

A Review of Pride and Prejudice

Aaron Hsu

Pride and Prejudice is one of the great Jane Austen novels, and probably one of the most well known. It tells the story of a young lady, born to a mediocre family of a gentleman. She is the second of 5 sisters, with only the two eldest of them having any sense at all. Her mother is a disgrace to society, and her father is content with merely laughing at the plight, thinking very little of it. It also tells the story of an extremely well connected gentleman, who is well connected, very influential, and who is also of such a disposition as to have most of his lessers consider him both proud and obstinately arrogant.

This is without a doubt my favorite of the Jane Austen Stories. I rather like Emma, as well, but this one seems to cry out to me much more than does Emma. In this, I can rather sympathize with Darcy (the proud gentleman) and Elizabeth (the unfortunately situated lady) as they both seem to bear faults and traits which I sometimes attribute to myself. The proceedings throughout the novel are very great, and things move at a rapid pace. I find that Jane Austen has a style that is very witty, and I more than once laughed in amusement at the scenes presented in the book. While the general tone of the book is that of a romantic novel, I also feel that there is a very great wit within the book that almost makes it a comedy.

There were a few things I did not like about my copy of the novel. I found at least 3 typographical errors and some other bad technical pieces in my copy, which is a rather sad occurrence. It does tend to take one out of the picture and scene of a chapter when one is suddenly and abruptly affronted by a glaring typographical error. At least there were not quite so many as may be had in other books, but it was still quite noticeable.

The most interesting thing, I think is that of the comparison of the book to it's A&E movie companion. I had started out watching the movie, so I thought, as I usually find with most of my novels with which I started to become familiar through the movie of it, that I would be rather influenced by the movie's take on the whole book. I also thought that I would more likely have the pictures in my head match up with those of the movie.

On this occasion, however, I was pleasantly surprised. While there were a great many things which I noticed in the book, which brought me to think of the movie; for the most part, I was imagining scenes quite different in sound and in movement than those presented in the movie. This is interesting, as the A&E movie has to be one of the most accurate book-to-movie projects I have ever seen. The movie did so much as to quote significant portions of the dialogue and scenes, with nary a change in them at all. It was impressive how well they had carried out the design of a faithful representation.

However, I found myself imagining a quite different character of Eliza Bennett than had been presented in the movie. Why this is, I cannot know, but for some reason, the movie version just didn't seem to give me such a feeling of authenticity with my imagination on this count. I thought their choice in Jane however, was quite good, as well as that of Darcy's.

I also was surprised to find that, as I read, the words and the dialogue in the movie were quite different than the inflections and sounds that I thought they would have sounded like from reading the book. I don't know if this is just my ignorance of English culture and dictation, or whether this is really a different design and imagination on the part of the director. For my part, I was glad, as it gave me more than two ways of looking at almost exactly the same dialogue, and quite broadened my understanding.

I should add that the ending presented by the book is much more to my liking than that of the movie. The reason? I am able to learn much more about what happens after the whole ordeal is finally ended, and I feel it was a much better closer, though perhaps not so romantic, as that ending of the movie. It gives one a better glimpse into the way the relationships between the main characters might go in the future, which is always something that I wish to know at the end of the book.

I think that the book also clarified a great deal of things for me on the part of how to interpret the looks of those in the movie. It is amazing how much more there is on the details of what everyone, especially with regards to Lizzy, is thinking during the whole of the story. I found many more places where the wit and humor of the situations was apparent when I read the book which were lost to me in the movie version.

All in all, the movie version is an excellent choice if you just want a little taste, and generally are interested in getting a feel for classic literature, as it is so faithfully presented that I think it works well for the majority of people. However, if one likes the movie, and is generally more apt to enjoy the finer details of a presentation, then I think it would be highly recommended that they read the book as well as watch the movie. This is one time where I wholly recommend reading the book as well as watching the movie, as they both compliment each other so perfectly.