

Jane Austen On Screen



Week Two

Welcome to *Jane Austen on Screen*

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Ah, the big one.

Pride & Prejudice.

Jane Austen's second published novel has probably done more than any work outside of Shakespeare's canon to define our modern understanding of the romantic comedy/drama.

Every generation has been gifted a Mr Darcy and Elizabeth Bennett, often shifting subtly to reflect the times in which the film or television adaptation has been made. And the archetypes, while not created by Austen entirely, of the taciturn man with a good heart and the intelligent woman looking for more, find, in Austen's story, perhaps their most compelling form.

It's also a book whose fingerprints are found all over cinema, not simply in direct adaptations.

Take *Bridget Jones's Diary* for one. Mark Darcy is deliberately, openly based on his literary forbearer. And both ended up played by Colin Firth, whose shirt-dampening activities did a great deal for Austen's prestige in the mid-1990s.

Perhaps most importantly, *Pride and Prejudice* remains genuinely funny, which is the aspect of Austen that is so often forgotten. Most of the film adaptations retain at least some of the humour, but it is on television where *P&P* truly flourishes, the extended runtimes preventing its cast of supporting characters from being trimmed down too severely.

The trend of re-examining the story continues to this day, with gay-themed films like *Fire Island* and even *Pride & Prejudice & Zombies*, which is still one of the greatest film titles of all time.

We'll skip the gore, but it's still a cracking adaptation.

WEEK TWO FILMS

Pride and Prejudice (1940)

Pride and Prejudice (1980)

Pride and Prejudice (1995)

You've Got Mail (1998)

Bridget Jones' Diary (2001)

Pride and Prejudice (2003)

Bride and Prejudice (2004)

Pride and Prejudice (2005)

The Lizzie Bennett Diaries (2013)

Unleashing Mr Darcy (2016)

Pride and Prejudice and Zombies (2016)

Pride and Prejudice Atlanta (2019)

Fire Island (2022)