



**JANE AUSTEN'S REALISM REVISITED: *PRIDE & PREJUDICE*,
EMMA, AND *SANDITON* IN THE DIGITAL AGE**

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This thesis examines three structural elements of Jane Austen's novels and the ways in which three recent internet adaptations recreate these techniques. The techniques highlighted here are metafictional awareness, detailed representations of daily life, and the creation of a community between audience and character. The paper is divided into four portions: 1) an introduction to place the internet adaptations in a context to other adaptations, 2) an analysis of metafiction in *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* and *Pride & Prejudice*, 3) the representation of daily life in *Welcome to Sanditon* and *Sanditon* and 4) creation of a community in *Emma Approved* and *Emma*.

Rather than just analyze the adaptations separately from the original novels, I contend that a full understanding of the techniques being used in both must be analyzed concurrently. Through a close reading of both the internet adaptations (which includes Twitter feeds, YouTube vlogs, and other social media) and their source novels, as well as a combination of theories such as film studies, transmedia studies, digital narratives, I have concluded that these new adaptations recreate the experience of reading an Austen novel.

Their successful application of metafiction, creation of daily life, and community between reader and character highlight not only what has made Austen's work last so long in popular culture, but also social media's possibility for storytelling. This recreation of reading experience broadens our understanding of what a "faithful" text to audio-visual adaptation can mean. While completely faithful adaptations are impossible when changing mediums, the term is typically reserved only for dramatizations set in a recreation of Regency England. However, as this thesis illustrates, the formal features that frame the now-classic romantic narratives are just as important as the plot and characters of Austen's novels. And while these techniques are often overlooked due to their difficulty to translate onto film or television platforms, social media such as YouTube, Twitter and Tumblr provide a way to transcend the constraints of most audio-visual platforms.

