable and "without any deficiency of useful understanding of knowledge of the world"; not because there is a real connection between the two.

In addition to Mr. Elton's description, Harriet Smith's depiction is also coloured by Emma's narrative. The sentence "Harriet certainly was not clever" (26) is a good example. Harriet might not be clever, but the addition of the adverb "certainly" shows that the description is biased by Emma's judgement. In addition, the narrator shows that she was "only desiring to be guided by any one she looked up to" (26), conveying Emma's desire to be a model for the young girl. Besides, the description is also focused on Harriet's status since the narrator argues that Harriet was "so artlessly impressed by the appearance of every thing in so superior a style to what she had been used to" (24), meaning that she is not used to be around wealthy people. At the same time, it seems it is a way for Emma to assess her superiority over Harriet in terms of status and her control over the younger girl if the reader is able to decipher Emma's opinion of Harriet.

Emma's refusal of marrying is shaken by the arrival of Frank Churchill, with whom Emma gets closer with. Frank seems to flirt with Emma and the narrator poins out "in spite of Emma's resolution of never marrying, there was something in the name, in the idea of Mr. Frank Churchill, which always interested her" (180). Once again, Emma's subjectivity is shown through the use of the noun "idea". She does not really know who Frank is, but she is interested in him, thanks to his name and situation. She considers the idea of marrying him because he equals her in "age, character and condition." Two of the three characteristics are superficial —age and condition— and Emma's superficiality is shown. Emma's subjectivity in marriage in furthered in the next sentence, when the narrator stresses "He *seemed* by this connexion between the families, quite to belong to her" [my emphasis]. Thus, Emma is considering marrying him because he flatters her ego and his superficiality equals hers.

Coloured narratives are the most frequent ways to narrate in *Emma*, rendering the text and Emma's thoughts almost impossible to separate. Nonetheless, it could be argued that Free Indirect Discourse does not only mimic the way the characters talk as Hough presents, but it also includes their thoughts. The imitation of the characters' discourses can be found with Mr. Weston in chapter

18. Mr. and Mrs. Weston organised a dinner to greet Frank Churchill, but he does not seem to arrive. The reader gets to read without knowing properly that Mr. Weston is speaking.

"*For half an hour Mr. Weston was surprised and sorry; but then he began to perceive that Frank's coming two or three months later would be a much better plan; better time of year; better weather; and that he would be able, without any doubt, to stay considerably longer with them than if he had come sooner.*" (136)

The use of the semi-colons renders an idea of a rapid, quick narration and an orality, mimicking the way Mr. Weston talks and embedding his speech with the narration, and therefore, including him in the text. However, more than imitating Mr. Weston's way of talking, it also allows another comprehension of the text and the story, because the reader has access to another point of view, and, therefore, it confronts Emma's point of view to others.

Free indirect speech is repeatedly used, making it harder for the reader to discern subjectivity and authorial voice. After Mr. Elton's proposal, Emma feels miserable, mostly because she thinks of Harriet's reaction and disappointment. The narration offers an excellent example of Free Indirect Speech. The narrator writes, "Perhaps it was not fair to expect him to feel how very much he was her inferior in talent, and all the elegancies of mind." (138). In this sentence, the readers might get the impression that it is a simple sentence. However, the insistence on "very much" highlights Emma's subjectivity. The emphasis on how Mr. Elton is inferior to Emma shows that it is not a statement but a part of Emma's thinking, especially on class and social status. The whole paragraph is written biased by Emma's thoughts as the text deals with the subject of the Woodhouses' superiority in Hartfield. The text assesses that "He must know that the Woodhouses had been settled for several generations at Hartfield, the younger branch of a very ancient family—and the Eltons were nobody." (138). In this sense, the differentiation represents Emma's preoccupation with social class and status, as she is obsessed with marrying someone as rich and important as she is. Thus, this part is written with free indirect speech, indiscernible to some readers. The reader gets a sense that status is essential in the novel, but not as much as it is vital in Emma's mind. Hence, free indirect speech and coloured narratives are the two most important ways to convey Emma's thoughts in the novel. Both techniques allow the reader to get involved in the heroine's subjectivity, almost indecipherable to the untrained eyes.

With her technique in the narrative, Austen links the whole novel with Emma's mistakes. Following the definition of errors by Marc Porée and Isabelle Alfandary in the book *Literature and Error*[34], errors "are made in reference to some ideal code, model or set of binding social values, interiorised as such and which should have called for a different, non-reprehensible, action" (4). Thus, Emma's actions and endeavours should have been different if she had followed society's codes and social values attached to her social condition. The reasons why she make these mistakes will be explained later on, and they will link errors and subjectivity with the feminine condition. But what is interesting here is "the "fit", the "suitability" of the pact, or contract, which binds literature to error at every level, forming what take to be, as it were, an organically joint venture in error" (11) as argued by the two authors. The ignorance, both of the reader the characters with Frank Churchill and Jane Fairfax's engagement is an important take. At every level, superficial (the reader) and internal (the characters), the mystery is never cleared up until it is announced. Hence, the confusion and the deception, for the reader but also for Emma and the inhabitants of Highbury, who all believed that Frank Churchill would propose to her. Literature and the narrative force the reader to believe in what it is written, and thus, plunges the characters and reader in the mistakes. Catherine Lanone, in the chapter entitled "Literature and the Sensation of Error" argues that "the literature of error unhinges the tale, forces reader and characters to revisit what happened in a flash of understanding that turns everything upside down, stripping illusions, fleshing out life, leaving only the bare bones of illusion and misguided or wrong decisions" (149). Indeed in the novel, when the news of Frank and Jane's engagement in revealed, all the characters and the reader have to reconsider what happened. Not only Emma, but everyone seems disappointed. The revelation comes from Mrs. Weston who "was looking so ill, and had an air of so much perturbation" (622) to Emma. Mrs. Weston declares "in a trembling voice" (623) that they are engaged. Furthermore, she states that "It is impossible to express our surprize" (623). Emma's reaction is the same as Mrs. Weston, as she "jumped with surprize;—and, horror-struck, exclaimed […]" (623). Even the reader is as shocked as Emma. Emma's reaction is mental but also physical, as she is physically reacting, her body jumping. To some extent, Mrs. Weston represents the inhabitants, thus it could be suggested that this is their reactions too. Therefore, as showed before by Porée and Alfandary, this is a "joint venture in error", leading the characters and the reader to a state of shock and surprise. Emma and the reader can think of every interactions Frank and the young woman had, guided by Frank's actions. Lanone in her chapter analyses a novel by Charles Dickens, and in doing so, she

[34] Marc Porée and Isabelle Alfandary, *Literature and Error: a Literary Take on Mistakes and Errors* (New-York: Peter Lang 2018).

suggests many clues to see how the narrative plays the reader and the characters in these errors. She argues that "the text plays simultaneously on gaps and blanks" (140). Indeed, in the novel, Frank Churchill often comes and goes, leaving for a few weeks and then returning to Highbury. Thus, he is leaving a mystery around him. At the beginning of chapter eighteen, the narrator indicates "Mr. Frank Churchill did not come" (211), when everyone was waiting for him. Hence, the prolepsis of his apparitions lead to the discovery of his engagement in a surprising way. Furthermore, neither the reader nor Emma learn the news in person. It is with reported speech, through Mrs. Weston that we (reader and Emma) acknowledge the truth. Interestingly, the noun "error" is mentioned only once in relation to Emma, and it happens when she reflects on her matchmaking between Mr. Elton and Harriet. The narrator declares "The first error and the worst lay at her door" (210), which presents Emma's first realisation that she has done something wrong. The next sentence, "It was foolish, it was wrong, to take so active a part in bringing any two people together" (210) depicts Emma's feelings and thoughts. Emma's subjectivity is underlined by the nouns "foolish" and "wrong", two words to describe negatively, and therefore, her viewpoint. Accordingly, literature and errors are associated in the novel and play an essential role in the understanding. However, unlike Lanone's arguments that "error is unbearable" and "error creates a flaw in the system" (143), Emma's errors encourages her to reflect on herself and ultimately, find love and happiness.

Hence, one can notice the importance of the free-indirect speech, coloured narratives and the narrative technique in which Emma's errors and judgements are immersed. Not only the characters are dived into the consequences of Emma's actions but the reader is also blinded by her errors. Frank Churchill's engagement is hidden by the narrative, rendering Emma's mistakes exogenous, as she is mislead and cannot know anything. Her subjectivity is, therefore, made even more meaningful because the reader is plunged in the same internal perspective.

In *Clueless*, Cher's subjectivity is more apparent thanks to the voice-over. The voice-over could be named as internal diegetic voiceover since it is subjective in the story world —and not completely diegetic, as it is not a sound produced within the story— as it is Cher's voice and subjectivity; she is talking about her thoughts. In *Film Art: An Introduction*[35], Bordwell, Thompson, and Smith argue that "Plunging into mental subjectivity can increase our sympathy for a character and can cue stable expectations about what the characters will later say or do." (291). Indeed, Cher's voice-over demonstrates that she tells us details of her inner life and what she thinks of

[35] David Bordwell, Kristin Thompson, and Jeff Smith, *Film Art an Introduction*, Eleventh ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill Education 2017).

people and situations. Furthermore, the authors suggest that "We may hear a character's thoughts even though the character's lips don't move; presumably, other characters cannot hear these thoughts. Here, the narration uses sound to achieve subjectivity, giving us information about the character's mental state. Such spoken thoughts are comparable to mental images on the visual track" (291). The adaptation from the book to the screen allowed Heckerling to exhibit Emma's thoughts and subjectivity through the voice-over and Cher's mental subjectivity. The audience is, therefore, dived into her understanding of the world.

There are 24 scenes throughout the film in which Cher's voice-over is present. We get clear access to her train of thoughts, and there is no doubt that the voice is Cher's voice, contrary to *Emma*, in which we cannot correctly discern between Emma's thought and authorial voice. The first time we hear Cher's voice-over, at the very beginning of the film, we do not know if it is the main character or not. However, the fact that the voice-over starts while the camera shows her with a medium close-up of her face in the mirror states that she is the main character and she is the one talking. Thus, the viewer is directly involved in Cher's way of thinking and, therefore, in the way she views the world, and her subjectivity. The voice-over is used in the typical way described by the authors of *Film Art: An Introduction*, as we hear the characters' thoughts without seeing their lips move, indicating that it is Cher's thoughts and not words being said aloud.

In all these instances, Cher is reflecting on people's behaviours, for example at the beginning [02:34] when she comments on Dionne's outfit as she states, "And I must give her snaps for her courageous fashion efforts," but also on herself when she wonders why she is not feeling herself around Josh. In this scene [1:19:20], she declares, "But now I don't know how to act around him. I mean, ordinarily I would strut around in my cutest little outfits and send myself flowers and candy, but I couldn't do that stuff with Josh." In this way, the audience gets a close approach to Cher's way of thinking, her criticisms, and the evolution on her thinking. Here, she does not understand why she is feeling like this, but she reflects on her own behaviour and, at school, does an introspection. This is when she decides to do a make-over, but for her soul, indicating that she is evolving into a better person. At the beginning, she is self-centred as the audience watches her commenting, with humour and sometimes sarcasm, and the audience witnesses her evolution through the voice-over. In the end, she is more conscious of the events around her, and more importantly, she is less selfish, thinking about her friends' happiness and desire. The audience sees her journey from a spoiled child to a conscious adolescent, aware of her surroundings, reinforcing the sympathy towards her. The same could be noticed in *Emma*. At the beginning of the novel, Emma is a young woman self-centred and acting childishly, as she influences on Harriet's love life

like she is a doll. Her mistakes allow her to grow up and become mature, growing into a woman. At the end, she is capable to interpret people's feelings and, thus, she is finally emotionally intelligent to analyse her own feelings and realises she is in love with Mr. Knightley.

Furthermore, it could be added that Cher addresses the audience, including them in the film process. The first line she delivers is directed to the audience; she says, "So OK, you're probably thinking […]," indicating that the voice-over is her thoughts to herself, and she is commenting on what she is doing, for someone else to see. To some extent, it could be argued that Cher's V.O. is added in the film as commentaries on her life, but the fact that these are direct comments implies that she does not have any perspective on her story, and therefore, they are not added afterward. The voice-over may seem nondiegetic as it is not perceived by other characters but by the audience, and Cher, rendering it diegetic. In this sense, Cher could be talking to an imaginary friend, presenting her life, friends, and feelings to an imaginary audience as if she was performing her life. In another instance, she says to no one or her imaginary audience, "And I must give her snaps for her courageous fashion efforts." [02:34], indicating that she is commenting on her own behaviour for someone else. She also explains that "Dionne and I were both named after great singers of the past who now do infomercials.", pointing out the fact that she explains this to someone who does not know her and her friends. For these reasons, the performance aspect is very important because she presents her life, and herself, to an unknown and unfamiliar audience. Feminine performativity, as shown earlier in the first part with Judith Butler, is more present in the film than in the novel, and will be discussed in the second part, as performance and feminine subjectivity are linked.

The voice-over directed to the viewer is an extension of Cher's discourse, and as Jennifer O'Meara shows, the voice-over addresses "viewers as though they, too, can benefit from her advice."[36] In this way Cher's subjectivity is shown and much more easier to discern than Emma's subjectivity. Thus, the audience may be closer to Cher than Emma because they have easier access to her thoughts, and they are directly pointed at them. As argued before, sympathy towards the character is emphasised in *Clueless,* thanks to the voice-over.

Moreover, the reader and audience are immersed in the character's point of view in different ways, as false clues are dropped here and there. In the novel, as the story is told most of the time from Emma's perspective, the reader is as surprised as Emma when Mr. Elton reveals his desire for her in the carriage scene. Because every interaction she had with him is misunderstood —for example, the riddle 'courtship' he wrote for her, but she believed it was for Harriet and Harriet's

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[36] Jennifer O'Meara, "'We've Got to Work on Your Accent and Vocabulary': Characterization through Verbal Style in 'Clueless.'" *Cinema Journal*, vol. 53, no. 3 (2014): 143.

portrait she drew for Mr. Elton— the reader is also convinced that Mr. Elton is after Harriet. The carriage scene climaxes with this misunderstanding as Emma is perplexed. In the same way, Cher is convinced that Elton loves Tai —the riddle and portrait are transformed into a picture— and the car scene in which he reveals his feelings feels like a deja-vu from the novel. Many scenes demonstrate the build-up of the confusion and how the reader and spectator are immersed in the characters' point of view.

The first instance of confusion, and the most important one, is displayed in chapter six. Emma wants to draw Harriet's portrait, and during the whole process, Mr. Elton is present and admires the girl. The narrator argues that "She [Emma] gave him credit for stationing himself where he might gaze and gaze again without offence" (45), clearly indicating that Mr. Elton is interested in Harriet as he keeps looking at her. After the painting is done, Mr. Woodhouse, Mr. Knightley, and Mrs. Weston criticise how she painted and how Harriet is represented. However, only Mr. Elton contradicts with them, saying that Harriet is "certainly not too tall" (46) or "The naïveté of Miss Smith's manners—and altogether—Oh, it is most admirable! I cannot keep my eyes from it. I never saw such a likeness." (47) In all these sentences, Mr. Elton appraises Harriet's look, inviting the reader to believe that he is indeed attracted to her. Furthermore, they are related in direct speech, highlighting that these are his words and not Emma's interpretation. Thus, Mr. Elton's words reinforce the idea that he is after Harriet.

Harriet and Emma meet Mr. Elton during a walk, and they get back to his house. Emma leaves the two alone, and when she comes back, "the lovers were standing together at one of the windows." (87). The noun "lovers" shows that it is free-indirect speech rendering Emma's thoughts because, in reality, they are not behaving like lovers as Emma thinks. Nonetheless, the reader could mistake FID with authorial voice and, therefore, be convinced that they are in love. The dinner party scene in *Emma* takes place before Christmas when they are invited to the Westons. Harriet is not present since she is sick, and after checking on her, Mr. Elton reports to Emma how Harriet is feeling, "and his voice was the voice of sentiment as he answered" (108). In the way he talks, Mr. Elton appears affected by Harriet's sickness, and Emma recognises the affection for something more than polite concerns. Afterward, Emma "was ready to listen with most friendly smiles" (118) to Mr. Elton's conversation. The narrator emphasises the adjective "friendly". In this way, the reader is aware of Emma's only intention to be friendly, and she does not look like she is flirting with Mr. Elton, reinforcing the idea that Emma does not imagine that Mr. Elton might be in love with her. With all these instances, the reader is blinded by false clues, and Emma's subjectivity is taken as a

fact. However, the last two examples are counteracted by numerous reactions and words from Mr. Elton hinting that Emma might be wrong.

In *Clueless*, false clues are also dropped, not only with Cher's voice-over but also with visual scenes. When Cher takes Tai's picture (31:15), the medium shot allows the audience to see Elton appear behind Cher and say "Cool picture" and "Beautiful" while looking at Tai. These short words induce the spectator into thinking that Elton is indeed attracted to Tai. Furthermore, he even asks, "Why don't you make me a copy of this?" hinting at Cher that he wants Tai's picture, to be able to look at her whenever he wants. In this sense, the spectator is led to think that Elton wants Tai, as we learn that he has Tai's picture in his locker. The party in the Valley scene [32:45] furthers this idea while contradicting it. The first shot of the scene is an establishing shot, taking place during Christmas, which can be deduced thanks to the decoration. The house party seems wild, people are dancing and, the spectator can hear bottles crashing. The lateral tracking shot follows Cher and Tai as they make their way into the crowd in order to dance in the centre of the room so that Elton can see Tai. After Tai's concussion, the medium-close up of Tai and Elton shows them in the foreground. Nonetheless, we can see Cher in the middle. Cher only sees that they seem to get along well, and Elton cares for Tai as he asks her multiple times how she is. This leads Cher to think that they are attracted to each other, and Cher's voice-over confirms it as she argues that she is doing "good deeds". Contrary to *Emma*, there are few false clues leading the spectator to believe in Cher's ideas. Except for the picture in the locker, we quickly realize that Elton is attracted to Cher rather than to Tai. As the spectator is more aware of Cher's subjectivity, it could be argued that she is more susceptible to be criticised and laughed at than Emma. Because the audience can see visually that Cher's beliefs are not in line with reality, the heroine is put in the position of a ridiculous character. To a certain extent, it could be said that the transition from novel to film rendered the heroine even more ridiculous and naive in the spectator's eyes. This idea is developed later in the film by another aspect, through the character of Christian.

The role of the adaptation is crucial as it re-works ideas from the book to transform and adapt them to a 20th-century audience. As mentioned in the introduction, there are many kinds of adaptations and many attempts to define them. In a chapter in *The Cambridge Companion to Literature on Screen*[37], Peter Brooker describes *Clueless* as a translation. The audience does not need to know *Emma* when they watch the movie. The "adaptation, that is to say, will stand in a set of potential intertextual or dialogic relation, not all of which will be realised or need to be realised at any given time in order to afford pleasure and understanding." (113). This is why Heckerling took the freedom to change Frank Churchill's secret engagement with Jane Fairfax into Christian's homosexuality. Olivia Murphy, in an article entitled "Queering Jane Austen in the Twenty-First Century,"[38] argues that "Queerness here fulfills the dual role of convenient mystery and punch line: as an audience we are meant to laugh both at the gay jokes Christian prompts and at Cher's obliviousness to the broad hints dropped regarding his sexuality." (793). She also adds that "Mainstream writers like Heckerling (…) deploy queerness simply as a means to update Austen's subplots of shame and secrecy for the twenty-first century." (796). Therefore, adding a queer character is only done for realism and to mock Cher. At the end of the twentieth century, queerness is thus common to talk about and represent in mainstream media. However, the fact that Cher is the only person to be oblivious about the fact that Christian is gay, is surprising.

In *Emma*, Frank Churchill's engagement to Jane Fairfax is a secret for all inhabitants of Highbury; therefore, when Emma learns that they are engaged and about to get married, the discovery is a shock for everyone and the reader as well. In addition, Frank cunningly flirts with Emma, leading her and the reader to believe that he is indeed attracted to her. On the contrary, in *Clueless*, all characters except for Cher know that Christian is gay. Nonetheless, it is never said directly, but by playing with stereotypes and clichés, the viewer and other characters in the film are all aware of his sexuality or at least that he is not attracted to girls.

The first time we see Christian is at school [47:50], right after Cher's voice-over wonders how to find a boyfriend in high school. The camera zooms-in in slow-motion toward Christian at the entrance of the room. The music seems to be part of a romantic comedy, rendering the scene very dramatic and rom-com worthy. Christian's outfit contrasts with the one Cher describes a few seconds before he arrives. She argues, "It looks like they just fell out of bed, put on some baggy

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[37] Deborah Cartmell, and Imelda Whelehan, *The Cambridge Companion to Literature on Screen* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2007).

[38] Olivia Murphy, "Queering Jane Austen in the Twenty−First Century" Journal of Popular Culture, vol. 53, no. 4 (2020): 790–810.

pant and take their greasy hair, ew! And covered up with a backwards cap" while the camera is tilting up and following a group of four skater boys walking to school. Thus, Christian seems different from other boys, as he is dressed in a tight black t-shirt, tailored high-waist grey trousers with a matching jacket. Furthermore, his hair is not greasy, and he does not wear a cap. Christian's hairstyle could be compared to Elvis Presley's Pompadour, highlighting that he takes care of himself and takes time to do his hair. At this stage, there is no evidence that he is gay, but he is different from the others. However, Christian leaves clues here and there that Cher does not pick up on. For example, in the following scene [50:16] at school, Christian reads a book called *Junky* by William S. Burroughs, a homosexual author, in which he writes a semi-autobiographical account of his life. Therefore, one could read such a book without being queer, but this fact is added with many other clues, such as his passion for shopping and his love for Tony Curtis in *Spartacus*.

In the same way, when Christian comes over to watch movies, Cher is convinced this is the night she will lose her virginity; therefore, she puts on her prettiest red mini-dress and make-up. The scene (1:03:21 - 1:04:47) starts with an establishing shot, showing Christian and Cher lying side by side on the bed watching a movie. Christian's face reveals that he is enjoying the movie, smiling and looking fondly at the screen, while Cher's face suggests she is bored. Cher's voice-over even argues, "Christian had a thing for Tony Curtis, so he brought over "Some Like It Hot" and "Spartacus"" (Heckerling 1995). The movie is filled with homoeroticism, but Cher does not seem to notice it, and she is still completely clueless, thinking that Christian likes her. Christian's lack of interest is highlighted right after. The close-up of their feet shows Cher rubbing her feet up against Christian's legs. The next medium shot of their faces proves that Christian is not interested, his face watching Cher with confusion and then putting away his feet. Even after this event, Cher tries to get closer, but she falls off the bed. Cher, like Emma, is not a good spectator, and she does not interpret movies correctly. Even right before her eyes, she does not discern all the clues. After all these clues, Cher is still convinced that Christian likes her, and it is only when Murray tells her that he is gay that she realizes that he is. Before clearly stating that he is gay, Murray lists many stereotypes as he says, "He's a disco-dancing, Oscar Wilde-reading, Streisand ticket-holding friend of Dorothy, know what I'm saying?" but Cher does not understand. All of these are references to culture and pop culture that the audience may understand. However, Cher does not, emphasising her obliviousness and lack of knowledge and culture in certain areas. Dionne emphasises Murray's statement by saying, "He does like to shop, Cher, and the boy can dress", which makes Cher realise that she was wrong about Christian. Interestingly, she realises it only when Dionne uses the example of fashion, reinforcing the cliché of the adolescent obsessed with clothes and fashion. To some extent, it could

be mentioned that this subjectivity is typically feminine, according to feminine stereotypes of the end of the twentieth century.

B. Feminine subjectivity.

As indicated previously, the heroines are naive about the world around them, and this naivety could be linked to their lack of education. Nevertheless, why is this subjectivity typically feminine? This is associated with characteristics already mentioned in the first part. Education in the 19th century did not allow women to access high education, except for conduct books that influenced how they viewed the world. In the novel, almost all coloured narratives or free indirect speech are told from Emma's point of view and reveal that her judgment is often wrong. Subjectivity is thus feminine because, as mentioned before, the constraint of the domestic novel restrains the characters in the novel. The plot is centred around Highbury, and Austen does not go beyond the village's limits, not giving access to a more man-dominated world, a business world in which Mr. Knightley and other male characters participate. Thus, Emma has no experience of the world around her, and her judgment is constructed around what she knows. Andrew H. Wright, in his book *Jane Austen's Novels: a Study in Structure,*[39] indicates that "Emma is, like all great heroes, the victim of her own illusions: she creates a world. How deceptive is appearance, and how misleading." (137). Growing up as a woman did not allow her to have multiple experiences besides the typical upper-class leisures. Even if Jane Austen depicts a relatively pro-feminist account, as Emma is to some extent free from any obligations (thanks to her father's wealth and status in society), the heroine still has a poorer education than her male counterparts, and this is why her subjectivity is feminine. Not only her education plays a part in her subjectivity but her inexperiences in everything that concerns love, marriage, and sex also play a part. R. E. Hughes, in his article "The Education of Emma Woodhouse"[40], demonstrates that "Thanks to her own inexperience and her father's myopic influence, Emma has a fairyland notion of love." (71). Indeed, her ignorance affects her views on the other characters' feelings, which leads her to commit all these mistakes when she matches, firstly Harriet and Mr. Elton and then Harriet and Frank Churchill. Emma creates a world around her by choosing whom she wants to spend time with, creating another layer of subjectivity. In the riddle scene with Mr. Elton and Harriet, already discussed in the first

[39] Andrew H. Wright, *Jane Austen's Novels: A Study in Structure* (London: Penguin, 1972).

[40] R. E. Hughes, "The Education of Emma Woodhouse" *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, vol. 16, no. 1 (1961): 69–74.

part, her intelligence has been shown through her quick deduction. However, it could be added that Emma seems to be convinced that Mr. Elton is in love with Harriet and wrote her a riddle, because she has decided so. In this sense, it could be linked to her education, as she reigns in her house. Mr. Elton's riddle expresses "And woman, lovely woman, reigns alone" (69) and this one sentence applies completely to Emma's upbringing and life, reigning, to some extent, over Highbury alone. Before Harriet, Emma does not have many close friends and her only friend was Miss Taylor, her governess and friend, who got married and left the Woodhouses' house. The narrator argues, "the quiet prosings of three such women [Mrs. and Miss Bates and Mrs. Goddard] made her feel that every evening so spent, was indeed one of the long evenings she had fearfully anticipated" (23), indicating that even if she has company, she does not have friends, especially young people her age. In this sense, the lack of friendship, especially feminine friendship, built her ideas of relationships and constructed her subjectivity concerning love.

Furthermore, she does not have a model of love relationships in her life, as her mom died when she was younger, and therefore, it might be the reason for her "fairyland notion of love," as R.E. Hugues argues. Emma is known for reading a lot, and her conception of love might come from books and not reality. Emma's inexperience of love is also pointed out in many occurrences. During a conversation between Mrs. Weston and Mr. Knightley, he ponders, "I should like to see Emma in love" (39), highlighting that Emma has never been in love. Emma herself reveals to Harriet that "I never have been in love; it is not my way, or my nature; and I do not think I ever shall." (82), which shows that Emma does not see love in her life. She does not see it in a negative way, but for her, love is not an option in her life but only in her imagination and for others. Furthermore, she does not want to marry as she argues "I have none of the usual inducements of women to marry" (86) which is important, as a woman of her time did not have many other options. The fact that she does not realise until very late that she is in love with Mr. Knightley is significant because if she cannot recognise love for herself, she cannot discern love in others. At the end of the novel, Emma understands that she is in love with Mr. Knightley when Harriet announces that she is attracted to him. Emma has a revelation, and she thinks, "It darted through her, with the speed of an arrow, that Mr. Knightley must marry no one but herself!" (382). The exclamation mark emphasises that this is not just the narrator thinking but Emma's thoughts.

In addition to her lack of feminine friendships and relationship role models, the deceptiveness of appearances is very important and leads Emma in the wrong direction. Frank Churchill is the perfect example, as he shamelessly flirts with Emma while being engaged with Jane Fairfax. Even if Emma has the intention to be friends with him, Frank still tries to flirt with her, and

“every distinguishing attention that could be paid, was paid to her” (345). The conversation between the two of them shows to what extent Frank flirts with her.

“‘It is hotter to-day."
"Not to my feelings. I am perfectly comfortable to-day."
"You are comfortable because you are under command."
"Your command?—Yes.”” (345)

Even the reader is confused and under the impression that Frank really is in love with Emma as he keeps leading the conversation to her and how much he likes her. Emma’s plain statement “It is hotter to-day” renders the idea of a dull and ordinary conversation, while Frank Churchill’s answer emphasises his eagerness to talk about his feelings. Furthermore, the rhetorical question he answers himself accentuates his flirting, as he leads the topic of the conversation to Emma. Thus, when she learns that he is engaged with Jane Fairfax, Emma feels shameful and embarrassed to have believed that Frank was attracted to her. Therefore, there is no doubt that she feels disappointed.

Thus, we could wonder, is Emma really manipulative as many have described her, or is she just the subject of her lack of education and lack of experience, therefore rendering her subjectivity feminine? As previously seen before, Emma, due to her status as a woman growing up in the nineteenth century, does not have high education and faces some constraints. Consequently, her lack of education and her inexperience in love and friendship pervade her vision of the world. Furthermore, throughout the novel, she and the people close to her all suggest that she acts with the goodness of her heart. At the beginning of the novel, Mr. Woodhouse declares, “Emma never thinks of herself, if she can do good to others” (14). Although it could be said that Mr. Woodhouse has a subjective opinion concerning Emma, it is true that Emma does not act with the intention of manipulating people, but on the contrary, because it makes her and the people around her happy, as she witnessed with the marriage of Miss Taylor and Mr. Weston. When meeting Harriet, the narrator shows that “Harriet would be loved as one to whom she [Emma] could be useful” (27). In this sense, the young lady wants to render Harriet’s life better; thus, she does not mean any harm when choosing Mr. Elton to be Harriet’s future husband. It is intriguing to note that the adjective “loved” is associated with “useful” because these two notions are not opposites, but they usually do not belong together. Love is associated with feelings, whereas usefulness is more a competence and an action. In this way, it can be observed that there is a clash between feelings and actions, rendering

Emma's subjectivity even more prominent. Consequently, Emma is not manipulating Highbury's inhabitants because she wants to control them but because she wants the best for the people she cares about, even if it means hurting their feelings. Emma and Cher have many characteristics in common, but Cher, thanks to media and her education, had access to much more knowledge. Her subjectivity could be considered feminine for other reasons, but they all seem odd for a teenage girl in the twentieth-century.

Cher in *Clueless* is also the subject of this subjectivity. Nonetheless, it is important to note the major difference between the novel and the film, which could explain, to some extent, Cher's naivety. Emma is twenty-one, as we learn at the very beginning of the novel, Cher is sixteen and still a student in high school. Sue Parrill in a chapter dedicated to *Emma*'s adaptations argues that "She [Heckerling] probably felt that an American high school student is more likely to experience the kind of idleness that Emma experienced as an unmarried female than an American young woman at any other stage of her existence." (121) Thus, if the director had decided to create a twenty-one year old heroine, the naivety she displays would have been even more laughable and strange.

Like Emma, although it is much bigger, she lives in a very concentrated area, Beverly Hills. Thanks to TV and other media, Cher is probably conscious of the world around her, but she is only interested in her little life. This time, it is not the fault of the lack of education but her disinterest in life outside celebrities, shopping malls, and her friends. As William Galperin puts it in his article, "Cher has learned everything that she needs or, better still, should have learned by the time we first encounter her in late 20th century Los Angeles." (190)[41]. In this manner, Cher learned all the things she needs to survive and thrive in her environment. Hence, why she does not seem interested in learning more, especially at school. During a presentation [04:32], she relays on experiences she had and does not add any new information or facts. In her speech she draws from her experience at a party and she defends:

"But it's like, when I had this garden party for my father's birthday right? I said R.S.V.P. because it was a sit-down dinner. But people came that like, did not R.S.V.P. so I was like, totally buggin'. I had to haul ass to the kitchen, redistribute the food, squish in extra place settings, but by the end of the day it was like, the more the merrier!"

[41] William Galperin, "Adapting Jane Austen: The Surprising Fidelity of 'Clueless'" *The Wordsworth Circle*, vol. 42, no. 3 (2011): 187–93.

Her event might seem foolish and pointless but, indeed, it does apply to the theme of the presentation, although it is not scholarly based. Furthermore, during her speech, the camera zooms-in on her face, inviting the spectator to believe that what she says is important. Furthermore, the music adds another layer, rendering the scene official and important, comparing her to an official doing a speech, changing the world. Thus, the spectator gets the idea that she does not need to study, because she achieves a lot, with what she already knows.

Like Emma, she is clueless regarding love, sex, and relationships. Melissa Mazmanian presents the context in which "The sexual revolution of the 1960's opened the doors on sexuality. What was once relegated to hushed whispers behind closed doors became open discussion in the hands of the media. Sex before marriage is assumed in most social circles and prevalent in current film."[42] Therefore, the fact that Cher does not read the clues correctly is quite surprising, and shows her subjectivity. The sexual revolution is a subject studied in depth by Elaine Tyler May in *America and The Pill: A History of Promise, Peril and Liberation*[43]. In this book, the author shows that the pill was the symbol of the sexual revolution of the 1960s, and it became real because it allowed women to be shameless and free of guilt around their sexuality and how they expressed it. May argues that "sex was increasingly escaping its marital confines and exploding among the unwed" (71). In this sense, sex usually kept in the private sphere became present in the realm of the public sphere. Gloria Steinem, in an article entitled "The Moral Disarmament of Betty Coed,"[44] claims that "Novels presently being written about, and sometimes by, college girls are not necessarily preoccupied with sex, but they do assume that it is a possible and probable part of a single girl's experience." Even if this quote is from an article written in 1962, it is still relevant for the end of the 90s and stresses that sex is everywhere in the media and has been for at least forty years. The movie does mention the pill or any contraceptive, but it is important to note that some high-school students do have sex, such as Tai or Murray, and Dionne.

Thus, movies and the media depicted more and more women at ease with showing their sexuality. Hence, even if Cher does not talk about it with her father, she must be aware of sexual talk or innuendos. The audience knows that Cher has seen many films, as she mentions and

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[42] Melissa, Mazmanian, "Reviving Emma in a Clueless World: The Current Attraction to a Classic Structure" *Persuasions Online Occasional Papers* 3 (1999).

[43] Elaine Tyler May, *America and The Pill: A History of Promise, Peril and Liberation* (New-York: Basic Books, 2010).

[44] Gloria Steinem, "The Moral Disarmament of Betty Coed", *Esquire* (1962): 96-97.

references many films during the film. For example, she suggests that Dionne and Murray's relationship resembles "that Ike and Tina Turner movie." The movie she refers to is *What's Love Got to Do with It*[45] (1993). The movie is Tina Turner's biography, relating her journey to success and her break-up with her abusive husband, Ike Turner, depicting sexual scenes. Thus, Cher is not cut from the cinema and cinema culture, showing that she should know about sex, even if she has never had any experience. However, the viewer endlessly sees Cher being clueless about sex talks or innuendos about it. In the school P.E scene, Amber argues, "My plastic surgeon doesn't want me doing any activity where balls fly at my nose," and Dionne answers, "Well, there goes your social life." The camera shows all the girls giggling, but Cher's face reveals that she does not understand, emphasising her obliviousness to sex talk.

Furthermore, according to modern stereotypes, Cher is expected to know about sex. She is blond, has full pink lips, is thin and pretty, and she is the stereotype of a sexual being. The blond's stereotype has been modelled by Marilyn Monroe and later Barbie, and Mazmanian categorises three characteristics of the blonde: the dumb blond, the materialistic, and the nymphomaniac. Cher definitely embodies the materialistic blonde, which is proved only by looking at the first scene in her bedroom and the number of clothes she owns. As much as she can prove to be intelligent when Christian asks her if she likes Billie Holiday, she answers, "Yes, I love *him*" [my emphasis], once again showing her lack of culture in certain areas. As Mazmanian argues, "The blonde stereotype automatically embodies three characteristics while Cher only owns up to two. Therefore, the audience is forced to confront their own preconceptions concerning blonde women as they recognize that her virginity is inconsistent with the stereotype." In this sense, Cher is the embodiment of both the sexual, through stereotypes and the naive, through her actions and her virginity. Accordingly, Cher exemplifies a contradiction between her supposed sexual activity and her virginity. By playing with stereotypes and stock characters, Heckerling allows the viewer to reconsider their views of the world by being confronted with what they expect and what is the reality in the movie. Thus, Heckerling puts the viewer in Cher's position, projecting her subjectivity into the world. Consequently, Cher's subjectivity is typically feminine because of her exposition to the world. However, unlike Emma, it is not imposed on her by her lack of education but her own fault, rendering this subjectivity at odds with modern views. As Emma's virginity is not unlikely — with the concept of ladyhood made very important in the 17th century— Cher's virginity, especially according to blond stereotypes, seems unusual. But Cher's virginity is a decision. In this sense, it

[45] *What's Love Got to Do with It*, dir. Brian Gibson, Touchstone Picture, 1993.

could be argued that she contradicts with the stereotype of the blonde girl who is sexually active, and is not as clueless about sex as the audience could think. She is only waiting for "the one", differing from the image of the blonde sexual being to a more romantic one. In this sense, her views on romance and sex resemble Emma's ones, or the ones before the sexual revolution. However, it is her decision, and therefore, she is empowering her virginity, and does not seem shy or awkward by it. This contradiction reflects Cher's personality, a mix between naivety and artificiality and knowledge and cluelessness. The fact that Cher's subjectivity is typically feminine seems at-odds with some of the customs of her time but that it what makes her an interesting character.

Just like Emma, Cher has never been in love. Dating seems like an important part in high school but Cher does not partake in this experience. When Tai asks her which one of them is her boyfriend, and Dionne answers that "Cher's got attitude about high school boys," Cher argues "It's a personal choice every woman has got to make for herself" (Heckerling). However, contrary to Emma, she does not have a fairyland notion of love but she compares high school boys to dogs. In a scene between Cher and Dionne at school [04:02], Cher argues in a voice-over "You have to clean them and feed them and they're just like these nervous creatures that jump and slobber all over you." In this sense, she views boys as creatures and does not consider them as potential boyfriends. She says this while we see Cher with a medium shot of her and the camera tracking away, walking in the middle of the crowd, as she is in deep focus, in a preppy look, with a yellow tartan skirt and assorted blazer. While the audience has access to her thoughts, the students, mostly boys around her, skate and walk past her. She seems different from the crowd, in the way she is dressed, the yellow contrasting with the less flashy colours around her. The viewer can see that she makes a disgusted face and suddenly, a boy puts his arm around her, while Cher screams "Ooo! Get off of me! Uh, as if!" In this way, the audience gets the idea that Cher is disgusted by high school boys and this is why she does not have a boyfriend. Thus, it could be said that Cher thinks that she is superior to the other students. It will be interesting to analyse in the last part how she realises that she is in love with Josh, her step-brother in college.

As noted before, Cher is performing for someone else. In the first part, it has been established that femininity and performance are related, and they constitute a constraint to Cher's education, as she performs her gender through her body and physical apparence. It has been remarked earlier that, for Butler, the language is "pervasively masculinist" and women represent "a linguistic absence." However, the presence of a feminine voice-over in the film offers to the spectator another aspect of a feminine performance. Not only Cher presents herself with her body and her clothes, but she also stages her voice and her ideas. She is present physically, through the

screen, but also mentally, because the spectator has access to her voice. Similarly, the facts that the film is constituted mainly of women, and that the story revolves around young women, thus, giving them a place to be heard, are essentials. Although it gives power to the feminine characters, it does not mean that it is not performed to please the masculine's opinion in the film. Cher comments on her life's events to the spectator, such as "Wasn't my Mom a betty? She died when I was just a baby" [07:28]. In this sentence she asks a rhetorical question, not expecting an answer but it allows her to presents her life to someone. She always comments on her friends' outfits and when Christian does not attempt to get closer when they are watching a movie [1:04:57], she complains "Did my hair get flat? Did I stumble into some bad lighting? What's wrong with me?" Similarly to her physical performativity, she always goes back to physical aspects when something goes wrong. Thus, her subjectivity is also a performance, to be seen as a woman and as feminine. Nonetheless, at the end of the film, she also cares about her mental being and her mental improvement, as she argues that she wants to do a "make-over of my soul" [1:21:44]. Therefore, she does not only care about her physical appearance but also her well-being, showing that she evolved and that her femininity does not have to revolve around her appearance. However, it could be argued that she wants to do a make-over to please Josh, rendering the idea that she is once again performing to please the masculine's eyes. In *Emma*, the question of feminine performance is less present, because the reader does not have access to many physical descriptions. Emma's subjectivity and judgements are focused on social classes and actions more than physical appearances. Hence, in *Clueless*, Cher's subjectivity could be considered as inherently feminine because of this notion of performance.

Thus, the two heroines' subjectivity is feminine and the way they grew up, and were raised as women, influenced how they view the world. To such a degree, if Heckerling had decided to adapt Emma's character into a male character, it would not have had the same effect, nor if Emma had been a man. This subjectivity, in both the novel and the film, is questioned by other characters, mainly male ones. Furthermore, the reader and viewer are given clues that the heroines' point of views are in contradiction with the reality.

III. Questioning the heroines' viewpoints.

A. Clues to reality.

Throughout the novel and the movie, hints contradict the heroines' subjectivity. The reader and audience have access to good clues, contrary to the wrong clues given by the heroines. Here, "good" is meant as objective, free from bias and prejudices, and close to reality, while "wrong" is associated with biased and subjective, therefore it is related to the heroines, as their judgements is not in tune with the reality.

When talking about the narrative and dialogue distinction in literature, Graham Hough assesses that "it is ordinarily assumed that the narrative is that part of a work of fiction for which the author assumes immediate responsibility, and the dialogue that in which he allows his characters 'to speak for themselves'." (203). However, as previously presented, the narrative in the novel is not necessarily from the narrator's point of view. Therefore, Hough adds that "There is indeed narrative which tells us about the characters, and in which they have no expressive share; the vocabulary, syntax and rhetorical ordonnance are entirely those of the narrator." (203). The goal then is to discern, what Graham Hough calls, the "objective narrative" (204). These are passages "where the facts are presented to us as facts, uncoloured, not from any particular point of view, manifestly to be accepted as true, uncontaminated either by the subjectivity of the author or that of any of the characters." (204). Thus, these passages can give the reader "good clues", objective clues, which can be differentiated from the clues given by Emma. Nonetheless, he indicates that there are few passages or objective narratives in *Emma*. They can be found "where the scene is to be set, circumstances explained, and new characters introduced" (204). As seen previously, the presentation of the characters of Mr. Elton and Harriet are both told from Emma's perspective with the help of free indirect discourse. In the same way, Mr. Woodhouse, Mrs. and Miss Bates, and Mrs. Goddard are all described through Emma's point of view, but they are indeed introduced very briefly in an "objective narrative." Starting with Mr. Woodhouse, the narrator writes "Mr. Woodhouse was fond of society in his own way" (18), which does not evoke any particular judgement but it is only a fact. In the same way, the sentence "Mrs. Goddard was the mistress of a School" (19) seems factual. Likewise, "Mrs. Bates, the widow of a former vicar of Highbury" (18) is an unbiased fact. However, practically all the sentences following these descriptions contain a judgement or a comment. For example, after the introduction of Mrs. Bates, the narrator indicates

"was a very old lady, almost past every thing but tea and quadrille." The instance on "very" indicates Emma's subjectivity since she constantly compares herself to others and assesses her superiority as a young and beautiful woman. In this sense, it can be argued that Hough's statement —that objective narrative is present when new characters are introduced— is valid only if we consider the minimal introduction and do not include the description of each of these characters. Thus, these other characters cannot be considered "good clues" to discern Emma's subjectivity from reality. However, the introduction of Mr. Knightley seems different from the others. He is described as "a sensible man about seven or eight-and-thirty" and "was not only a very old and intimate friend of the family, but particularly connected with it, as the elder brother of Isabella's husband" (6). Apart from the adjective "sensible," which could be considered a judgement on Emma's part, the rest of his description seems neutral. As we will see later, Mr. Knightley holds a particular place in the novel and Emma's life, which justifies his portrayal. In Jane Austen's novels and especially in *Emma*, there are few descriptions of the places and where the scene is set, but when they are, they are depicted in an objective narrative. For example, at the beginning of chapter 7, the narrator explains that "Harriet had been at Hartfield, as usual, soon after breakfast" (50), reporting the time and space where the scene takes place. However, there are not many characterisations of the spaces around the characters. Most of the description is made through the dialogues and conversations between the characters; therefore, there are not many objective narratives. In another instance, the description of Box Hill consists only in the characterisation of the weather as the narrator shows, "They had a very fine day for Box Hill" (385). Even the first time Box Hill is mentioned, the reader never has access to a description of the place. Consequently, the lack of description of places does not allow many objective narratives, and therefore, the reader does not have "good clues" offered to him by the narration only.

However, through the dramatic irony technique, Jane Austen lets the reader discern between Emma's thoughts and reality. In the chapter "Purity and Rhetoric" in the book *The Rhetoric of Fiction*[46] Wayne Booth establishes that "the author's judgement is always present, always evident to anyone who knows how to look for it (...) we must never forget that though the author can to some extent choose his disguise, he can never choose to disappear." (20). Indeed, Austen presents moral judgement in *Emma*, for example, the wisdom from Mr. Knightley or the perfect image of Jane Fairfax. The distance between Austen's narration and Emma's narration (through the free indirect speech) renders the narrator unreliable. Booth claims that "if he [the narrator] is discovered to be

[46] Wayne C. Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010).

untrustworthy, then the total affect of the work he relays to us is transformed" (Booth 158). With her subtle technique of free indirect speech, the narrator is unreliable, and Emma's internal focalisation is highlighted. However, as Booth asserts, "Sympathy for Emma can be heightened by withholding inside views of others as well as by granting them of her" (Booth 249). Thus, if Austen had decided to give some insight into Jane Fairfax's views, it would have ruined the reader's sympathy for Emma when she thought that Frank Churchill was in love with her. In Chapter 11, Austen wrote:

"*The rest of the gentlemen being now in the room, Emma found herself obliged to turn from him for a few minutes, and listen to Mr. Cole. When Mr. Cole had moved away, and her attention could be restored as before, she saw Frank Churchill looking intently across the room at Miss Fairfax, who was sitting exactly opposite.*

"*What is the matter?" said she.*

He started. "Thank you for rousing me," he replied. "I believe I have been very rude; but really Miss Fairfax has done her hair in so odd a way—so very odd a way—that I cannot keep my eyes from her. I never saw any thing so outree!—Those curls!—This must be a fancy of her own. I see nobody else looking like her!—I must go and ask her whether it is an Irish fashion. Shall I?—Yes, I will—I declare I will—and you shall see how she takes it;—whether she colours."

He was gone immediately; and Emma soon saw him standing before Miss Fairfax, and talking to her; but as to its effect on the young lady, as he had improvidently placed himself exactly between them, exactly in front of Miss Fairfax, she could absolutely distinguish nothing." (Austen 207)

This passage occurs during a dinner when Emma is still convinced that Frank Churchill is in love with her. Booth argues that Austen "works at all points to heighten the reader's sense of dramatic irony, usually in the form of a contrast between what Emma knows and what the reader knows." (Booth 255). On first reading, the reader usually does not detect all the errors of judgement Emma makes, which reveals Austen's intention to keep the mystery until we discover it at the same time as Emma, and therefore points out the dramatic irony in the book. However, the reader can find that Jane's or Frank's attitude is unnatural and sense that Emma's judgement might not be entirely reliable. In the passage, the narrator argues that Frank Churchill was "looking intently across the room at Miss Fairfax," which is the first clue of his attraction. Furthermore, Mr. Churchill finds the slightest excuse to go and see Jane Fairfax, which is another clue to their secret engagement, but Emma does not realise it, and she only gets jealous of Miss Fairfax. Thus the

reader understands that Frank Churchill is not interested in Emma but in Jane, and the other little clues are a contrast between what the reader knows and what Emma does not understand or read correctly. The mystery of the situation creates this dramatic irony. There are clues, but as Emma's thoughts pervade the narration, the reader is inclined to trust her opinion. Booth summarises it by saying, "we discover new intensities of dramatic irony resulting from the complete loss of mystery; knowing what abysses or error Emma is preparing for herself, even those of us who may on first reading have deciphered nearly all the details of the Churchill mystery find additional ironies" (Booth 255). Therefore, the discovery of dramatic irony exposes Emma's point of view.

Other clues can be found with Mr. Elton. After learning that Harriet cannot go to the Randalls with them, Emma inquires Mr. Elton to know how he might feel about it. Mr. Elton seems to regret that Harriet will not be here. However, the narrator suggests that "Emma was rather in dismay when only half a minute afterwards he began to speak of other things, and in a voice of the greatest alacrity and enjoyment." (120). Consequently, the reader can note that Mr. Elton seems to appreciate Harriet. However, he might not love her, as he does not seem too upset that she is not here. Moreover, the narrator asserts that "Harriet seemed quite forgotten in the expectation of a pleasant party" (121). As an observer, the reader can see that Mr. Elton is not interested in Harriet. The dramatic irony climaxes when Mr. Elton confesses his feelings to Emma in the carriage back home after this Christmas dinner.

The scene in chapter fifteen is essential in the novel because it is the first time Emma is confronted with her disillusion. It starts after the Westons' Christmas Eve dinner when the Woodhouses and Knightleys are leaving the party in a hurry because it has started to snow. The words "alarm", "snow", and "much darker night" create tension and foreshadow the following scene, as it conveys the idea that it does not go as expected. Furthermore, the whiteness of the snow clashes with the night and leads to a certain duality, recalling the duality of what Emma thinks and what is the reality. Therefore, Emma is alone with Mr. Elton because John Knightley got in the first carriage with Mr. Woodhouse and his wife, Isabella. The verb "find" in the sentence "Emma found" reveals that she did not plan it. However, Mr. Elton "escorted" and "followed" her; thus, he maybe did plan it. In addition, the anaphora of "that" tells that Emma was forced into this carriage, and she did not expect it. It is reinforced by the expression "lawfully shut on them". This expression conveys the idea that Emma was forced to do it, and she was not willing to get onto this carriage. It could hint at Emma's plan to force Harriet and Mr. Elton to be in love when both are attracted to someone else. Emma "believed he had been drinking too much of Mr. Weston's good wine" (my emphasis). Emma believes that since he is tipsy, he would want to be talking and acting nonsense.

When Mr. Elton harasses Emma, he “makes violent love to her” and is “hoping, fearing, adoring," “ready to die”, “ardent attachment," “unequalled loved," and “unexampled passion," which portrays extreme strong feelings, as well as violence. Emma is speechless, and this violence is the violence of reality crashing with her imagination and the ideas she had in mind. She is so clueless about love and convinced that Mr. Elton is in love with Harriet that reality is violent.

Afterwards, “she *felt* that half of his folly must be drunkenness” (my emphasis). Her thoughts about Mr. Elton are not so strong anymore. She believed, and now she feels it. However, the omniscient narrator reveals that “Mr. Elton had only drunk wine” and that “he perfectly knew his own meaning," which illustrates Emma’s naivety and duality. She believes that he is drunk, but in reality, he is not. During their exchange, the repetition of “such” depicts her astonishment and confusion. Emma then “thought” and “felt”. She is connected to her feelings, as she has “unpleasant sensations” about the situation. Emma is saying, “you have been entirely mistaken in supposing it," which is ironic because she is the one who supposed Mr. Elton was in love with Harriet when he was in love with her. She was the one who had a "misconception” of his views and convinced Harriet of it. Thus, this scene marks the first deception that Emma encounters throughout the novel, but it will not stop her from continuing her matches. The narration does not offer many clues to the reader. However, the story and the dramatic irony created by dialogues and other characters allow the reader to see how Emma is wrong.

Clueless is plentiful of “good clues” that call into question Cher’s words that she conveys with the voice-over. Good clues are easier to find in the movie thanks to the images that can contrast with the sound. In *Film Art: An Introduction*, the authors explain that narration is “the plot’s way of distributing story information in order to achieve specific effects. Narration is the moment-by-moment process that guides viewers in building the story out of the plot" (87). Accordingly, the narration can be subjective, as it might not always be omniscient and show everything. Bordwell continues by adding, “A film’s narration manipulates not only the range of knowledge but also the depth of our knowledge. The filmmaker must decide how far to plunge into a character’s psychological states.” (90). In *Clueless*, the images differ from the voice-over. Thus, the narration clearly emphasises the inconsistency between Cher’s thoughts and the world’s reality. The wrong clues from the main character are expressed through the voice-over and directly contradicted by the images, rendering an ironic and humoristic tone. Moreover, it allows the spectator to realise that Cher’s perception is wrong, or at least biased and subjective.

In the frat party scene (55:30 - 56-02), Cher is talking to Tai, and she asks her, “Oh, my God. Do you see how he is falling in love with me?” while the next shot shows a full shot of Christian at the bar, removing an interested girl’s hand from his shoulder and openly flirting with the barman. Right after, the medium shot presents Tai and Cher, who exclaims, “I mean, look how he ignores every other girl”. As Emma misreads Frank’s actions towards Jane, Cher does not recognise the clues about Christian’s sexuality. Here, the film’s narration and the director could have decided to leave the mystery complete and not show Christian at the bar. However, there is no mystery about his intentions, highlighting Cher’s cluelessness and revealing to the viewer how Cher does not read the clues correctly.

As argued in the second part of this paper, the party scene also confronts Cher’s thoughts about reality. The quick editing shows Cher and Tai doing “sexy” dances to impress the boys, and Elton, with a medium close-up shot of him watching intensely at the girls. In this way, the audience does not know whom Elton is watching. However, the next medium close-up shot shows Cher, which allows the spectator to guess that Elton stares at Cher and not Tai, hinting at his attraction toward Cher.

More often than not in the film, the images challenging Cher’s voice-over portray her as dumb and create a humoristic tone. It allows the audience to understand Cher’s perception better and constructs a space to mock her. The dramatic irony in *Emma* can be used for the reader to mock the heroine, but it does not seem as funny as in the film. In one instance [10:40], Cher argues in the voice-over, “I needed to find sanctuary in a place where I could gather my thoughts and regain my strength.” The next shot shows an establishing shot of a mall, highlighting Cher’s materialism. The viewer is confronted with Cher’s perception. In this sense, it could be argued that even if it does not openly provide “clues” to her cluelessness about love signs, it creates the idea that her perception is biased and, therefore, the images show reality. At the same time, Cher’s voice-over is biased and subjective. In the same way, when she presents her house to the viewer [07:22], she proudly says, “Isn't my house classic?” while the camera presents an establishing shot of her huge house. The house does not seem thoroughly modern, but at the same time, it can be deduced that it was not built two hundred years ago. Even if it highlights her naivety and stupidity, it also creates a contradiction between what she says and what is the reality, emphasising her subjectivity.

Interestingly, the carriage scene in *Emma* is translated into a car scene, in which Elton reveals his feelings for Cher. Like in the novel, it confronts Cher with the realisation that she was wrong the whole time, and like Emma, it will not stop her from continuing her matching schemes.

The lateral tracking shot of the car running in the streets shows the night and the urban area where they are. There are no houses around, only neon lights from night shops. This atmosphere makes the spectator aware that they are in unknown places, which might be dangerous. As Cher talks, the spectator does not see her. Thus, when the camera shows us the two protagonists in a medium close-up, Elton sings and is not answering the question. What she said could be understood as a voice-over; on the contrary, he did not hear her. This action foretells the rest of the scene, as Elton ignores what Cher says and goes ahead, sexually harassing her. The shot-reverse-shot indicates that he is still singing a love song, and Cher is still annoyed and talks about Tai to lift her mood. Elton flirts while Cher looks obnoxious, allowing the viewer to see how uncomfortable Cher is. Furthermore, the camera zooms into the car on Elton's side; the audience sees him going for a kiss, or more accurately, jumping on her violently as he says, "I knew it." However, the viewer cannot see Cher's face and only hear her as she says, "ugh." Only after he is rejected can the audience see her disgusted and horrified face. The shot-reverse shot of their faces amplifies their mutual confusion. Cher mentions Tai and her picture, but Elton explains, "I have the picture *you* took in my locker." [my emphasis]. Cher remarks that she is having a "Twin Peaks experience," which refers to the TV show *Twin Peaks*, a detective fiction. Thus, it alludes to the fact that she finds out about reality. Elton goes for a second kiss and does not, or does not want to, understand that Cher does not love him back. The spectator finally sees the third attempt to kiss Cher's side as she says, "Stop it!". Elton tries to attempt a fourth and fifth kiss when she clearly states that she does not love him and tries to set him up with Tai, never thinking about him as a potential lover.

Contrary to Emma, Cher does not have many moments of confusion about Elton's intention until this moment, which renders the narrative interesting. While allowing the audience to see and understand more than the narration in the novel, the camera and the voice-over do not hint as much at Elton's attraction to Cher. One could think that the adaptation and film technique could reveal more information, but on the contrary, *Clueless* hints at more than it exposes. As suggested by Bordwell, the film's narration can manipulate our depth of knowledge, and, therefore, the adaptation in the film does not mean that the viewer has to see more.

In addition to the narrative element giving clues to a reality, external characters also question the heroines' points of view. In the novel, Mr. Knightley seems to be the only critic of Emma's actions. Andrew H. Wright describes Mr. Knightley as "sensible, proper, kind, open, and vigorous" (159). He also mentions that "Mr. Knightley possesses other attributes besides that of

common sense" (158). Thus, it implies that Emma does not have common sense, so her subjectivity is misguided. Wright estimates that Emma's qualities are "often in conflict with what Mr. Knightley represents." (160), hence his position as a clue to reality. Throughout the novel, he constantly criticises Emma for her actions and tries to advise her in her choices which hints at the reader Emma's subjectivity. Booth offers an analysis of Mr. Knightley's character, and he assesses that "His commentary on Emma's errors is a natural expression of his love; he can tell the reader and Emma at the same time precisely how she is mistaken" (Booth 253).

In the very first chapter of the novel, Mr. Knightley criticises Emma when she argues that "she made the match" between Mr. Weston and her governess Miss Tailor. He says:

"*I do not understand what you mean by 'success,'" said Mr. Knightley. "Success supposes endeavour. Your time has been properly and delicately spent, if you have been endeavouring for the last four years to bring about this marriage. A worthy employment for a young lady's mind! But if, which I rather imagine, your making the match, as you call it, means only your planning it, your saying to yourself one idle day, 'I think it would be a very good thing for Miss Taylor if Mr. Weston were to marry her,' and saying it again to yourself every now and then afterwards, why do you talk of success? Where is your merit? What are you proud of? You made a lucky guess; and that is all that can be said." (Austen 3)*

In this excerpt, he puts Emma in her place by explaining that she did not dedicate her time to organise the meeting and planning this marriage. He maintains that "success supposes endeavour", which she did not. She did not plan everything from the beginning, organising meetings and arranging. He exposes her by saying that she might have thought they would be a good match, but she never did anything to provoke it. His rhetorical question, "Where is your merit? What are you proud of?" might seem harsh and rude, but it is nonetheless true. Mr. Knightley is wise and gives good advice; he also is a good judge of character and does not hesitate to refute her when she does something wrong. As Booth demonstrates, when he attacks her, "we have Jane Austen's judgement on Emma, rendered dramatically." (Booth 253). Therefore, Mr. Knightley conveys Austen's judgment. He is the moralistic character in the novel, and he could be compared to an omniscient eye, knowing and judging everything and everyone. However, he is the only one to see the "true" Emma and the only one to be in love with her. Even if he criticises her, it is for her good.

In chapter five, Mr. Knightley and Mrs. Weston have a conversation about Emma, and while Mrs. Weston seems to find no fault in Emma, Mr. Knightley keeps criticising her. He argues, “She will never submit to any thing requiring industry and patience, and a subjection of the fancy to the understanding” (50). However, he also admits that “Emma is spoiled by being the cleverest of her family. At ten years old, she had the misfortune of being able to answer questions which puzzled her sister at seventeen” (50), which shows that he judges her, but can see her qualities. Thus, Mr. Knightley is fair and reasonable. Hence, the reader can trust him and believe what he says about Emma. Thus, Mr. Knightley, through his critics, judgements, and also affirmation, becomes a reliable character for the reader. Even with his clever argumentation, Mr. Knightley does not convince Mrs. Weston that Emma’s endeavour with Harriet is terrible. He concludes the conversation by saying, “Emma shall be an angel, and I will keep my spleen to myself till Christmas brings John and Isabella.” (55). By Mrs. Weston and the whole village, Emma is considered an angel, and only Mr. Knightley sees flaws in her. He is the only one to see who Emma truly is, but it does not prevent him from loving her. On the contrary, this is because he knows who she is and that he genuinely loves her.

Only after Mr. Elton confesses his love for her does Emma consider what Mr. Knightley said about him correctly. After this event, Emma feels shameful, “She remembered what Mr. Knightley had once said to her about Mr. Elton, the caution he had given, the conviction he had professed that Mr. Elton would never marry indiscreetly” (220). Indeed, Mr. Knightley had been clear about his opinion on Mr. Elton, but Emma dismissed him. The words associated with Mr. Knightley, “caution,” “conviction,” and “professed” all render the idea that he is a wise man, opposing him to Emma’s behaviours. Just like Mr. Elton’s confession does not stop her matchmaking, she does not listen to Mr. Knightley’s warnings about Frank Churchill either.

The narrator explains, “Mr. Knightley, who, for some reason best known to himself, had certainly taken an early dislike to Frank Churchill, was only growing to dislike him more” (570). The fact that it is in the narration and not said by any of the characters implies that he did not share his judgement with everyone. However, the adverb “certainly” suggests that his dislike is shown, and therefore the inhabitants of Highbury are aware of it. After dinner at Hartfield, Mr. Knightley tries to make Emma realises that Mr. Churchill and Jane Fairfax are more than friends to warn her, but Emma does not understand. He asks her, “My dear Emma," said he at last, with earnest kindness, "do you think you perfectly understand the degree of acquaintance between the gentleman and lady we have been speaking of?" (580). Adding the adjective “earnest kindness” shows that Mr.

Knightley has good intentions for Emma. He does not want her to be heartbroken. Like with Mr. Elton, Emma reminds herself that Mr. Knightley had tried to warn her in a conversation with him. She says" ,I have not forgotten that you once tried to give me a caution." (705).

In the two situations, with Mr. Elton and Frank Churchill, Mr. Knightley has the role of the wise. He tries to warn Emma about her mistakes, but she does not listen. He is the only one to find fault in her endeavours and the only one to think that there is something between Frank Churchill and Jane Fairfax. Mr. Knightley constantly questions Emma's point of view. Thus, it gives the reader a chance to doubt Emma's opinion.

In the same way, Josh, Mr. Knightley's modern counterpart, is also the only one who criticises Cher. Melissa Mazmanian explains, "The film manipulates many stock characters: Josh portrays the angst-ridden college student who wears all black, listens to complaint rock and reads Nietzsche." Therefore, he is the total contrary of Cher's character, who "whines and squeals; she is also a materialistic ditz.; and when she has problems she goes to a place where she can "gather (her) thoughts and regain (her) strength" -- the mall." As seen previously, she is the stereotype of the blond girl, which plays a part in the audience's judgment of Cher's subjectivity. Likewise, Josh's stereotypical character is more trustworthy to a modern audience because of his higher education and "serious" personality, giving his advice and judgment a higher value. Consequently, his judgment and advice give good clues to the spectator, indicating that Cher is mistaken.

Interestingly in the film, there are no scenes in which the audience sees Josh without any link with Cher. The only time the audience sees him without Cher is because he is with his girlfriend, and the moment lasts a few seconds before Cher calls him. Unlike the novel, where the reader has access to a chapter in which *Emma* is not present, and Mr. Knightley is given a role, the film does not contain any scenes with Josh alone and Cher not being around. This might be explained because, contrary to *Emma,* in which Mr. Knightley is part of Highbury, Josh is an external character and does not belong to the school's environment, as he is in college. Furthermore, the audience does not have access to his background story and does not know anything besides that he is Cher's half-brother. Thus, it could be argued that Josh is present only to criticise Cher and prove to the audience Cher's subjectivity.

The first time the audience sees Josh, he is at Cher's house, and Josh is in front of the fridge [7:43]. The medium-long kitchen shot lets the viewer witness Cher entering the room. The audience sees her, but Josh is from behind. The audience cannot observe his face and only spot his checked

flannel shirt with brown colours. The viewer learns through Cher that he is at university since she complains, “Yuck! What is it about college and crybaby music?” Thus, it allows the spectator to guess without seeing his face that Josh is older than Cher. As Mr. Knightley, Josh is older than Cher. The fact that he seems at home implies that he comes often or lives there, and one could think that he is Cher’s brother. When Josh says, “I went by Dad's office," and Cher answers, “He is not your Dad, " the viewer understands that they are not brother and sister. They interact like siblings, and like Mr. Knightley, he seems the only person to argue with her and find faults in her. At the dinner table, Josh mocks Cher for her superficiality. Mel, Cher’s father, quarrels with Cher for having no direction in life, and she argues, “I have direction," while the camera presents a close-up of her face chewing asparagus with a pout, to which Josh answers, “Yeah, towards the mall.” As in *Emma*, Josh sounds like a moralistic person, while Cher sounds like a spoilt child. Another instance in the scene demonstrates that Cher acts like a child, and Josh is more grown-up. Cher whines and says, “You are such a brown-noser," Josh responds, “Oh, and you are such a superficial space-cadet.” For these reasons, the viewer can see that they tease each other, but Josh resembles more an adult than Cher.

The idea that Josh is an adult and mature, contrary to Cher, is emphasised when the audience hears Cher’s voice-over questions, “A licensed driver with nothing to do? Where would I find such a loser?” [15:27] and the camera zooms in on Josh reading a philosophical book by Friedrich Nietzsche. Thus, the book reveals Josh’s maturity and cleverness, unlike Cher’s lack of it. Furthermore, the audience witnesses the first time Josh criticises Cher. He argues that he has to go back to college because they are going to plant a tree and maintains, “You know, maybe Marky Mark wants to use his popularity for a good cause, make a contribution. In case you have never heard of that, a contribution is the giving of…." The second part of the sentence is ironic, but Cher goes one further and explains that she has donated many clothes to her maid and that she helped two teachers to find love. Josh further replies in a critique by saying, “Which I'll bet serves your interest more than theirs. You know, if I ever saw you do something that wasn't ninety percent selfish, I’d die of shock.” This sentence is the first one that Josh expresses to criticise Cher. Josh condones Cher’s selfishness more than the fact that she interferes in her teachers’ lives. This part of the scene is shot in Cher’s Jeep, and the camera does a medium close-up of their faces from behind the Jeep’s windscreen. This way, the camera allows the spectator to see both of their reactions at the same time. Cher's smile does not disappear, and she takes any opportunity to make fun of him more than answer his critiques. Just like in *Emma*, Cher does not listen to Josh’s criticism and warnings about her endeavours.

In the same way, he does not approve of her enterprise with Tai. He declares that he is amazed [27:54] "that you've [Cher] found someone even more clueless than you are to worship you." This is a reminder of Mr. Knightley's critique, and like in the novel, he seems like the only person to be doubtful of this venture. In addition, contrary to Cher's outfit change in almost every scene, Josh is still wearing his flannel shirt, showing that he does not care about his appearance. The contrast with Cher emphasises that she is materialistic while Josh is more interested in his studies and mental abilities. Furthermore, like Mr. Knightley does not like Frank, Josh does not like Christian. After Cher and Christian leaves for the party, Josh declares to Mel, "I didn't like him" [53:25] while the camera is in a medium close-up of his face. His face shows emotion, and he seems bitter about this situation. Unlike Mr. Knightley, he does not say anything about Christian to Cher, but he goes to the frat party they go to watch them. Josh seems more critical of Cher and her qualities than she does. As explained before, this could be interpreted because he does not spend time with her and her friends; thus, he is not made aware of many of her plans. Overall, Josh does not interrupt Cher's life as Mr. Knightley does. He is an external character in Cher's life but becomes more important as the film goes by. Josh is always available for Cher, and as much as he criticises her, he seems to like her because he is always there.

Mr. Knightley and Josh are male protagonists who act like moral judges and are the only ones to find faults in the heroine. The two are important in the novel and the film; however, Josh does not belong to Cher's school world. His point of view as an external character is valuable. Nonetheless, Mr. Knightley's judgement is more prominent in the novel because the reader experiences more scenes with him. Josh seems present only when Cher is around; thus, it does not allow the spectator to hear what he thinks of her and what she does, other than when he tells it to Cher. Nevertheless, the two characters are significant for the heroines because this is when Emma and Cher realise that they are in love and that the best comes out of them.

B. The masculine urge to save women.

Following the previous arguments, the presence of a "superior" voice in the characters of Mr. Knightley and Josh illustrates a paradox and the limits on women's education—the need for a masculine guide to getting Emma and Cher back on the right path.

As seen in the first part, education for women in the 19th century was not considered, and marriage was one of the only ways to climb the social ladder. Lloyd W. Brown, in his article "Jane

Austen and the Feminist Tradition",[47] assesses that "the role of marriage in Emma's experience is typical of its positive function in Jane Austen's fiction as a whole." (338). Indeed, as the writer suggests, "it celebrates the union or eventual compatibility of personalities that have been freed from the perceptual and moral failings of their individual selves and conventional, restricting notions of "female feelings," education, and sexual passion" (338). Nonetheless, even if it is a happy marriage, it is also a sign that Emma needed a man to be liberated from her "perceptual failings". He also defends the idea that "Emma's matchmaking schemes are a vicarious form of sex-seeking which may be linked with the deficient education that Mr. Knightley deplores" (331). As a result, Emma needs the help of Mr. Knightley to find true happiness and fill her lack of education.

Noted by Lloyd B. Brown, marriage plays a vital role in the novel. Throughout the story, Emma assesses many times that she will never marry. She first declares it through a discussion with Harriet, arguing, "I have none of the usual inducements of women to marry" (140). She then says, "Fortune I do not want; employment I do not want; consequence I do not want" (141). These two sentences highlight Emma's convictions about marriage. As shown before, Emma has a fairyland notion of love; however, she does not want to marry. Emma's opinion seems unusual for the 19th century, and even if it cannot be considered feminism, it is still very advanced for her time. Her refusal to get married is rare and emphasises her qualities as an independent woman with strong convictions. Thus, it could be argued that Jane Austen's feminine considerations are seen through Emma. Emma's lack of education does not influence her opinion, and she knows her place in society. She is lucky enough to be rich, and her father is still here, but as argued before, she is the mistress of Hartfield. Therefore, marrying someone could impact her lifestyle and her number one position in her house. This need to be the first is highlighted by the following sentence, where she declares, "and never, never could I expect to be so truly beloved and important; so always first and always right in any man's eyes as I am in my father's" (141). Hence, Emma's ego prevents her from falling in love, as she wants to be the first in everything. Furthermore, Emma's father always flatters her ego, contrary to Mr. Knightley, who criticises her. Thus, Emma's conviction not to get married might be influenced by her ego and her lack of education more than a refusal of rules and habits of the time.

Being first is thus her only goal after she realises she is in love with Mr. Knightley. The narrator declares, "Emma had never known how much of her happiness depended on being first with Mr. Knightley, first in interest and affection" (640). Thus, it goes back to the competition between

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[47] Lloyd W. Brown, "Jane Austen and the Feminist Tradition." *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, vol. 28, no. 3 (1973): 321–38.

the feminine characters, a subject tackled in the first part. Nonetheless, it also proves that Emma is looking for validation from other characters, especially Mr. Knightley. This way, the reader gets the idea that what Mr. Knightley says is correct and that Emma needs a man to be happy, contradicting her pro-feminism ideas of not marrying.

When Emma realises she is in love, the sensation is described as "It darted through her, with the speed of an arrow, that Mr. Knightley must marry no one but herself!" (660). The feeling is described as very quick, something she can feel in her body. The image of the arrow's speed could be compared with the arrow in Cupid's heart, meaning that Emma has been struck with the arrow of love. At the same time, Emma's ego is still present, as she assesses that he must marry no one else than her, reinforcing the idea of the competition—even if it is a competition with herself.

Interestingly, after admitting her feelings, Emma realises how wrong she has been with Harriet and then Frank. The narrator or Emma, through the free-indirect discourse (hinted at with the exclamation mark), conveys:

> "*How inconsiderate, how indelicate, how irrational, how unfeeling had been her conduct! What blindness, what madness, had led her on! It struck her with dreadful force, and she was ready to give it every bad name in the world.*" (660)

The repetition of "how" followed by many negative adjectives indicates that Emma is finally realising all the troubles she caused. In the same way, the repetition of "what" and two negative adjectives accentuates this idea. This is the first time that Emma feel many emotions at once, and just like the feeling of love, the feeling of such a realisation "strikes" her, like thunder striking through her body. Thus, it could be argued that love, and therefore, men are the only way for her to realise that she was wrong. Suppose she had never fallen in love with Mr. Knightley. In that case, she might have never recognised her errors, reinforcing the traditional idea that women need men to be accomplished and free from "the perceptual and moral failings," as Brown argued.

Even if marriage is fundamental in *Emma* and works as a positive function, Emma's and Mr. Knightley's marriage and proposal are never adequately told. The reader has access to many conversations, as dialogues are critical in the novel. However, the proposal is told through the narration, and thus, the reader never gets access to how Mr. Knightley proposes. The narrator declares:

"The subject followed; it was in plain, unaffected, gentlemanlike English, such as Mr. Knightley used even to the woman he was in love with, how to be able to ask her to marry him, without attacking the happiness of her father." (738)

Even after declaring his love with a passionate discourse and his most famous sentence, "If I loved you less, I might be able to talk about it more" (698), the proposal is sterile, plain, and lacking strong feelings in the narration. The adjectives used are not usual for a proposal, mainly because it is said that he is in love with her. Thus, the proposal is not answered immediately, as Emma does not want to leave her father.

In the same way, the wedding is curiously summarised in a short paragraph, starting with a description. The narrator argues, "The wedding was very much like other weddings, where the parties have no taste for finery or parade; and Mrs. Elton, from the particulars detailed by her husband, thought it all extremely shabby, and very inferior to her own" (752). Like Mr. Knightley's proposal, the wedding is plain and uneventful, and there are traces of free-indirect speech from Mrs. Elton, which is interesting because she is not someone Emma appreciates. The reader does not have any pieces of information about Emma and Mr. Knightley, but the ending reveals a happy ending for the newly wed. The narrator conveys, "But, in spite of these deficiencies, the wishes, the hopes, the confidence, the predictions of the small band of true friends who witnessed the ceremony, were fully answered in the perfect happiness of the union." In this sense, it could be argued that marriage is not essential, but love is. However, the marriage happened because Emma understood her errors, thanks to Mr. Knightley; therefore, it allowed her to be "accomplished" finally.

Understanding her errors is an integral part of the novel, in which she reflects on what she did and admits to Mr. Knightley that she had been wrong. In a conversation with Mr. Knightley, she declares, "I was very often influenced rightly by you—oftener than I would own at the time. I am very sure you did me good" (736). Mr. Knightley might have influenced Emma, but she never acknowledged it before; her ego is too strong. Thus the fact that she reflects and takes the introspection very seriously is not surprising because love made her realise that she did wrong, especially with Harriet. The narrator states, "To understand, thoroughly understand her own heart, was the first endeavour" (654). Indeed, Emma throws herself into this activity as she did with Harriet. In her conclusions, Emma says, "With insufferable vanity had she believed herself in the secret of every body's feelings; with unpardonable arrogance proposed to arrange every body's destiny" (655), highlighting that she does have remorse. Thus, Mr. Knightley, even without meaning to do it, acts as a saviour, saving Emma from her moral prejudices. This is after she realises that she is in love that Emma tries to better herself for Mr. Knightley and deserves his love. The celebration

of their love through the marriage is not depicted, but it is achieved with Emma's work on herself. Love bettered Emma, and Mr. Knightley played only a tiny part in it. To some extent, it could be argued that Emma only needed to fall in love to amend all her errors, portraying her life as a fairyland story.

Clueless is a movie set in 1995. At that time, the feminist movement had made a lot of progress in the past decades. Therefore, it can be said that society was more aware of feminists questions, and the movie, directed by a woman, could supposedly be more evolved concerning feminist questions. Nonetheless, it is questionably less feminist than the novel. Suzanne Ferris, in her chapter named "*Emma* Becomes Clueless,"[48] explains that "Heckerling's version presents women of the 1990s as less empowered or enlightened than women in the original novel." (123). Indeed, as she maintains, "the female protagonist's success comes through marriage" (122), which is a very conservative idea. Cher does not marry, but her success comes from her relationship with Josh. Her make-over is successful only when she realises that she loves Josh. However, Ferris indicates, "unlike Emma, Cher, as a woman of the 1990s, is clearly afforded the option of pursuing a career." (126), and therefore, the movie shows paradoxes. Even if Cher is more educated than Emma, she does not have more discernment because the film is set in high school. The other paradox comes from the idea that even in 1995, happiness and self-fulfilment for Cher cannot be achieved by herself but with the help of a man. Melissa Mazmanian shows that Cher "has an epiphany about her character only after she is physically attracted to Josh and must prove herself worthy of more than a sisterly relationship." Thus, she works on herself only to please a man. This paradox emphasises the traditional gender roles and heteronormativity, still present nowadays, but at the end of the line, love and happiness are the essential values in the heroines' lives.

Throughout the movie, boyfriends and dating are not options for Cher. As seen previously, Cher does not partake in the experience of dating, contrary to Dionne and Tai. Alternatively, more accurately, she likes the idea of dating through the experience of others with her matchmaking endeavours. Cher argues, "It's a personal choice every woman has got to make for herself" [23:18]. Thus, she has decided that she does not want to be like other girls, and boys do not interest her. However, when Elton and Tai seem to get closer, she declares in the voice-over, "Love was everywhere. Even though I was alone, I was really happy for Tai" [38:05]. Later, she also

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[48] Suzanne Ferris, "*Emma* Becomes Clueless", *Jane Austen in Hollywood (*Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2001).

announces that “I realized how much I wanted a boyfriend of my own” [1:07:47]. The latest sentence, with the addition of “of my own," reflects Cher’s materialism. She does not want a boyfriend because she wants to fall in love, but she wants to possess an object, a status, that everyone around her has. Hence, Cher’s ideal to become a woman does not involve a boyfriend. For Hilary Radner, “This concept of identity as a process of “becoming” has been understood as offering emancipatory possibilities to the individual who is invited, not to take up a stable, untested and fixed position, but, rather, to see her “self,” or even “selves,” as subject to a multiple and on-going process of revision, reform and choices.”[49] In such a way, it could be argued that Cher’s change of position toward having a boyfriend is the testimony of change and the revision of her beliefs, and becoming a woman is not a stable process. However, following Judith Butler, it could, once again, be an aspect of the performance of her femininity. As her other female friends have boyfriends, Cher might also feel the need to get one. Furthermore, it has been previously argued that Cher’s exposition to media, as she references many romantic movies, is explicit in the film. Thus, the heteronormative ideal, coupled with traditional gender roles, is omnipresent in her mind. To Cher’s mind, fitting-in societal’s norms and becoming a woman includes having a boyfriend. Nonetheless, many chicks flick in the 80s onward present the model of the single girl, a subject explored by Hilary Radner. Accordingly, the presence of films in which single women thrived should influence Cher’s way of thinking. However, the spectator does not have access to this idea through Cher; therefore, having a boyfriend is her only way to be fully happy.

However, to get her boyfriend, Cher has to go through an intense period in which she reflects on herself and tries to change to be worthy of Josh’s love and attention. The scene [1:17:35] in which she introspects starts with a slow lateral tracking shot. The camera shows Cher going down the stairs. In this scene, the audience hears Cher’s thoughts in the voice-over. The nondiegetic music, *All By Myself* by Céline Dion, in the background, adds a layer of drama; and makes a nod to Cher’s feelings. Cher is self-pitying, and she seems despaired in her misery. However, the track left follows Cher in the street, and as she complains, she gets distracted mid-sentence by a shop’s window, and she exclaims, “Oh, I wonder if they have at my size!” Before this exclamation, she declared, “What is my problem? Tai is my pal! I don’t begrudge her boyfriend, I really….” On the one hand, it reinforces the paradox between her introspection, her feelings, and her urge to shop, emphasising her materialism and the fact that she represents the stereotype of the blond girl. On the other hand, it also foretells Cher and Josh’s relationship outcome, as her good intentions not to steal

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[49] Hilary, Radner, *Neo-Feminist Cinema: Girly Films, Chick Flicks, and Consumer Culture* (New- York: Taylor & Francis, 2010): p.6.

someone's else boyfriend is cut. The next shot presents an establishing shot of an old house. The camera does not move, and the audience sees Cher walking from one end of the screen to the other with the house in the background. The house resembles a fairytale house, and to some extent, it looks like Sleeping Beauty's house. For this reason, this scene foreshadows the end, in which Cher and Josh end up with a happily-ever-after story. Consequently, like Emma, Cher has a fairyland notion of love. She might not be aware of it, but her story presented in the film closes with a fairytale ending. While Cher is still talking in the voice-over, complaining about Josh and his defaults, the audience sees a montage. The montage comprises medium close-ups of Cher's face while she walks and good moments that Cher and Josh shared, in which they both seem pleased and joyful. At this moment, the music gets louder, and the audience hears the lyrics "All by myself", reinforcing Cher's feelings of loneliness. Finally, Cher finds herself in front of a fountain at night, while the other scenes before were in daylight. The camera tilts down and pans left until the spectator sees Cher, in a medium-long shot, in front of the fountain. Cher, in the voice-over, continues by saying, "and suddenly…" while a trumpet victory sound can be heard and the fountain lights up in pink and purple colours. These colours are stereotypically associated with love. Thus, it foreshadows what she says next, and the audience can see that she finally admits to herself her feelings. Interestingly, she declares, "Oh my god, *I* love Josh!" [my emphasis] out loud while the camera zooms in on her face. It could be understood as Cher's final realisation and opening to the world around her. Furthermore, saying it aloud renders it more accurate for the audience and her. Thus, Heckerling, in this scene, plays with stereotypes of notions of love to imply before the end that Cher and Josh's relationship is meant to be. Accordingly, love seems to be the answer to all of Cher's problems, as they will resolve after she decides to do a make-over for her "soul" to please Josh.

The first time they kiss is an important scene [1:28:27]. The first part of the scene is shot from a low-angle shot while Cher and Josh are both sitting on the double-flight staircase. They are situated in the middle, rendering an idea of framing. This framing encloses them and foreshadows the inevitability. The majestic aspect of the staircase reinforces the fairytale-like aspect of their relationship, as already presented before. Josh is here to reassure her and plays the role of the superhero. He says, "I'll take care of it," implying that he is protecting her and taking care of her as a father would. Cher complains that he sees her only as "just a ditz with a credit card", which underlines that she does not want to be perceived as such anymore, especially by Josh. The shot-reverse shot in this scene allows the spectator to see that they both struggle to speak, showing their feelings for each other. Furthermore, the medium close-up of their faces reveals to the audience that

Cher is hurt because she does not want Josh to think that shopping is her only hobby. Thus, it could be argued that she changed and got involved in charity to appear more "grown-up" in Josh's eyes and not a materialist adolescent. Therefore, this sudden change caused by Josh stresses the role of men and patriarchy in Cher's life, as she needs to prove herself worthy of Josh in order to be loved and reach happiness. Once again, the subject of the performance is at stake. Cher performs an ideal, working in the charity and bettering herself so that Josh can see her. The scene presents nondiegetic romantic music in the background, which is heightened when Cher and Josh kiss. The first kiss is shy, but the medium-close-up shot of Cher's face permits the spectator to see Cher's smile. Thus, when they kiss again, the camera returns to the low-angle shot and suggests that this is a fairytale-like kiss, proving their true love. In this manner, Cher and Josh's love story seems more authentic and romantic than Emma and Mr. Knightley's, as the spectator has visual proof of their first kiss and how they confess their feelings to each other. On the contrary, as seen previously in the novel, the reader does not have access to the proposal and the marriage. Consequently, Cher and Josh's relationship seems more authentic and genuine than in the book.

However, the age difference could be problematic for a twenty-first-century audience. In the novel, Emma is twenty-one, and Mr. Knightley is thirty-seven. The age difference in the nineteenth century might not be as significant, especially because Emma was considered a woman and an adult. However, Cher is a minor, and Josh is a young adult at university. After the kiss, Cher's voice-over exclaims, "Well, you can guess what happened next…" while the camera shows an establishing shot of two people from the back in front of the altar, clearly referring to marriage. Immediately, Cher's voice-over starts again, and the spectator hears her shout out, "As if! I am only sixteen, and this is California, not Kentucky." Consequently, it is suggested that Cher could have been married. Even if it is not Cher's marriage but Mrs. Geist and Mr. Hall's marriage, it is suggested for a few seconds that it is the adolescent's marriage. Throughout the movie, Cher is always considered by Josh as a child, as they constantly bicker about their different tastes in TV programs and music. Moreover, as seen previously, Josh is presented as a mature and wiser man. Therefore, their age difference is shown and acknowledged. Interestingly, the age difference is never mentioned in articles about the film, but it seems like a sixteen-year-old girl and a twenty-something man do not belong together. Even if the legal age in the US is twenty-one and Josh might be under twenty-one, the relationship seems odd since a high school girl and a man at university do not have the same maturity and goal in life at this moment. Thus, Heckerling presents a relationship that should not be happening, but love is stronger than age.

This fairytale idea is reinforced by the scene [1:31:52] in which Mrs. Geist throws the bouquet at the girls. The high-angle shot shows all the girls fighting for the bouquet, and Cher is the

one who catches it. Thus, it implies that Cher and Josh will get married in the future, showing their happily ever after. In addition, the film ends with a medium close-up shot of Cher and Josh kissing passionately for a long time and hugging each other as the spectator sees Cher smiling. The ending stresses that Cher needed Josh to be happy and contempt with her life.

Nonetheless, it is only when Cher grows up and matures for him that they get to be together. Thus, it could be argued that even if she is not married, she is passed from her father's care to Josh's one, like Emma to Mr. Knightley. In this sense, it does not present a single and free woman to the audience, but it delivers the message that a woman has to be taken care of, which contradicts the ideas of feminism at the end of the twentieth century. Hilary Radner argues that "Typically, in terms of the marriage plot, the heroine's goal is to find an appropriate husband, or in this case boyfriend—though the film seems to suggest that in due course he will come to take up the role of spouse" (67). Indeed, the film is not complete after her reconciliation with Tai —which could have been a possibility, as the main issue was Cher's confrontation with Tai— but when Cher and Josh finally get together. Thus, as Radner shows, "ultimately, Cher's destiny is defined by her relations to men, initially to her father, and ultimately to her husband-to-be" (68). In this manner, Heckerling points out the film's link with *Emma*, with the traditional marriage plot and the need for the heroine to be saved from her moral compasses by a man. The film strengthens its attachment to *Emma* and returns to an uncommon feminine ideal at the end of the twentieth century. Therefore, the adaptation of *Emma* to a modern context for a modern audience allowed Heckerling to introduce diversity in the cast (with Dionne or Christian, for example). The updating is undermined by the end, with the marriage and Cher's need to improve herself for a man. However, the happy ending and Cher and Josh's fairytale-like relationship indicate that love, more than patriarchy, is the answer to happiness.

IV - Conclusion

Emma and Cher's growing up as women does not have the same sense. For Emma, conducts books, conventions, and constrictions to the private sphere were the norms. For Cher, school, parties, and spending time with friends were all part of her daily life. Their education results from an upbringing in their rich and (semi) educated environment. Undoubtedly, their position as women in society influenced the way they viewed the world. However, despite a vast period of difference, the two heroines have the same qualities and flaws, and face almost the same constraints. The space barrier is one of them, as both girls did not have any experience of the exterior world outside of their village or city in Cher's case. In the same way, the chick flick genre represents women in a certain way, usually superficial, calling into question the aspect of the performance in teenage girls' behaviours. If gender is performative, as Judith Butler argues, then femininity is performed through the body. As seen in the first part, there are norms of behaviour, how girls should talk, walk and how they should dress, to fit in. To Butler's mind, women assess their femininity through their bodies, with the repetition of movements and languages that characterise them as women. Thus, it explains Cher's superficiality and the fact that she is mainly focused on appearances. The argument that women are represented by their bodies can also be found in *Emma* since Mary Wollstonecraft pointed out this distinction to refute it better. Furthermore, competition between women is another constraint found in the two works that highlights how difficult growing up as a woman is. Thanks to the different narration techniques such as the free indirect speech, and coloured narratives, Jane Austen highlights Emma's perceptions of the events and influences the reader's point of view on Emma and her experiences. The concept of coloured narratives has been an essential one. Through the many analysis in this project, it has been shown that the narration is often "coloured" with few sentences. At the same time, free indirect style passages, which are whole passages in which Emma's reflections and thoughts are transcribed, are fewer. The imitation of the character's speech, as Daniel P. Gunn demonstrates, renders the act of perceiving the character's thoughts more difficult. The notion of errors is thus essential because it allows the reader to be immersed in the heroine's actions, and leading Emma to reflect on these mistakes. Nonetheless, while Catherine Lanone argues that "the mistaken protagonist stands as the ghost of the one he might have been, had he taken the right path" (150), Emma's mistakes allow her to become better, and thus, the ghost is erased, and the heroine's errors are the right path for her.

Amy Heckerling with Cher's voice-over produces the same effect. The many instances in which Cher's voice-over can be heard in the movie oblige the spectator to be involved, and there is no doubt that it is her voice and her thoughts. However, Cher's errors and actions are directly contradicted by the camera and the images. Once again, the way they grew up influenced this subjectivity. For Emma, it is shown by her lack of feminine friendships and absence of role models in terms of relationships. Emma creates her own world by choosing the people she wants to spend time with. Jane Fairfax and all the other women in Highbury could have been good friends and critics, but feminine competition plays a part in it and prevents Emma from making friends and broadening her horizons. Furthermore, appearances are misleading, especially with the character of Frank Churchill, who leads Emma and the reader to believe in his smooth talk. Likewise, Cher's education shaped her worldview; thus, her lack of experience in relationships, sex, and dating explains why she misunderstands many interactions. This notion is underlined by the paradox of the stereotype she represents (the dumb blond girl) and her innocence. In *Emma*, dramatic irony and clues to reality, meaning passages in which the reader is explicitly told that Emma might be wrong, undermine Emma's thoughts in the narration. The character of Mr. Knightley also allows the reader to get a clearer view of Emma's perception. *Clueless* contains a lot of "good clues", as opposed to the wrong clues, with images that counter Cher's thoughts. Josh plays the same role and revokes Cher's opinion by contradicting her, just like Mr. Knightley. The presence of these "superior" voices highlights the idea that the two heroines needed someone, a man, to realise that they were wrong. Interestingly, the marriage plot in *Emma* is important for the story but not in the story —as it is not told— which weakens its impact and brings into the spotlight the love story and the fairyland story. Conversely, in *Clueless*, dating does not seem an essential part of Cher's life until she wants a boyfriend to be like all her friends. The time difference does not change the ending, as the traditional marriage plot is highlighted in the movie. Even if the heroine does not marry Josh, it is suggested that they will marry eventually. Like in *Emma*, Cher has a fairylike love story, which subverts the idea that love and courtship are not present anymore.

Ultimately, it could be concluded that education and growing up as women influenced how the heroines view the world. It shaped their lives, and their subjectivity led them to commit some errors. Nonetheless, they both obtain their redemption by realising their errors and finding love. Interestingly, the time difference and the different educations did not change the heroines' behaviours. The many similarities between Emma and Cher are unusual. They commit the same mistakes and go through the same thoughts-process, yet they do not have access to the same type of education. Therefore, in theory, they should not act the same way. In the novel, Emma's conduct

seems to cause her more remorse than Cher because problems are resolved quicker in the movie. Nonetheless, the first part shows that they face the same constraints, and it can be seen that even if women's rights evolved a lot in 180 years, women still experience the same restraints and thus, are not as free as one could think. In this way, the heroines' subjectivity does not seem unexpected, as they do not have an understanding of the world that is global. The reader is subconsciously immersed in Emma's thoughts because they are harder to discern than the obvious voice-over, which renders Emma's actions less laughable. On the contrary, Cher's thoughts are on display and, therefore, easier to make fun of.

The adaptation allowed the spectator to acknowledge its similarities with *Emma* by being very different in its context, but at the same time, it shines a light on important aspects, such as the heroine's subjectivity and the love story. The feminine condition is not a vital notion in *Clueless*, although it could be argued that the chick flick either shows an independent woman or on the contrary, a superficial one that laughs at the stereotypes. *Clueless* embodies both aspects, as Cher represents the dumb blond girl through her appearance and at the same time, she is clever and is the mistress of her house, illustrating the independent woman. Nonetheless, the ending stays close to the novel and, to some extent, undermines the message that women do not need men to succeed in life, like many other chicks flick show. The heteronormativity urge to put independent and perfectly happy individuals together in an accepted way is very present in the film, although it could be argued that Cher is not truly happy until she gets in a relationship with Josh. Thus, Heckerling could have underlined the love story more than Cher's woman condition and the ongoing presence of a patriarchal system.

Women's education is a subject that has been studied thoroughly and will continue to be studied because women's rights are always in danger of being revoked. Women, their fights and their freedom, and feminism are issues that matter because, as recent events show, they are consistently threatened to be taken away. With the tools of her time, Jane Austen offered another vision of women who lived their lives freely and had a word for their future. Many first-wave feminism ideals drew upon earlier ideas and reading *Emma* nowadays is an excellent example of the evolution of women's rights. However, even if *Clueless* presents an updated version of *Emma*, it also shows that women still have much to fight for, in order not to be stereotyped and represented by their physical appearance.

The movie's success created a cult and had a cultural impact even twenty-three years later. Donatella Versace's 2018 collection was inspired by *Clueless* and was the leading inspiration for the rapper Iggy Azalea's "Fancy" music video in 2014. In 2022, twenty-seven years after its release, the

movie was considered a classic. The first and most surprising adaptation of *Emma,* written by Jane Austen in 1815, is as timeless, if not more, as the original book, even 180 years apart, and their legacy will continue over time.

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