

Master thesis

Pride and Prejudice Retold in the 21st Century:

Traces of Austen's Work
in Contemporary Notions of Pride

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Written Cultures – English and Norwegian

Word Count: 34440



HØGSKULEN
I VOLDA

Sammendrag

Denne masteroppgaven er relatert til forskningsfeltet intertekstualitet innenfor skriftkulturer, og hvordan mening endres gjennom prosesser som involverer imitasjon og adaptasjon, gjennom å studere temaet stolthet (*pride*). Oppgaven studerer hvordan stolthet er gjenfortalt fra Jane Austens roman *Pride and Prejudice* (*Stolthet og fordom*) fra 1813 til to kontekster i det 20. århundre. Studien setter søkelys på ekteskapsplottet i originalteksten, hvor Miss Elizabeth Bennet og Mr. Fitzwilliam Darcy må overvinne sin egen stolthet og fordom for å bli gift. Metoden som benyttes i studien er nærlesing, med søkelys på begrepet stolthet, relaterte begrep og fraser, og scener som beskriver stolthet. De to gjenfortellingene som studeres er *Eligible* av Curtis Sittenfeld (2016), der konteksten er bymiljø i USA, og *First Impressions* av Sarah Price (2014), der konteksten er Amish samfunn i USA. Konteksten i originalteksten, *Pride and Prejudice*, er det engelske samfunnet rundt Jane Austens levetid (1775-1817), med søkelys på middel- og overklassen. De tre kontekstene i studien varierer når det gjelder sosial kontroll, og jeg argumenterer for at dette skaper ulike oppfatninger av stolthet med tanke på hvordan stolthet blir skapt og sett på. I *Pride and Prejudice* og *First Impressions* relaterer oppfatningene seg til kristendom, kjønn og klasse, og det å være stolt fører gjerne til negativ respons. I *Eligible* er det mindre sosial kontroll, mindre ulikhet og mindre snakk om stolthet.

Stolthet fungerer ulikt som spennings- og konfliktskapende plot-enhet i de tre romanene. I *Pride and Prejudice* og *First Impressions* er der mer spenning og konflikt enn i *Eligible*. Disse ulikhetene tilskrives ulike oppfatninger av stolthet og kontekstuelle forskjeller i kvinnerollene til heltinnene, der heltinnen i *Eligible* tar den mest innflytelsesrike rollen av de tre. Gjenfortellingene framstår som ulike responser til Jane Austens *Pride and Prejudice*, der det finnes spor av arbeidene hennes i tekstene.

Abstract

This thesis relates to the research field of intertextuality within written cultures and how meaning changes through processes of imitation and adaptation by studying the theme of pride. The thesis studies how pride is retold from Jane Austen's novel *Pride and Prejudice* from 1813 into two contexts of the 21st century. The study focuses on the main marriage plot in the source text, where Miss Elizabeth Bennet and Mr. Fitzwilliam Darcy must overcome their pride and prejudice to marry. The method used in the study is close reading, focusing on the term pride, related terms and phrases, and scenes depicting pride. The two retellings studied are *Eligible* by Curtis Sittenfeld (2016), set in an urban US context and *First Impressions* by Sarah Price (2014), set in an Amish US context. The context of the source text, *Pride and Prejudice*, is English society around Jane Austen's lifetime (1775-1817), focusing on the upper and middle classes. These three contexts differ regarding social control, and I argue that this generates differing notions of pride regarding how pride is generated and viewed. In *Pride and Prejudice* and *First Impressions*, notions of pride relate to Christianity, gender, and class, and being proud often evokes negative responses. In *Eligible*, there is less social control, less inequality, and less talk of pride. Pride functions differently as a tension- and conflict-creating plot device in the three novels. In *Pride and Prejudice* and *First Impressions* there is more tension and conflict than in *Eligible*. I ascribe these differences to notions of pride and contextual differences in the women's roles of the heroines, where the heroine in *Eligible* takes on the more empowered role of the three. The retellings appear as different responses to Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, where traces of her work are embedded within the texts.

Acknowledgements

This thesis is part of a master's course in written cultures, where I have been enlightened about the numerous intertextual links across time and space from the Greek philosophers to contemporary times. I wish to send a "thank you" to all the creators and mediators of the texts who have contributed to broadening my mind through these last 2,5 years. That includes Jane Austen, who wrote the novel which inspired this thesis 210 years after its publication. It has been an inspiring journey!

Thank you, Professor Marie Nedregotten Sørbo, for being my supervisor while creating this thesis. I was thrilled when you accepted my request and equally worried when I contemplated that my advisor is an internationally acknowledged expert in this academic field where I venture as an apprentice. The opportunity to harvest from your expertise about Jane Austen and her works and see her authorship in the broader context of written cultures has inspired me. Thank you for sharing your knowledge!

Thank you, family, friends, and colleagues, for patiently listening to me when I have needed emotional support and for understanding that my time has been extremely limited these past months.

Thank you, Sunniva and Patrick, for being you – and for all your love and support. I hope that seeing your mum spending months reading and writing, and actually enjoying it, has been as inspiring to you as your mere existence is to me.

I am proud of having you all in my life.

Lin-Marita Sandvik

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Introduction

The scope and aim of this thesis

Pride, a term that in the 21st century connotes advocacy for equal rights, was used by Jane Austen (1775-1817) as a topic to create tension and conflict in her 1813-novel *Pride and Prejudice* (Austen, 2019). In this novel, we find different notions of pride: being seen as proud contributes to the devaluation of the character displaying it, hurting others' pride evokes negative responses, and pride is also seen as a positive emotion.

Similar notions of pride are found in contemporary society, where we also find terms like "gay pride", "black pride" and "women's pride" advocating for equality in the distribution of power and influence. Differing notions of pride are the topic of this thesis, which studies how pride from *Pride and Prejudice* is retold in two 21st-century contexts with differing levels of social control. The two retellings studied are *Eligible* by Curtis Sittenfeld (2016), set in an urban US context and *First impressions* by Sarah Price (2014), set in an Amish US context. The aim is to explore if the level of social control in the contexts affects how pride is generated and viewed and how pride functions as a plot device in the retellings.

The art of retelling existing stories originated in the oral storytelling tradition, which preceded written cultures. Orally transmitted stories were altered as they were passed on through imitation, whereas writing them down preserved versions of the original stories for the future. Written cultures still involve sharing, imitating, and altering already existing ideas and stories, and intertextual links run across history and cultures. Such links are the topic of this thesis, focusing on retellings published in the form of novels. As the object of study, I chose *Pride and Prejudice* as the source text since studies of the novel and research of it demonstrated the wide range of perspectives that resonate with themes found in this novel. I chose *pride* as the object of study since this term and topic has taken on new meanings in contemporary times compared to the lifetime of Jane Austen. This makes it interesting to study if and how differing notions of pride are expressed in retellings of this source text.

The novel *Pride and Prejudice* includes four marriage plots thematising various motivations for marrying and obstacles related to manners, class-belonging, and gender expectations. This study focuses on the main marriage plot involving Miss Elizabeth Bennet (heroine) and Mr Fitzwilliam Darcy (hero), which in this thesis will be referred to as *the marriage plot*. In this plot, the central conflict lies in the pride and prejudice elicited by the heroine and hero's first impressions of each other. This is mainly an internally oriented

conflict whose solution lies in their mental growth. I will claim that in *Pride and Prejudice*, the antecedents to the heroine and hero's pride are contextually dependent on power imbalances between them, which relate to class, gender, and the level of social control embedded within this Austenian version of a Regency context, which coincides with Austen's lifetime.

Prejudice signifies the judging of someone before knowing them. *Pride* is, in this thesis, seen as an emotion, an attitude and a label resulting from typification, which affect the behaviour of individuals. The theoretical framework on pride combines psychological theory by Jessica Tracy, in cooperation with various fellow scholars, with Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann's social constructionist theory of typification. The psychological theory defines what pride is and how it is displayed, and points to contextual variation in the antecedents and evaluations of pride. The theory of typification describes how people form opinions of each other, and how these opinions may be wrong.

An underlying assumption in this study is that pride must be understood from its societal context. The notions of pride we find in *Pride and Prejudice* must hence be understood from Austen's version of Regency England and the landed gentry's norms and ways of living, which is the context of the novel. This context has high levels of social control regarding what is considered appropriate behaviour and acceptable manners. These norms relate to biblical ideas of how people should behave, linking Austen's writing intertextually to Christianity and the Bible. Another contextual feature which generates pride and prejudice in this novel is the power inequalities between the hero and the heroine. When Austen created her characters, she ascribed more power to Mr. Darcy than Elizabeth due to his belonging to a superior class to her and his gender assigning him more legal rights. By doing so, Austen created entertainment based on processes where their behaviour causes pride and prejudice in the other.

Pride and Prejudice has become a classic in English literature over the two centuries after its publication. Within academia, it has been researched from historical, religious, linguistic, economist, political and feminist perspectives, among others. Outside academia, this novel and Austen's other literary works have generated fan bases observable online through many fan sites and discussions in literary communities. *Pride and Prejudice* has also been commented upon through reworkings. It has been adapted into movies and TV series, and it has been retold in a vast number of published novels and online fanfiction. Some of these have expanded upon the original story by retelling it in other contexts, with a different cast of characters and points of view, and as continuations of the original story. Others have

kept close to the original plot, characterisation, and point of view. Combined, the retellings of *Pride and Prejudice* make up an archive of what Abigail Derecho labels “archontic literature”. This concept focuses on the process where writers enter a text, select items they find useful, and create new texts which are deposited back into the archive of the source text. The main characters in *Pride and Prejudice*, Elizabeth Bennet, and Mr Darcy, as well as "Austen's particular version of English manners and morals" are by Derecho labelled as "usable artifacts" in this process, (Derecho, 2006, p. 65) and these are the objects of study in this thesis.

Austen's background and writing

The creator of these artefacts, Jane Austen, based the story worlds and characterisations in her novels mainly on the landed gentry in England around 1800, also named the Regency era. This was a familiar context to her. Austen was the daughter of a reverend and a mother with aristocratic connections but little fortune. She was born in Steventon, died in Winchester, and lived in other locations in Southwest England. Austen never married, but she is said to have experienced a romantic relationship once. She grew up in a time where power, status and wealth were closely related to land ownership and gender due to the legal system of patrilineal inheritance. These factors caused marriage to be seen as a solution to secure one's economic future and social status. Norms for acceptable behaviour were linked to the Anglican faith through conduct books written by clergy members. Such books aimed to teach young women how to think and behave appropriately and represented traditional values. At the same time, the English society experienced industrialisation, societal change, and ideologies advocating for freedom and legal rights. These trends correlated with international processes of change related to struggles for self-government, which were central to the Atlantic revolutions (De Dijn, 2020, p. 189). Traces of these are found in *Pride and Prejudice*, where soldiers and the regiment point to the Napoleonic Wars.

Austen wrote six completed novels, two fragments of novels, a novella-in-letters, and juvenilia. Her first novel, *Sense and Sensibility*, was published in 1811. Austen was 21 when she started writing *Pride and Prejudice* in 1796-97, originally titled *First Impressions* (Sutherland, 2005, pp. 12-16). It was later heavily revised and retitled with the terms *pride* and *prejudice*, which point to the major themes in the novel.

Jane Austen did not receive fame for her authorship in her lifetime and was not much read until the late nineteenth century. A memoir published in 1870 by her nephew, James Edward Austen-Leigh, contributed to altering this, and to her recognition as a national treasure beloved by “Janeites” (Todd 2006, p. 32). Since the 1890s, Austen has been the object of Janeite fandom (Sørbø, 2020, p. 525). Other terms which refer to her present-day and wide popularity are “The Jane Austen Phenomenon” and “Austenmania” (Ridout 2010, p. 123). According to Austen scholar Marie N. Sørbø, feminism provided Jane Austen with a modest wave of appreciation in the 1970s, and from the 1990s there has been a “tsunami of adoration” (Sørbø, 2020, p. 525). Sørbø argues that the reception history of Austen’s authorship demonstrates a dichotomy between her being seen as a “sharp satirist attacking certain aspects of her world” or as a “mild commemorator of English village life” (Sørbø 2014, p. 9). Sørbø herself considers Austen to be “an ordinary woman with an ordinary life [...] but with a remarkable drive for writing, and a penchant for writing ironically about the ordinary” (p. 9).

Marriage and courtship are two of the topics she ironized and satirised through here writing. Even if the plotlines of her novels include romantic stories, she is considered a realistic author more than a romance author, a claim Sørbø supports by arguing that “she wrote feminine realism under the guise of “romance”” (p. 16). Austen is considered to have depicted the society she knew so detailed that Paula Byrne claims, "For the social historian, Austen's own novels are a fascinating repository of the manners of 'polite' society" (Byrne 2005, p. 299). “Manners” had a variety of meaning in Austen’s time, Janet Todd points out, from “character of mind and general way of life; morals; habits' to 'ceremonious behaviour; studied civility” (Todd, 2006, p. 297). Some traits besides pride which Austen thematised were, according to Theodore Benditt: “vanity, self-knowledge, responsibility and the lack of it, prudence, selfishness and self-centeredness, sympathy, kind- and cold- heartedness, self-esteem, insensitivity, love, liveliness, and being dutiful”. (Benditt 2003, p. 250). Benditt sees her as a moralist, not aimed at showing “that bad things happen to the wicked” (p. 245), but rather to point out how “people are all too frequently in a moral muddle, a state either of blindness or of confusion” (p. 246). Benditt, like many others, considers her a Christian, while acknowledging her more secular legacy of Aristotle. This is partly based on Allistair MacIntyre’s argument about how Austen “praises practical intelligence in an Aristotelian way and humility in a Christian way” (MacIntyre, 1981, p. 241) MacIntyre also points to Austen’s Christianity as the roots to a third kind of motivation for marrying, besides love and economic safety: “[...] the telos of her heroines is a life within both a particular kind of

marriage and a particular kind of household of which that marriage will be the focal point” (p. 239). It is not the scope of this thesis to argue the existence of such a telos in Austen’s writing, but rather to point to the reception and ideological roots of her authorship.

Adaptations, retellings, and research questions

In 2013, The HarperCollins project set out to retell Austen’s six novels into contemporary contexts through famous novelists. *Pride and Prejudice* was retold by Curtis Sittenfeld, whose novel *Eligible* was published in 2016. Nora F. Stovel calls this “the most daring thus far” by its use of a reality television show titled *Eligible* as backdrop for her drama and playing with LGBTQ topics like transgender issues and lesbianism. Stovel argues that this retelling is “changing the scene”, comparing it to the 1997 film *Clueless* and the 2004 *Bride and Prejudice* which were considered equally radical (Stovel, 2018, p. 113). Stovel’s review points to many similarities between the plot and cast of characters in this retelling and *Pride and Prejudice* but does not mention the themes pride and prejudice specifically. These concepts are interesting since the LGBTQ community uses pride as both a slogan and a term referring to social gatherings celebrating and taking pride in diversity, individuality, and not being prejudiced.

As mentioned in the start of this introduction, pride may have different connotations in contemporary society. Fictional texts portray society through imitation, as Aristotle theorised in his *Poetics*. Studied of novels may, therefore, provide information about how pride is viewed in today’s society, as interpreted by the authors creating these novels. Studying various retellings which translate *Pride and Prejudice* to the 21st century is interesting since it reveals how different authors interpret Jane Austen’s work and recreate features of this work in a new context. This can provide new information about the reception of Austen.

While *Pride and Prejudice* is based on a Christian context with a high level of social control, the retelling *Eligible* seems to represent contrasting values to this, based on Stovel’s article (Stovel, 2018). Can it be argued that the notions of pride in *Pride and Prejudice* are generated by mechanisms closely related to biblical thoughts condemning excessive pride or hubris? If so, could this mean that rewriting *Pride and Prejudice* in the context of suburban Cincinnati, and including LGBTQ topics, represents a more virtuous and acceptable type of pride in the novel *Eligible*? If one continues this line of thought, one might ask: What if *Pride*

and Prejudice is rewritten to other contexts, possibly leading to other notions of the concepts? Would the authors use pride as a plot device in the same way as in *Pride and Prejudice*? Would these still function as a conflict creating tension, driving the plot forward?

To find an answer to these questions, I searched for another novel to contrast and compare with *Eligible* and *Pride and Prejudice* and chose to include *First impressions* by Sarah Price (2014) in this study. *Eligible* is set in an urban US context while *First Impressions* is set in an Amish US context. These are studied through close reading of all three novels, where the analysis of *Pride and Prejudice* functions as a blueprint for the analysis of the two retellings. The analysis focuses on the term pride, related terms and descriptions signifying pride, and parts where processes involving pride are narrated. The study aims to explore if retelling *Pride and Prejudice* in the Amish context has elicited more similar notions of pride than retelling it in the urban US context, and to see if various notions of pride affect the function of this topic as a plot device.

Theory

The emotion pride

The psychologist Jessica Tracy and fellow scholars have studied the emotion pride for the last couple of decades. In her book *“Take Pride: Why the Deadliest Sin Holds the Secret to Human Success”* (Tracy 2016), Tracy links contemporary notions of pride to biblical notions and presents their perspectives and research on pride. Pride is seen as a social and two-faceted emotion, labelled “authentic pride” (related to accomplishments, achievements, and a wish to be good) and “hubristic pride” (related to personal traits, boasting, and a feeling of superiority). Tracy et al. argue that pride must be considered a basic emotion, biologically encoded rather than socially constructed, in line with the six basic emotions defined by a study from 1967. In this study, Paul Ekman and Wallace V. Friesen (1971) presented a group of people from Papua New Guinea with photos displaying anger, disgust, fear, happiness, sadness, and surprise. When these were recognised by the study group, who were culturally isolated from the West, it was seen as proof of the universality of these emotions.

Tracy and fellow researchers conducted a similar study with photos of people whose body language displayed prototypical pride expressions. To argue that pride is part of human nature, they tested for pride recognition outside of American culture on a group of people in the rural countryside of Burkina Faso and found more than 50% recognition (p. 23). To uncover if pride is a universal human emotion, they continued their research to discover “whether people all over the world show the critical pride behaviours when they feel pride. Head tilted back, chest expanded, arms raised” (p. 27). For this aim, they studied the nonverbal displays of pride by winners of judo competitions in the Olympics and found all the behavioural components of the pride expressions. To ensure that such expressions were not a result of learning by observing, they went on to study blind athletes competing in the Paralympic Games. The bodily and nonverbal pride expressions were the same, leading Tracy et al. to conclude that pride is part of human nature (p. 32). The implication of this universality in pride expressions is that the emotion pride, which is an internal state, is observable through a person’s body language. This leads to the second way pride is viewed in this thesis: As a label based on typification.

Pride as a label based on typification

The term typification refers to processes taking place when people interact and is embedded within the theory of the *Social Construction of Reality* by Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann (Berger and Luckmann 1991) The term “social norms” is central in this theory, which can be defined as "implicit or explicit rules or principles that members of a group understand and that guide and/ or constrain behavior" which "create a shared understanding of what is acceptable within a given context" (Wanders et al. 2021, p. 1). This definition is based on Berger and Luckmann’s theory about how reality is socially constructed through "typification of one's own and others' performances". (Berger & Luckmann, 1991, p. 89) They argue that when two people meet and interact, each will attribute motives to the other person’s behaviour and typify the actions of the other. As they continue interacting, these typifications will lead to “specific patterns of conduct”, meaning that they will "begin to play roles vis-a-vis each other" (p. 74). However, the information one person has about the intentions and motives of another person may be misinterpreted. To illustrate this, Berger and Luckmann point out how "I may think that the other is smiling while in fact he is smirking" (p. 43), and that "I may view the other as someone inherently unfriendly to me and act towards him within a pattern of 'unfriendly relations' as understood by me" (p. 44). In addition to contributing to how we view others, the same processes affect how we view ourselves through a reflection governed by "the attitude towards me that the other exhibits" (p. 44). This points to the socialisation processes where individuals learn, internalise and act towards the norms of a specific social world, and perspectives and word-views related to this context. Such processes contribute to a person’s identity and understanding of one’s social location (pp. 151-152).

This theory also aims to explain how socialisation involves the discovery of norms through the reactions received by others, or "the attitude towards me that the other exhibits" (p. 44). A person who conforms with the norms is expected to correct his or her behaviour accordingly or may be sanctioned for not doing so. In a study of norm violators and the effect of sanctions, Wanders et al. (2021) claim that "research has documented that people who violate norms tend to elicit negative responses in others, including unfavorable social perceptions, negative emotions, scolding, gossip, and punishment" (p. 1). Such processes point to social control: mechanisms that “control human conduct by setting up predefined patterns of conduct” (Berger and Luckmann 1991, p. 72).

Berger and Luckmann’s theory will be used as a framework for later discussions on typification as a cause of labelling and misinterpretations of other characters in the novels

used in this study. The linguistic representation of the outcome of typifications - the words used to describe what is seen and interpreted - will be referred to as labels. To relate this to the previously presented theory about pride; when characters observe behaviour which they typify as pride and/ or being proud, this process will be referred to as typification. Terms like *pride*, *proud* and *prejudiced* will be seen as labels signifying the outcomes of typification.

Pride and contextual variation

Even if pride is considered a universal emotion felt and displayed comparably across cultures, research has pointed to how antecedents to pride and how pride is perceived and evaluated within a society may vary contextually. This was one of Yvette M.J. Van Osch et al. (2013) conclusions after looking for cross-cultural differences in the meaning of pride. Based on theories of cultural differences, they expected to find such differences but concluded that “[...] pride may be experienced and expressed similarly across cultures, but the antecedents of pride as well as its specific behavioral expression may be affected by cultural situation-specific normative scripts” (van Osch et al., 2013, p. 386).

This research was conducted at the start of the 21st century, a few years prior to the publications of the novels studied in this thesis. In an article from 2007, Tracy and Robin point to how the way pride is viewed in society has evolved: “Ancient Greek and biblical thought condemned excessive pride or hubris, yet in Western culture, pride is widely viewed as a virtue to be sought and encouraged” (Tracy & Robins, 2007, p. 148). They argue that in contemporary society, the virtuous type of pride makes people “strive to achieve, to be a “good person,” or to treat others well because doing so makes us proud of ourselves” (p. 149). This is a contrasting response to the condemnation related to the ancient Greek and biblical ways of perceiving pride. It is an exciting contrast regarding the aim of this study: to compare notions of pride from an author who is considered a Christian to literary works of contemporary authors.

Adaptation and recontextualising

Recreating literary works by borrowing elements and retelling these is a long-established tradition within the written culture of human societies. Scholars use terms like

fanfiction and adaptations to refer to the product of such processes and the term intertextuality to refer to similarities across texts. As Linda Hutcheon points out, adaptations will be created from different motives, and the adapters will have different motives behind their choices during the adaptation. “They are just as likely to want to contest the aesthetic or political values of the adapted text as to pay homage”, Hutcheon argues (Hutcheon, 2013, p. 20) regarding fidelity debates regarding adaptation processes. Abigail Derecho argues that to see literature as “archontic”, pointing to archives as ever-expanding, opens up to the view that “texts that build on a previously existing text are not lesser than the source text” (Derecho, 2006, p. 64). Based on Derecho’s terminology, *Pride and Prejudice* is an “archontic” text, and a retelling will be part of its “archive”. A feature of the archive of an archontic text is that it “is not identical to the text but is a virtual construct surrounding the text, including it and all texts relating to it” (p. 65)

A common trait of many writers of Austen retellings is that they describe their writing to pay homage to Austen, and a way of “repaying the pleasure they have gained from reading here”, according to scholar Alice Ridout. In this sense, these authors contribute to what poststructuralist theories see as blurring boundaries between fiction and criticism, between reader and writer (Ridout, 2012, p. 13). As an example of how authors of retellings function as critics, Ridout points to how plot change in “*Lost in Austen*” “function to critique Austen’s idealised version of Regency England” (p. 134). Scholar Julie Sanders claim that such commentary of adaptations on a source text occurs “frequently”. This is most often achieved “by offering a revised point of view from the “original”, adding hypothetical motivation or voicing what the text silences or marginalizes” (Sanders, 2016, p. 23).

Such commentary may result from the retelling of a story in a new context since shifts in time and place, according to Hutcheon, “should bring about alterations in cultural associations” (Hutcheon, 2013, p. 145). Since our perceptions and interpretations are conditioned by “contemporary events or dominant images”, the adapter must acknowledge that the context of reception is just as important as the context of creation (p. 149). Adapting across cultures means adapting cultural and social meaning to a new environment (p. 149). It is therefore interesting to study the products of such adaptations. In the next part I present the methods used to choose and analyse the retellings of this study.

Method

Selection of retellings for this study

What initiated this study was the assumption that retellings of *Pride and Prejudice* using other contexts would have differing notions of pride. The first step towards studying this was to search for retellings using other contexts than Regency England. Since I already had decided to include *Eligible* in this study, I looked for novels published around the same time; the early 21st century. *Pride and Prejudice* is considered to depict society, life, and characters realistically. I therefore wished to include retellings from real-life contexts as the objects of study. Based on what I already knew about the plotline, and how the actions of other characters in *Pride and Prejudice* affect the interaction between the heroine and hero and their opinions of each other, I aimed to find retellings with a similar plot and cast. When searching for retellings to include in this study, I was therefore looking for novels that:

1. were said to be retellings of *Pride and Prejudice*
2. were published around the same time as *Eligible*, which was published in 2017
3. included a marriage plot and a similar cast of characters as in *Pride and Prejudice*
4. were written within different real-life contexts

Online searches returned lists of websites with suggested novels, and related terms to *adaptations*, like *retellings*, *sequels*, and *variations*. Using these search terms led to related terms, like *spinoffs*, *variations*, *fanfiction*, *remakes*, and *rewritings*. I discovered that the term *adaptation* mostly returned titles of films, movies and TV series and that *fanfiction* led to online communities, digital texts, and traditionally published works. Searches for *rewritings* tended to return links with the word *retelling* in them, where *retelling* was used as a noun referring to the product, the novel. *Rewriting* was mostly used as a verb referring to the writing process itself. The usage I found on the Internet of the term *retelling* contributed to my decision to use the term *retelling* in this thesis. The online searches provided a glimpse into the vast number of texts written as response to Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, and to retellings of this novel. Some of these are sequels, continuing the story of Elizabeth and Darcy, some are written from the viewpoint of other characters of *Pride and Prejudice*, and some are set in storyworlds very different from the setting and context used in *Pride and Prejudice*. Recommendations and reviews are published online by both scholars and readers,

and the large number of different sites proves Jane Austen's continued popularity in the 21st century.

The diversity of online writers offering their recommendations and reading tips means a wide range of recommendations. However, the previously mentioned novel *Eligible* (Sittenfeld, 2017) was repeatedly mentioned on lists of recommended retellings. Other retellings found repeatedly were *Unmarriageable* by Soniah Kamal (2018), *Ayesha at Last* by Uzma Jalaluddin, (2018) and *Pride* by Ibi Zoboi (2018). To decide about which ones to buy, I browsed information from the worldwide reader community found at the web site *Goodreads*. By skimming through reviews, I discovered that the wide range of readers means a wide range of opinions and ways to write about writing. As Juliette Wells points out in her article *New Approaches to Austen and the Popular Reader* (2012), scholars may feel that their authority and professionalism are at stake when readers outside universities comment on Austen. She sees this as a reflection of scholars' "prejudices against non-academic reading practices" and acknowledges that scholars may gain new perspectives by studying these (p. 78-79).

Since my main intention was to obtain information about the cast of characters, plot, and authors in various retellings of *Pride and Prejudice*, I put my own prejudice aside and discovered that reviews and comments at *Goodreads.com* proved helpful. I bought and evaluated the suitability of the novels *Eligible*, *First Impressions*, *Unmarriageable*, *Ayesha at Last* and *Pride* for this study. While the first of these, *Eligible*, differs the most from the source text on questions of social control and religiousness, *Pride* differs the most in its plotline by being a Young Adult novel focusing on dating rather than marrying. The last three ones, *First Impressions*, *Unmarriageable* and *Ayesha at Last* are all retold in religious contexts. My initial aim was to include all but *Pride* in the study. Later, I decided to focus on contrasting contexts rather than trying to discuss range of contexts. This study therefore includes *Eligible*, portraying modern lifestyles in urban contexts and *First Impressions*, portraying Amish lifestyles in farming contexts.

Having all three novels as paperback editions allowed the inclusion of marginalia and post-it notes in the books as I read them. It also meant having access to the book covers, which reveal what information publishers wish to convey to readers. The phrase "pride and prejudice" is written on the front cover of both *First Impressions* and *Eligible*, making visible the link to *Pride and Prejudice*.

Studying pride through close reading

As pointed out in the theory part, pride is observable through bodily expressions and body language. It is also observable through utterances using the terms pride, proud and synonyms to these. A third way to observe and study pride is through utterances describing behaviours, feelings and opinions which can be interpreted as pride. This implies that close reading of the texts, focusing on language, form, and semantics, is a suitable method to obtain data and information on which to base the analysis.

Close reading is a method connected to New Criticism which originally emphasized studying texts without regard to anything external to the texts (Klages, 2012, p. 56). In this sense, the close reading conducted in this study to not adhere to the standards of New Criticism, since the text is analysed towards the context portrayed in it. Scholar Paula L. Moya defines close-reading as “intensive reading and re-reading that calls for a heightened attention to literary language and form, considering both as semantic structures that mediate authors’ and readers’ perceptions of the social world” (Moya, 2015, p. 9) Moya is interested in how a close reading can be an encounter with the self as well as another, and serve as “an excavation of [...] the pervasive sociocultural ideas - such as race, ethnicity, gender and sexuality - of the social worlds” (p. 9) In this thesis, the close reading explores the sociocultural theme pride, and relates this to gender and class.

Tanja Dromnes et al. (Dromnes et al., 2009) have studied the distribution and frequency of the terms *pride* and *prejudice* in *Pride and Prejudice* through close reading. Their aim was to uncover to what extent the title terms illustrate the novel's central conflicts, and they found a connection between the formal features and the thematic features of the novel. In volume I, which contains 35 examples of the term “pride” and 1 of “prejudice”, pride is presented mainly as a negative concept (p. 154). Volume II contains 13 examples of the term “pride” and 4 of “prejudice” (p. 159). In this part, the characters start to realise how their impressions may have been wrong. Volume III contains 22 examples of “pride” and 3 of “prejudice”, and in this part, pride is seen both as a vice and a virtue, according to Dromnes et. Al. (p. 164-165). These findings contributed to my decision of structuring the analysis using a traditional plot arch as model, from exposition via rising action and climax towards the resolution of the plot.

I started analysing the source text, *Pride and Prejudice*, focusing on pride, and the parts of the plot most relevant to study the marriage plot in regard to pride. As step two, the

retellings were analysed and discussed towards the source text, from start to bottom. As step three of the analysis, the two retellings are discussed simultaneously towards the source text. I have paid much attention to providing enough information about a plot part to allow for reflections from the reader as to whether my arguing and conclusions can be considered valid and reliable. This is done through a mixture of descriptions, paraphrasing and quotes.

The main research questions in this thesis, which will be answered in the conclusion, are:

- to argue how the different contexts of the novels generate different notions of pride
- to discuss how these different notions of pride functions differently as conflict-creating plot devices within the plotlines of the three novels.

To answer these questions, the analysis is based on these three questions:

- How are the hero and heroine typified, focusing on the theme pride?
- What norms and expectations are these typifications based on?
- How do the hero and heroine's opinions and feelings develop, related to pride?

Outline of this thesis

The discussion of this thesis is structured into four parts:

- 1) Context, focusing on the socio-historical setting of the five novels and the cast of characters.
- 2) First meetings, focusing on the first meetings between Miss Elizabeth Bennet and Mr. Fitzwilliam Darcy where pride is generated.
- 3) The Netherfield stay, focusing on how their relationship develops through interaction.
- 4) Rising action, focusing on Mr. Wickham's lie, Mr. Darcy's interference in the relationship between Miss Jane and Mr. Bingley and Mr. Darcy's first proposal.
- 5) The resolution of the novel, focusing on Mr. Darcy's explanatory letter, , the Pemberley visit, the elopement, Lady Catherine de Bourgh's interference and the second proposal.

The last chapter presents the conclusions of this thesis, pointing towards a connection between the level of social control in the contexts of the retellings and the notions of pride in the retellings. It will also point to how traits of the character Miss Elizabeth Bennet, related to woman pride, are maintained from the source text through the retellings.

Contexts portrayed in the novels

Since this thesis argues that the concepts of pride and prejudice must be understood from the contexts of the novels, what follows are brief presentations of the contexts portrayed in *Pride and Prejudice*, *Eligible* and *First Impressions*, based on what can be read from the texts. Another feature of the retellings concerns language: *Eligible* uses US-spelling, whereas the Amish language Pennsylvania Dutch is used in *First Impressions*. These linguistic traits are visible in this thesis, through terms, quotes and spelling.

Pride and Prejudice: The Bennet family in Regency England

The novel *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen (1813) portray the middle- and upper classes in England and a time with clearly defined gender roles where women were economically dependent on men. Large parts of the plot take place inside the houses of the families of the novel, and their houses and estates function as symbols of their wealth and status. We mostly get to know the characters in social and domestic settings, where they dance, read, play games, write letters, eat, and relax. Balls and dancing are important social events, and several of the women entertain by singing and playing the piano. None of the men do this; little is told about what men do outside the domestic sphere. We do not get to know much about how people look and what they wear, but we get to know a great deal about norms and expectations related to being social. Some examples of this are related to norms for introductions: As the patriarch of the Bennet household, Mr. Bennet must visit Mr. Bingley before it is socially acceptable for the family's women to make his acquaintance. When Mr. Collins approaches Mr. Darcy at a gathering without being introduced, he violates norms for introductions.

When the characters are to meet, formal invitations are delivered on paper by servants, and communication across distances are made through handwritten letters. Horses and carriages were their primary means of transportation, besides walking. Walking is also used as a social activity when characters interact by walking and conversing.

The opening scene of *Pride and Prejudice* directs readers' attention to marital expectations of Jane Austen's time, with the narrator's statement that: "It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife" (p. 3). Then, the focus is directed to the Bennet family, whose members have the leading roles in this novel. In the dialogue initiating the actions of the novel, Mrs. Bennet informs Mr. Bennet that their neighbouring estate, Netherfield Park, is rented out to a single

man having a fortune of four or five thousand a year. Mrs. Bennet is characterised as an emotional woman who enjoys gossiping and whose primary goal is to get all her daughters married. This goal stems from their situation of living in an entailed property under primogeniture laws, meaning that if Mr. Bennet dies, neither she nor her daughters will inherit the property. The heir would instead be Mr. Collins, cousin of Mr. Bennet. Mrs. Bennet sees their new neighbour, Mr. Bingley, as a way to secure the economic future of one of her five daughters. Mr. Bennet is characterised as a man of the landed gentry who enjoys reading newspapers and books, offers sarcastic comments to his wife and events in the novel, and adores his second daughter, Elizabeth. She is the heroine of the main marriage plot of the novel. Elizabeth is 21 years old and well-informed about the importance of marrying but knowing what is expected does not necessarily mean she is acting accordingly. She wishes to marry for love, has her standards and expectations towards other people, and voices her opinions. The other four Bennet daughters are Jane, the eldest, seen as the most beautiful and kind of them, and Mary, the middle one, who is described as a reader, mediocre musician, and moralist. Then there are Kitty and Lydia, the youngest ones, with a playful, carefree, and giggling approach to life. The cast of characters in *Pride and Prejudice* contributes to the development of the marriage plot involving Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy in various ways, which the analysis will show.

Eligible: The Bennet family in Cincinnati, Ohio

The retelling *Eligible* by Curtis Sittenfeld (2016) is set in an urban US context geographically located in Cincinnati, which culturally focuses on LGBT and reality shows. In this retelling, the characters work, have urban lifestyles and use contemporary technology. The Bennet sisters are portrayed as modernised versions of Austen's Bennet sisters. The youngest, Kitty and Lydia, have had various jobs, a few months at a time, and do CrossFit. Mary is doing her third online master's degree and the family wonders if she is gay, which worries Mrs. Bennet. Jane, the eldest, works as a yoga instructor and is seen as the most beautiful and gentle. She tries to get pregnant using a sperm donor. The heroine Lizzy, shortened to Liz, is a magazine writer, allowing her to travel and interview accomplished people, often women. Liz and Jane live in New York and are at home with their parents due to their father's recovery from a heart attack. They discover that Mrs. and Mr. Bennet have marital and economic problems there. The title term, *Eligible*, is the name of the reality show

Chip Bingley has been a part of when the novel starts, and it is the context gathering the whole Bennet family at the end of the novel. Besides this, several of the single characters demonstrate being eligible throughout the novel and are in a relationship by the novel's ending.

The marriage plot involving Liz Bennet and Fitzwilliam Darcy in *Eligible* shares many similarities with the similar plotline in *Pride and Prejudice*, yet several alterations exist. *Pride and Prejudice* portray a time with strict rules for courtship expectations of getting married, and in Austen's works, there was no physical intimacy before marriage. Since her novels ended with the hero and heroine marrying, there are no sex scenes in her novels. In *Eligible*, Liz and her sisters voice and portray contemporary woman's roles regarding dating and sex. Liz and Jane have been in relationships, dating and having casual sex. To them, both dating and sex are ways of getting to know each other, and children and marriage are optional features of life.

In *Pride and Prejudice*, the economic challenge is based on primogeniture and the threat of losing the family estate. The economic challenge in *Eligible* is based on their Tudor house's need for renovation, Mr. Bennet's lack of health insurance, Mrs. Bennet's shopping addiction, and the youngest daughters living off their parents' money. Liz is informed about their economic trouble when she declines Cousin Willie, whose money her parents saw as a way to get rid of their debts. From that moment (p. 136), Liz is the main character in a subplot of the novel, lasting from around her and Darcy's first meetings until a short time (p. 397) before the part where their relationship is resolved. Liz is the one who questions her parents' economy, helps her father get a payment plan for his hospital bills, tells her parents and sisters that they must sell the Tudor house, and finds a real estate agent to do so. Liz is the one who finds a valet who can sell the loads of things her mother has bought online and who cleans out the basement and organises everything when they discover that the Tudor house is spider infested. She withstands criticism from her mother and sisters for deciding to sell their house, and she is the one motivating Lydia, Kitty and Mary to find jobs and move out of their parents' house. Liz is also moving things from the house to storage, and she helps land the sale and have her parents move to an apartment. By demonstrating competence and willpower to fix and organise this extensive range of tasks, Liz represents the more competent and empowered woman of the 21st century compared to women in Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*. This is emphasised by connecting Liz to feminism through her working in a magazine with "feminist stances" (Sittenfeld, 2016, p. 11), and her admiration of the famous feminist Kathy de Bourgh. She is an eighty-year-old woman who was part of the women's

movement in the sixties, which Liz gets to interview. While Lady Catherine de Bourgh in *Pride and Prejudice* voices the upper-class expectations of Austen's time, Kathy de Bourgh in *Eligible* voices contemporary and feminist expectations towards women. In this context, the marriage plot involving Liz Bennet and Fitzwilliam Darcy involves notions of pride which differ from the source text *Pride and Prejudice*. I will argue that a significant cause of these differences lies in Liz's more empowered role portrayed in this 21st-century context.

First Impressions - The Blank family in Amish context, Pennsylvania

The retelling *First Impressions* (Price, 2014) is set in an Amish context in Pennsylvania and portrays farm life and Amish ways of living governed by the religious rules set forth by the *Ordnung*. In this retelling, working hard is a virtue, women and men have clearly defined roles with gendered expectations, and contemporary technology is rarely used. They still write letters, travel by horses and buggies, very few use electricity, and phones are reserved for work purposes. The most important social gatherings centre around Church Sundays, accompanied by eating and singing Ausbund hymns.

The Blank family consists of the parents, *maem* and *daed*, and five daughters whose personalities resemble how we know the Bennet family from *Pride and Prejudice*. As for clothing and appearance, the sisters wear dresses, twist their hair in a bun, and wear a kapp covering their hair. We are told that the Blank family has a property of one hundred acres where they grow corn, hay and tobacco. They run a dairy farm where the barn could hold more than sixty cows, yet the farm is not considered particularly wealthy. When *daed* is introduced, we get a description of his appearance, the main focus being his untrimmed beard. This is where we first hear the mentioning of pride: "Nowadays many of the younger men were trimming their beards, a grave issue among the elders who saw that as a trait of pride" (p. 6). The *elders* have the highest rank within the Amish church community, where rank is related to gender (patriarchy), marriage and age. A scene from the start and seating of a church service illustrates rank in this community: Bishops and ministers enter and are seated first. Then the elderly and married women are seated before the younger women of marriageable age enter. The seating of the men follows the same pattern: elderly, then younger married men, and younger unmarried men. (p. 20)

Marriage in this context has an economic function for men since a wife bears boppli who grow into farm workers. For women, marriage is also a question of moral since their standing in the community rises with having a husband and children. (P. 10)

First Impressions imitates the plotline and characterisation of *Pride and Prejudice*. What differs the most in this retelling, compared to the source text, is the strong emphasis on Christianity, since they go to church, and God's word and church leaders govern their lives.

First meetings: pride and prejudice generated

The names of the heroine and hero in the retellings resemble the original names of the characters, Elizabeth Bennet, and Mr. Fitzwilliam Darcy. There are also similarities in what kind of social settings they meet for the first time, considering the function of this setting to the context of the novel. In the following, the first meetings in the three novels will be analysed, focusing on typification and pride related to the heroine and the hero.

Pride and Prejudice – Miss Elizabeth Bennet, Mr. Fitzwilliam Darcy, two balls

The first chapter in *Pride and Prejudice* focuses on Mr. and Mrs. Bennet and their dialogue related to Mr. Bingley, the new neighbour and potential husband of one of the Bennet daughters. Miss Elizabeth is introduced into the plot and their dialogue in chapter two, where Mr. Bennet reveals that he now has "called on" (p. 6) Mr. Bingley, as his wife wished. This paves the way for the meeting between Miss Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy a "fortnight" (p. 6) later, at a ball in Meryton. The first description of Miss Elizabeth is that she is Mr. Bennet's second daughter, and that she is "employed in trimming a hat" (p. 5). Mr. Darcy is introduced in chapter three, first mentioned as "another young man" who enters the ball simultaneously as Mr. Bingley (p. 8). In this scene, the narrator describes the two gentlemen as referring to the outcomes of typification done by the people at the ball. Mr. Bingley is described as "good looking and gentlemanlike" with a "pleasant countenance, and easy, unaffected manners" (p. 8). While the terms *countenance* and *manners* refer to observable features of Mr. Bingley, describing them as *pleasant* and *easy*, *unaffected* signifies people having positive attitudes towards him. The focus then shifts to Mr. Darcy, and the narrator informs that:

“[...] Mr. Darcy soon drew the attention of the room by his fine, tall person, handsome features, noble mien; and the report which was in general circulation within five minutes after his entrance, of his having ten thousand a year. The gentlemen pronounced him to be a fine figure of a man, the ladies declared he was much handsomer than Mr. Bingley, and he was looked at with great admiration for about half the evening, till his manners gave a disgust which turned the tide of his popularity; for he was discovered to be proud, to be above his company, and above being pleased; and not all his large estate in Derbyshire could then save him from having a most forbidding, disagreeable countenance, and being unworthy to be compared with his friend” (Austen, 2018, p. 8).

This excerpt describes how both men and women, based on observations of Mr. Darcy’s features and appearance, first typified him positively, signified by terms like a *fine, tall person, noble mien, fine figure, much handsomer, great admiration*. We also see that the manners he displayed caused a shift in the typification since his countenance is later labelled as *most forbidding, disagreeable*, and that he was seen as *unworthy* of being compared to his friend. What was it with Mr. Darcy’s manners that “gave a disgust” and made him typified as proud? Mr. Bingley is used as a contrasting device to explain this. He was “acquainted with all the principal people in the room”, “danced every dance” and “talked of giving one himself” (p. 8). In contrast, Mr. Darcy “danced only once” with Mr Bingley’s sisters, “declined being introduced to any other lady”, and kept “walking about the room”, only “speaking occasionally” with the people he knew (p. 8). Based on this, the narrator states: "His character was decided. He was the proudest, most disagreeable man in the world, and every body hoped that he would never come there again" (p. 9).

Miss Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy meet for the first time at this ball, and readers are not told if she shares these opinions of him. The first interaction between them is narrated as a retrospective explanation of Mrs. Bennet’s resentment towards him for having “slighted one of her daughters” (p. 9). This insulting occurs when Elizabeth has been “obliged by the scarcity of gentlemen to sit down for two dances” (p. 9). Mr. Darcy is standing close by, and she overhears a conversation between him and Mr. Bingley, who is trying to get his friend to join the others in dancing. Mr Darcy has only danced with Mr. Bingley’s two sisters and replies that dancing with the others, with whom he is not acquainted, would be “insupportable” and “a punishment” (p. 9). When Mr. Bingley comments that there are many pleasant and pretty women at the ball, Mr. Darcy replies that he dances with the only

handsome girl in the room, referring to Jane. Mr. Bingley argues that Elizabeth is “pretty” and “very agreeable” (p. 9) and suggests that Jane could introduce Mr. Darcy to her. This makes Mr. Darcy turn around and look at Miss Elizabeth. When he catches her eye he withdraws his gaze and replies coldly that “She is tolerable; but not handsome enough to tempt *me*; and I am in no humour at present to give consequence to young ladies who are slighted by other men” (p. 9). We are then told how Mr. Bingley and Mr. Darcy leave and that Miss Elizabeth “remained with no very cordial feelings towards him” (p. 9).

When learning about their first meeting in this way, readers might easily agree with the negative typification of Mr. Darcy. In this sense, the scene functions as it probably was intended: Readers are first served the assembly’s typification of him as “proud”, then told that Mrs. Bennet is “amongst the most violent against him”, based on her “dislike of his general behaviour” (p. 9). The eavesdropping part, where Mr. Darcy’s attitude and behaviour is observable through his dialogue with Mr. Bingley, supports this negative impression of him. Miss Elizabeth’s immediate reactions towards Mr. Darcy’s behaviour are voiced by the narrator, who informs that she, later on, told her friends this story “with great spirit”, since she “delighted in any thing ridiculous” (p. 9). However, her more true sentiments seem to be revealed in a scene from the morning after the ball, when the Lucases visit the Bennets to talk about the previous evening. Her friend Charlotte pities Elizabeth for being called “only just *tolerable*” (p. 14), and Mrs. Bennet claims that Mr. Darcy is “ate up with pride” (p. 15). Charlotte argues that Mr. Darcy has “a *right* to be proud”, based on his family and fortune (p. 15), towards which Elizabeth replies that “[...] I could easily forgive *his* pride if he had not mortified mine” (p. 15).

What kind of pride is Elizabeth referring to that is mortified by Mr. Darcy? Was it that he did not dance with her despite the scarcity of men? Was it his defining her as only “tolerable”, and not handsome enough for him to be tempted by her? Was it what he signalled by his body language while saying so? I will argue that the answer lies in all the above and that the antecedents to her pride are how she sees herself as a person and a woman, in contrast to how she feels treated by Mr. Darcy. This points to her pride being hubristic since it is based on personal traits, not accomplishments. I will argue that it can be labelled *woman pride* since it is based on her role as a woman and her identity as such. I find her recounting the episode to her friends as “ridiculous” to support this argument. It takes a small amount of self-esteem to rise above unpleasant experiences, which this scene is described as, and to see it as “ridiculous” would be one way to rise above it. Alternative reactions could have been to

run away, cry, complain about it to others, or to keep the story to herself, but Elizabeth did none of the above.

While Elizabeth acknowledges having pride, the Mr. Darcy is typified and labelled as such. This typification results from Mr. Darcy breaching the societal norms towards a gentleman of his standing through his attitudes, behaviour, and utterances. Mr. Bingley is presented as a gentleman who adheres to these norms, while Mr. Darcy is presented as a gentleman who looks at himself as superior to the others. This positive typification of Mr. Bingley, compared to the negative typification of Mr. Darcy, can be interpreted as Mr. Darcy having violated norms for conduct and manners through his behaviour at the ball. In contrast, Mr. Bingley's behaviour conformed to the same norms. Being handsome and rich was not enough to gain status in the context portrayed in this novel. A gentleman should also dance, converse with the ladies, and show interest in getting to know the community's people. By doing so, he would have behaved "in a gentlemanlike manner", a characteristic used later in the novel. The narration of this scene points to his background being the cause of his perceived superiority and that the other attendees dislike such attitudes and manners. Mr. Darcy can, therefore, be accused of having hubristic pride.

This first meeting between Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy focuses on how he is perceived as proud and displaying pride. We also learn that her pride has been mortified due to his actions. The overall impression is that Mr. Darcy does not like Elizabeth, as an effect of his pride and prejudicial attitudes towards her, and that Elizabeth does not like him based on her pride having been mortified. In addition to this, her opinions of him seem to have been affected by the opinions of other characters, making for prejudicial attitudes towards him.

Readers are told of developments in their relationship a few days later. While Charlotte and Elizabeth discuss the attraction between Jane and Mr. Bingley and questions related to courtship and marriage, the narrator discloses the growing attraction of Mr. Darcy towards Elizabeth. We learn that he had looked at her "without admiration" at the ball, and "only to criticise" the next time they met, but that he now rendered her face "uncommonly intelligent by the beautiful expression of her dark eyes". As for her manners, we learn that "in spite of his asserting that her manners were not those of the fashionable world, he was caught by their easy playfulness" (p. 18). The narrator also informs that Elizabeth is unaware of Mr. Darcy's altered attitudes towards her: "[...] to her he was only the man who made himself agreeable no where, and who had not thought her handsome enough to dance with" (p. 18). When they next meet, at Sir William Lucas's, Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy engage in dialogue, where she playfully challenges him. Later, Sir William Lucas urges Mr. Darcy to ask her to a

dance, but Elizabeth declines (p. 20). At the end of the scene, Mr. Darcy admits his attraction towards Elizabeth and these “pair of fine eyes in the face of a pretty woman” (p. 21) to Caroline Bingley.

The argumentation and findings from the “first meetings”-part of the plotline can be summarised into the following points: Mr. Darcy is typified as proud by people at the ball, Mrs. Bennet and Miss Elizabeth, based on his manners which seem to break their norms and expectations towards a gentleman. Miss Elizabeth acknowledges having pride, generated by Mr. Darcy’s utterances about her. I have argued that this can be labelled *woman pride*. Mr. Darcy’s feelings and behaviour towards Elizabeth have developed positively since their first meeting at the Meryton ball. Miss Elizabeth seems to speak and act towards Mr. Darcy as if she still finds him proud, based on his manners, and as if his opinions of her are unaltered from their first meeting at the ball.

Eligible - Lizzy Bennet, Fitzwilliam Darcy, barbecue, and game night

The retelling *Eligible* starts by focusing on Chip Bingley, followed by a dialogue between Mrs. and Mr. Bennet about his potential role as a husband for one of their daughters. Lizzy, called Liz, is introduced in chapter two, where she and her sisters join a continuation of this discussion. Through the following pages, we learn that Lizzy is close to 40 years old and a writer for the monthly women’s magazine *Mascara*. We also learn that Liz wants to avoid motherhood and that she has a sexual relationship with the married man Jasper Wick, who has been her friend and crush for more than 16 years.

The first meeting between Liz and Fitzwilliam Darcy occurs at a 4th of July barbecue arranged by the Lucas family. The Bennets are invited due to Mrs Bennet’s wish to create a meeting point between Chip Bingley and her daughters. Like in *Pride and Prejudice*, the two men are first introduced through observations of them at the party. Charlotte Lucas informs Liz and Jane that the "tall, dark, and handsome one" (p. 33) is Fitzwilliam Darcy, who is a friend of Chip Bingley, a neurosurgeon, and single but "kind of standoffish" (p. 33). Liz finds an empty chair next to Darcy at this party and asks him if it is taken. He tells her that it is, in a way that makes Liz tempted to apologise for having imagined herself to be "worthy of sharing" his table: "So he had gone to Harvard Medical School; so he was a neurosurgeon - neither fact gave him carte blanche to be rude" (p. 37). When she later sees that the chair beside him is still empty, Liz is "even more insulted by Darcy’s snub than she’d been at first"

(p. 37). Shortly after, while Liz is texting with Jasper Wick, the eavesdropping-scene is also imitated in this retelling. Here, Chip tells Darcy that moving to Cincinnati has been "much better" than he expected, to which Darcy replies that Chip had been talking to the "only goodlooking woman at the party" for the last hour (p. 38). Darcy adds that he finds Cincinnatians "painfully provincial", and the narrator informs that Liz smiles and finds it "oddly satisfying to receive confirmation of Darcy's snobbishness" (p. 38). Chip then comments that "Liz is single, too". Darcy replies that it would be "uncharacteristic to say I'm not surprised". The narrator informs that "Liz's jaw dropped" in response, and that that she wondered: "Who did this man think he was, and what did he have against her personally?" since they "hadn't exchanged more than ten words" when being introduced (p. 38). Darcy then tells how he finds that the people of Cincinnati "grade their women on a curve", exaggerating their virtues, exemplified by what he believes people mean when they call women "sophisticated" or "beautiful". He also finds people to be "obsessed with matchmaking", based on numerous attempts by "colleague's wives" to set him up (p. 38). The narrator informs that Liz sees Darcy's utterances as "aspersions", and his words as "offensive" (p. 39). After overhearing this conversation, Liz reveals herself by opening the screen door. She then smiles, makes eye contact with Darcy, and tells him "I was just inside thinking what grade I'd give myself [...] I realised it would be an A-plus, but I've heard we grade on a curve here, so I'm probably what - more like a B for the coasts? Or a B-minus?". Then she walks past them and leaves, "eager to repeat Darcy's comments as widely and quickly as she could" (p. 39).

The terms pride or proud are not used in this text. Yet, the terms and descriptions used point to similar typification being made as in *Pride and Prejudice*. Charlotte Lucas describes Darcy as *kind of standoffish* when he is introduced. When he denies Liz the empty chair, she finds him *rude* and sees this as *snub*. These terms signify that they perceive him as a man who keeps people at a distance and treats people disrespectfully. Liz's pondering on whether she was *worthy of sharing* his table points to her feeling inferior compared to him. She attributes this to his background: he has attended *Harvard Medical School* and is a *neurosurgeon*, representing prestigious and high-status education and occupation. When Liz is eavesdropping, she believes to receive confirmation of his *snobbishness*, and later Darcy's utterances are described as *aspersions*, and his words *offensive*. These descriptions of Liz's first impressions of Darcy point to her typifying him as a man who considers himself superior to herself and others whose behaviour breaks her expectations regarding manners. Readers also get the impression that she reacts emotionally to this, and even if this is not stated, her

reactions could be interpreted as Darcy having hurt her pride. The grading of herself as *B-minus*, as if this was Darcy's grading of her, although she would grade herself an *A-plus*, also indicates that she believes he thinks less of her than what she thinks of herself. I would argue that this indicates Liz displaying a hubristic kind of pride related to both her background and being a woman.

Since this part mostly focalises on Liz, we only get a little information about what Darcy thinks of her. When they meet for the second time, there is more focalising on him, too, and we see how her typification of him affects how she interacts with him. This meeting occurs in Charlotte Lucas's downtown apartment, gathering eleven people to a gaming night of Charades. The narrator informs that when Darcy enters the apartment, "[...] the sight of Darcy rattled Liz more than she wishes to admit" and that Darcy's comment on the barbecue "had echoed unpleasantly in Liz's head during the last week" (p. 71). Readers learn that Liz ponders whether his comment about her "ostensibly single status" had been an "attempt at wit" or if he had "taken note of some off-putting feature of her" (p. 71). Liz's views of Darcy's perceived superiority and condescending attitudes towards herself and her sisters seem to affect how she views this evening of Charades: When Darcy later comments on the team divisions, Liz finds him to speak in "an obnoxious tone" (p. 75), and she does not look forward to playing Charades before the "judgmental gaze of outsiders" (p. 77). The narrator informs that "[...] the game resembled an audition in which Darcy and Caroline's negative impressions of Cincinnati would either be confirmed or contradicted" (p. 77). How the Bennet sisters are viewed is also a topic when Liz ponders the "indecent" of her youngest sisters Lydia and Kitty, who "never passed up an opportunity to talk about sex, shit, or combination thereof". Still, the narrator informs that Liz thinks that "if her family horrified Darcy and Caroline, so be it" and that Liz's major concerns is for Jane and if the evening should "compromise Chip's impression of her" (p. 80).

During this charade evening, we find a scene where Darcy questions Liz's impressions of him: Liz accidentally drinks Darcy's glass of wine, and when he points that out she asks if he is worried about her "B-minus Cincinnati germs" (p. 81), referring to the conversation at the barbecue. Darcy points out that "[...] it was you yourself, not I, who assigned you a grade of B-minus", to which Liz replies that she was "looking at the world from your perspective" (p. 81) The narrator informs that "Everything about him - every inflection of his voice, every expression he made - oozed superciliousness" (p. 81) Liz points to her own view of his opinions when she asks "So where are you from that's so superior to here?" to which Darcy replies that "Though again, you're putting words in my mouth - I

never said superior" (p. 81). They talk about her life in New York and her father's surgery before Caroline Bingley enters, and the scene ends with Liz indicating that a comment from Darcy showed "a sense of humor" (p. 83).

At this point of the Cincinnati retelling of *Pride and Prejudice*, readers are mostly informed about Lizzy Bennet's opinions and typification of Fitzwilliam Darcy. The narration of him having *rattled* Liz and that his comment had *echoed unpleasantly* indicate that Darcy evokes negative emotions in Liz. Based on his utterances and attitudes, Liz finds him to ooze of superciliousness. She believes him to feel superior to herself and others, which she attributes to his educational, occupational, and geographical background. While a larger group of people conducts the typification of Mr. Darcy in *Pride and Prejudice*, we only hear Charlotte and Liz typifying him in this retelling. The narration of how Liz is challenging Darcy can be interpreted, as indicated above, that his attitude generates pride within her. We know little of Darcy's opinions about Liz at this point. However, his contradictions of her claims and utterances directed at him indicate that he finds her to have a wrong impression of him and that her typification of him is incorrect. This can be interpreted as him indicating prejudicial attitudes from Liz directed towards himself. The narration of the game night does not point expressly to him neither displaying pride nor being particularly proud towards Liz. Instead, his attempt at making a joke at the end contributes to giving a more sympathetic impression of him. Let us look at how the first meetings between the heroine and hero in *First Impressions* are retold.

First Impressions - Lizzie, Frederick Detweiler, and church Sunday

In *First Impressions* we are introduced to Lizzie from the first page of the novel, as "a young woman" (p. 1) whose name we get to know when her mother calls at her at page three. Lizzie is described as an Amish woman through her clothing, love of reading Amish and Christian literature, listening to Amish music, and conformity to the Amish church. While her sisters help their *maem* with house and garden chores, Lizzie works on the dairy farm alongside their *daed*, since he has no son. As for marriage, she would remain alone rather than marry without love.

Lizzie and Frederick Detweiler meet for the first time on a late-June church Sunday. This social event functions similarly within Amish society as a ball in *Pride and Prejudice*. The five Blank sisters are walking to a church Sunday at a nearby farm when Charles

Beachey and "another unknown man" (p. 18) pass by in their open-top buggies. We are told how Charles Beachey stops, greets them and asks for road directions while the "unknown man" meets Lizzie's eyes as he passes them, yet he is "not even acknowledging their presence with the customary nod or wave of the hand" (p. 19). Based on this, Catherine declares him "an unlikable man" (p. 19). When the congregation has gathered at the church service and has started singing the Ausbund hymn, "two men and a woman" (p. 21) enter and sit down at the back of the room along with the other unmarried men and women. After observing "the man sitting next to Charles Beachey" (p. 22), the narrator informs that Lizzie finds him handsome, but his manners to be "haughty and proud" (p. 23). This labelling is narrated as generated by Lizzie's observation of Frederick Detweiler's body language: "She knew that from just looking at the way he carried himself: shoulders straight back, chin tilted ever so slightly in a condescending expression, and narrow eyes that seemed to be assessing the room without seeing anything" (p. 23).

This scene shows that Lizzie initially typifies Frederick Detweiler based on his manners, labelled *haughty* and *proud*, and his body language. The description focusing on the positioning of shoulders (straight back), chin (slightly tilted) and eyes (narrow) resemble the pride expressions described in the research of Jessica Tracy et al. presented in the theory chapter. The scene is from the evening singing on the same church Sunday. When Charles Beachey and the man Lizzie refers to as "his broody cousin" (p. 27) arrives, Charlotte informs that his name is Frederick Detweiler, that he is a friend of Charles Beachey, and that he "comes from quite a line of farmers" (p. 28). She adds that he, due to inheritance, now owns "one of the largest farms in Holmes County" and that he employs many young men "on a full-time schedule" (p. 28). Lizzie sees this as proof of her evaluation of him; "Why, I thought he looked very proud, but to learn that he's too proud to even work his own land?" (p. 28). Jane suggests that Lizzie should not "jump to conclusions", and that "maybe he is quite the hard worker and a godly man at that" (p. 28).

The typification of Frederick as *too proud to even work his own land* displays that Lizzie expects a man to work hard. Since we are informed that she is a woman who conforms to the Amish ways of living, we can infer that this expectation represents the Amish society's norm that values hard work. Lizzie's typification of Frederick Detweiler as proud based on his body language may be incorrect since she doesn't know if he felt proud when she observed him. Nor does she know yet if he might be a hard worker besides employing workers. Therefore, Lizzie can be said to display prejudice towards him, which is implied by Jane's remark that she should not "jump to conclusions". Jane also reminds her they "haven't

yet engaged in any exchange" (p. 28) with him. Later, Lizzie and Frederick communicate briefly. His "formal and unfamiliar" words, and remark about joining singings "as infrequently as possible", makes Lizzie wonder; "What woman would want to join with such a proud and unlikable man?" (p. 32). As a contrast to this, Lizzie finds Charles Beachey to be "handsome, charming, hardworking, and lively", and she thanks God for what she finds to be "a fortuitous match for Sister Jane" (p. 33), the narrator informs.

Lizzie's dislike towards Frederick Detweiler is further strengthened when the eavesdropping-scene from *Pride and Prejudice* is imitated in this retelling. Charles and Frederick are standing and talking in the doorway when Lizzie approaches, and she overhears how both men praise Jane's beauty. Charles suggests that Lizzie "has quite a sparkle in her eye and a quickness of tongue that might just suit your temperament right gut!", to which Frederick replies that: "It would take more than a sparkle in her eye or quickness of her tongue for me to ask her to ride home in my buggy". He then adds that "she is tolerable, at best" (p. 34). When Lizzie hears this, she feels "a soft rage rising inside of her" (p. 34), and thinks that "He has hurt my pride, and that shall not be permitted!" (p. 35). Being an Amish woman, she sees her own rage as the "devil's insidious attempt at overtaking her" (p. 34), so she breathes deeply, lifts her chin and walks into the barn.

So far in this Amish retelling of *Pride and Prejudice*, readers are mostly informed about Lizzie's opinions of Frederick Detweiler: She finds him proud, based on appearance and body language, which she finds to display perceived superiority, and because he seems not to be the hard-working man the Amish society values. We know little of Frederick Detweiler's opinions about Lizzie Blank, since there has been little interaction between them after the singing at church Sunday.

The Netherfield stay: interaction and altered opinions

This part refers to the plot part where Miss Jane and Miss Elizabeth spend some days at Netherfield due to Jane's visit and sudden illness. This brings the two sisters into the domestic sphere of Mr. Darcy and Mr. Bingley and away from the watchful gaze of their family. Through interactions and conversations, Miss Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy get to know each other better. In the following chapter, I argue that the Netherfield stay in *Pride and Prejudice* contains:

- Typification of Elizabeth as proud, based on manners, appearance, and background
- Definition of expectations towards a woman
- Description of Elizabeth's feelings for Darcy and what she believes he thinks of her
- Description of Darcy's feelings for Elizabeth and how he rationalises these

After analysing *Pride and Prejudice*, the focus is on how this part of the plot is retold.

Pride and Prejudice

The chapter "first meetings" left off after the gathering at the Lucases. Jane is invited to visit Caroline Bingley at Netherfield a few days later. When she arrives, soaked from a downpour, she gets ill and is put to bed. Elizabeth goes there to keep her company, and the four days she and Mr. Darcy spend in the same house develops their relationship. After Elizabeth's arrival at Netherfield, the focalisation is on how she believes she is viewed by the Bingleys and how they view her. She walks there and arrives "with weary ankles, dirty stockings, and a face glowing with the warmth of exercise" (p. 25), and Elizabeth is convinced that the Bingleys hold her "in contempt for it" when she arrives after having walked "in such weather, and by herself" (p. 25). They receive her "very politely" (p. 25), but when Elizabeth has returned to Jane's room after dinner, their opinions of her are uncovered. The narrator informs that Miss Bingley "[...] began abusing her as soon as she was out of the room. Her manners were pronounced to be very bad indeed, a mixture of pride and impertinence; she had no conversation, no style, no taste, no beauty" (p. 26). We learn that Mr. Bingley's other sister, Mrs. Hurst, agrees with her, while he defends Elizabeth, saying that he thought she "looked remarkably well" when she arrived, and that "It shews an affection for her sister that is very pleasing" (p. 27). Miss Bingley turns to Mr Darcy for support in her opinions of Elizabeth and suggests that "the adventure" must have affected his "admiration of her fine eyes" to which he objects, stating that he thought "the exercise brightened them" (p. 27). The two sisters then belittle the parents and "low connections" of Jane and Elizabeth,

arguing that they have no chance of getting “well settled”, even if they have uncles with respectable occupations. Mr. Darcy agrees to this, stating that “it must very materially lessen their chance of marrying men of any consideration in the world” (p. 27). In this passage, the Bingley sisters typify Elizabeth negatively based on her appearance and manners, labelled *a mixture of pride and impertinence*. They do not seem to succeed in making Mr. Bingley and Mr. Darcy share their opinions and typification of her, except their views of the sisters’ low value on the marriage market due to their family background.

Societal expectations towards women is commented upon in the next scene, where Elizabeth joins Mr. Darcy and the Bingleys in the drawing room. They play cards, and she observes while reading. Miss Bingley attempts to get Mr. Darcy’s attention by praising his estate Pemberley, his library, and his sister: “Such a countenance, such manners! and so extremely accomplished for her age!” (p. 29). This leads to a discussion of what it means to be “an accomplished woman”, which is defined as having “a thorough knowledge of music, singing, drawing, dancing, and the modern languages [...] and besides all this, she must possess a certain something in her air and manner of walking, the tone of her voice, her address and expressions [...]”. Mr. Darcy adds that she must “yet add something more substantial, in the improvement of her mind by extensive reading” (p. 30). This list of expectations leads to a discussion between him and Elizabeth, who seems to find them unreasonable: “I never saw such a woman, I never saw such capacity and taste, and application, and elegance, as you describe, united” (p. 30). The narrator informs that Bingley’s sisters react to this by crying out “against the injustice of her implied doubt and were both protesting that they knew many women who answered this description” (p. 30). We learn that Elizabeth leaves the room soon afterwards, and that Miss Bingley sees Elizabeth’s reaction as a way to “recommend themselves to the other sex, by undervaluing their own” (p. 30). This dialogue discussing the Bingley and Darcy families’ notions of being “an accomplished woman” seems to evoke pride and prejudice in all women involved. That Mrs Hurst and Miss Bingley see Elizabeth’s utterances as displaying *injustice* and *doubt* can be seen as them finding her prejudicial towards them. At the same time, Elizabeth has probably hurt their pride, leading to the negative comment from Miss Bingley where she tries to devalue Elizabeth in the mind of Mr. Darcy by stating that she tried to *recommend herself to the other sex*. Elizabeth’s reaction of courageously speaking her mind, can be seen as pride-related since she does not fulfil the specified expectations, and neither do the other women she knows. Her reaction can also be seen as prejudicial towards these expectations

since she reacts based on her knowledge of women without acknowledging that women from other contexts may differ.

The next part focuses on Elizabeth's family background when Mrs. Bennet, Kitty and Lydia come to see Jane the following day. Mrs. Bennet states that Jane is "a great deal too ill to be moved" (p. 31), and she boasts about Jane by comparing her "beauty" to the "not handsome" Lucas girls (p. 33). During her brief stay, Mrs. Bennet gets offended by Mr. Darcy by his comments about a country neighbourhood being a "very confined and unvarying society" (p. 31). Mrs. Bennet then turns to Mr. Bingley for support in her statement that the country is "a vast deal pleasanter" than London (p. 32) and embarrasses Elizabeth by the way she shows discontent for "that gentleman" (p. 33), referring to Mr. Darcy. When they leave, the Bingley sisters criticise "her relations' behaviour", and the narrator informs how Mr. Darcy "could not be prevailed on to join in their censure of her" (p. 35). Once more he declines supporting the negative typification of Elizabeth.

The last part of the Netherfield stay focalises on Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy's attitudes and feelings, starting with them engaging in a discussion with the others on topics like letter writing, showing off versus modesty, and about taking advice from friends. What follows is a scene where Mrs. Hurst and her sister sing and play, where the narrator informs that Elizabeth observes "how frequently Mr. Darcy's eyes were fixed on her". She wonders if she really "could be an object of admiration to so great a man" but decides to think that "she drew his notice because there was a something about her more wrong and reprehensible, according to his ideas of right than in any other person present". The narrator concludes this referral of her thought by stating that this "did not pain her" since she "liked him too little to care for his approbation" (p. 38-39). Soon after, Mr. Darcy asks her to dance a reel, which she rejects by replying that "[...] You wanted me, I know, to say "Yes", that you might have the pleasure of despising my taste; but I always delight in overthrowing that kind of schemes and cheating a person of their premeditated contempt. [...]" (p. 39) The narrator lets us know that Mr Darcy "[...] had never been so bewitched by any woman as he was by her" and that "were it not for the inferiority of her connections, he should be in some danger" (p. 39) The narrator reveals that Miss Bingley is "jealous" and that she has a "desire of getting rid of Elizabeth" (p. 39).

A bit later, Mr. Darcy is reading a book when Miss Bingley asks Elizabeth to "take a turn about the room" (p. 42). The two women discuss Mr. Darcy's personal traits, whether he can be laughed at, and the act of ridiculing. Mr. Darcy states that he always has avoided "those weaknesses which often expose a strong understanding to ridicule" (p. 43). Elizabeth defines these to be "vanity and pride", and Mr. Darcy agrees that vanity is a weakness, but

that “[...] where there is a real superiority of mind, pride will be always under good regulation” (p. 43). Elizabeth concludes to Miss Bingley that Mr. Darcy “has no defect” (p. 43), towards which he objects, stating that a fault of his is that “My good opinion once lost is lost for ever” (p. 44). Mr. Darcy continues his argument by stating that there are evil and natural defects within all people. Elizabeth replies that his defect is “a propensity to hate every body” (p. 44), to which he replies with a smile that hers is “wilfully to misunderstand them” (p. 44). This is the first time the hero and heroine are this open about their impressions of each other. A few days later the Bennet sisters leave Netherfield.

The findings from the “Netherfield”-part can be summarised as follows: Elizabeth is typified negatively by the Bingley sisters, based on her behaviour, manners, and family background. The class-related expectations she is evaluated and typified towards are revealed in their discussion of what it means to be “an accomplished woman” (p. 29). Elizabeth’s reactions towards these expectations, the reactions her behaviour evokes during her stay, and the way Mrs. Bennet is “exposing herself” (p. 34) during her brief visit, indicate that Elizabeth is part of a different class than the women who typify her. We find examples of Elizabeth expecting to be typified negatively by Mr. Darcy and the Bingleys, like her being *convinced they held her in contempt for it* when she arrived (p. 25), and the way she rationalises Mr Darcy’s observing her: She believes Mr Darcy still sees *something wrong and reprehensible* in her (p. 39). This points to her awareness of the differences between her and them. I will argue that the way Elizabeth declines Mr. Darcy’s offer to dance and verbally challenges him, despite believing him to dislike her, is a sign of her self-confidence and pride with herself, or rather: her woman pride.

In this part, Mr. Darcy is not portrayed as particularly proud nor prejudicial, and we are told that he declined supporting the negative typification of the Bingley sisters. Readers also know that Mr. Darcy has solid affection for her, but since “she attracted him more than he liked” (p. 45), based on how he viewed her family background, he showed no signs of admiration for her at her last day there and was glad when they left. As for Elizabeth’s feelings towards Mr Darcy, readers are told that she *liked him too little to care* (p. 39) if he disliked her. Now, let us look at how the Netherfield stay is retold in contemporary contexts.

Eligible

The Netherfield stay is not directly paralleled in *Eligible*, since there is no location called Netherfield where Liz and Darcy spend time together shortly after they have met. Instead, their relationship develops through a series of meetings, some of which are based on their shared interests in jogging and having sex. Since the number of days Miss Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy spend at Netherfield in *Pride and Prejudice* is comparable to the number of times Liz and Darcy jog or have sex in *Eligible*, it is tempting to indicate that Sittenfeld has intended to make a pun on the word Netherfield. Having sex usually involves the lower regions of the bodies. The connection to Netherfield would thus be a combination of “nether”, meaning lower-lying, and “field”, meaning area, which combined translates to “lower-lying areas”. The Netherfield stay in *Pride and Prejudice* shows a development in the relationship between the hero and the heroine before we are presented with the complicating actions of the plot. Since the outcome of the jogging-and-having-sex scenes of Liz and Darcy is that their relationship develops, these scenes are analysed here.

On the same night as Jasper arrives in Cincinnati, where he and Liz meet Darcy in the Skyline restaurant, Liz and Darcy meet for the first time while jogging. When Liz contemplates something she said to Darcy, the narrator informs that “[...] the animosity between them was also strangely liberating; offending each other had never posed a hypothetical threat but, rather, was the basis of their relationship” (p. 205). Liz tells Darcy how Willie had tried to kiss her, and that he and Charlotte are a couple. She also brings Darcy’s perception of her own family into the conversation by asking “[...] you know how you think my family is a trashy mess? You haven’t heard the least of it” (p. 206). Then she reveals the economic trouble of her family, stating that “Chip really dodged a bullet, huh?” (p. 206). Darcy asks if Liz finds Jasper Wick’s “undergraduate transgressions” to be a “vivid tale” (p. 207). Liz does not want to admit that Jasper still has not told why he was expelled. When Liz and Darcy part, the narrator informs that Liz contemplates how she felt “a peculiar awareness of the fact that she had just confided in Darcy [...] and he has listened, mostly with respect” (p. 207).

The next time Liz and Darcy jog is the evening after Liz ends her relationship with Jasper. They talk about Jane and Chip, who Darcy points out are at “very different points in their lives” (p. 234). Liz asks Darcy about Caroline, learns that he is single, and suggests that any woman of his cannot be from Cincinnati since “we all know about the subpar quality of Cincinnati women” (p. 236). Darcy calls Liz a “brazen eavesdropper” (p. 236). Liz reveals

her opinions of Darcy when declaring him to be “eligible” and that “[...] I personally would never go out with you, but you’re tall, you went to fancy schools, and you’re a doctor. To the general public, which has no idea what a condescending elitist you are, you are a catch” (p. 237). Darcy asks if she is single. She admits that she is and argues that “[...] everyone knows it’s completely different for a woman. You could stand on a street corner, announce you want a wife, and be engaged fifteen minutes later. I have to convince people to overlook my rapidly approaching expiration date” (p. 237). Then Liz challenges Darcy to race up a nearby hill, and at the top “there was between them such a profusion of vitality that it was hard to know what to do with it” (p. 238). The narrator indicates that both are thinking the same when Liz asks Darcy, “Want to go to your place and have hate sex?” (p. 238), and so they do. Afterwards, the narrator informs that for Liz “the experience was highly satisfying” and that it seemed to be so “for him as well” (p. 241). The next time they run and have sex, Darcy tells Liz that his sister Georgie is a fan of Liz. He says that Georgie is a Stanford PhD student in history, that their parents are dead, and that she does not want to give up their parents’ house. When Darcy tells Liz that their Atherton house is on twelve acres, she realises that Darcy comes from an affluent family: “[...] both his education and bearing had provided clues - but it hadn’t occurred to her that his affluence was so extreme [...] Personality aside, he really was almost freakishly eligible” (p. 249-250). Liz then tells Darcy that her parents have an offer on their house, before asking Darcy if she should come back to his apartment? Darcy laughs and says she “certainly should” (p. 250).

When Liz and Darcy next meet by “semi-coincidence” (p. 261), Darcy tells her that the first time they met, “when I told you the chair next to me was taken” (p. 261), this was requested by Dr. Lucas. Liz indicates that Darcy had been “acting like an asshole” when he was “trashing me, my family, and Cincinnati” (p. 261). He accepts her complaint with a “touché” (p. 262). Darcy asks if she wants children, and they discover that neither do. He explains, “I believe the skill set I have means I can contribute the most to society as a scientist and doctor. Any man with a viable sperm count can become a dad, whereas only some people can perform a decompressive craniectomy” (p. 263). Liz finds him “principled and thoughtful” and she “felt a vague embarrassment that she worked for a magazine that recommended anti-aging creams to women in their twenties and he helped people who’d experienced brain trauma” (p. 263). Then they have sex.

A week later, Liz is at Mary and Kitty’s “two-bedroom apartment” a few blocks from Darcy (p. 269). She walks over to Darcy, and ten minutes after entering his apartment the “true reason for her visit” is “successfully completed” (p. 273). Liz tells Darcy that she is

returning to New York the next day. Darcy asks if the “so-called hate sex” is the norm for her, and if Jasper Wick is the one she just broke up with (p. 273). Liz suggests he try online dating, and they talk of tattoos. When Liz dresses the narrator informs that there is an “unexpected welling of emotion” (p. 274), and that Darcy may have said “My darling” during the sex a few minutes earlier (p. 274). Darcy says she is “way too good for Jasper”, and Liz replies that she “wouldn’t be so sure of that”, trying to “sound light-hearted” (p. 275).

While the Netherfield Stay in *Pride and Prejudice* involve other characters than the heroine and hero, the plot part presented here involves only interaction between these two. Liz typifies and labels Darcy based on attitudes she believes him to have towards other people. She believes he sees her family as *a trashy mess* and that he finds Cincinnati women to be of *subpar quality*. At one point during their meetings, Liz declares that Darcy is *a catch* to people in general, based on his height, education, and occupation, but that she sees him as *a condescending elitist*. Later, Liz uses the word *trashing*, signifying to criticise or insult, to Darcy about what he did to her, her family, and Cincinnati. She defines this as acting *like an asshole*. What Liz does here is accusing Darcy of having hubristic pride. When Darcy calls Liz *a brazen eavesdropper*, he indicates her having a shameless attitude towards listening to other people’s conversations. Besides this, Darcy does not argue against nor typify or label Liz’s opinions and accusations towards him. When he declares Liz to be *way too good for Jasper*, he typifies her positively and as having good personal qualities. As for their feelings towards each other, Liz has declared that *I personally would never go out with you*, while readers are informed that he possibly called Liz his *darling* during sex. This would indicate loving feelings towards her.

First Impressions

In *Pride and Prejudice*, the stay at Netherfield is initiated by Miss Caroline, Mr. Bingley’s sister, when she invites Miss Jane to Netherfield. Heavy rain and sudden illness make Miss Jane stay at Netherfield, and what brings Miss Elizabeth there. She and Mr. Darcy get to know each other better while at Netherfield park. Through this plot part, we see how Miss Elizabeth is typified negatively by the Bingley sisters based on her behaviour and background. We are also told what expectations the upper-class characters have towards a woman, specified by Mr. Darcy’s notions of what it takes to be an “accomplished woman”. In

First Impressions, this plot part is retold in a stay at the Beachey farm, which is the neighbouring farm to the Blank family.

The day after Lizzie and Frederick first met, Jane receives an invitation from Carol Ann Beachey, Charles's sister, to visit her at the Beachey farm. Two scenes adding to the negative opinion of Frederick and Carol Ann is included in the part where Jane is about to go there. First, we hear how Lizzie and her *daed* work in the pasture when Frederick and Carol Ann drive by in a buggy on their way to pick up Jane. When *daed* waves at Frederick without receiving any wave in return, Lizzie is "more convinced than ever that she didn't care the least for that Frederick Detweiler [...]" (p. 43). Later, when Lizzie returns home, her *maem* declares Frederick to be "the rudest man I have ever met" for not stepping "past the threshold" (p. 43) and coming inside the house when they came to get Jane. *Maem* ascribes this to them seeing the Blank house as "inferior to what they are used to" (p. 43), since they are from Holmes County. When a storm surprises them later that day, making Jane stay at the Beachey farm, *maem* worries for Jane's reputation. This causes Lizzie to walk there, accompanied by her *daed* (p. 52), and upon her arrival, Frederick offers her a helping hand to cross a puddle. The last time he and Lizzie met, her opinion of him was related to her seeing him as "too proud to even work his own land" (p. 28). This time, how his clothing is described indicates that he has been working outside to remove debris after the storm. The narration hints at some curiosity, possibly interest, between them. We can read that Lizzy is "speechless in his presence" and that when she leaves him to find Jane, she is "unaware that she was still being watched" (p. 55).

A scene inside the Beachey farmhouse later points to George, cousin of Frederick, having a similar function in this retelling as Mr. Wickham in *Pride and Prejudice*. We hear how Frederick "stiffen and turn his face away" when George introduces himself to Lizzie, and that she is "curious as to the cause of Frederick's obvious dislike" for him (p. 58). While Jane and Carol Ann are portrayed as women doing what is expected of them, Lizzie is portrayed as a woman who also enjoys being a part of the men's world, causing reactions from others. One example is how Carol Ann spins around, with "a shocked look on her face" when Lizzie announces that she will go outside to help the men work (p. 59). Another example is found when she is outside, working side by side with the men to clear the road. We are then told how Frederick "Seemed to view the presence of a lone female in their midst with surprise and disapproval, frowning whenever she came his way" (p. 60). While her behaviour causes adverse reactions from Carol Ann and Frederick, Lizzie finds Frederick's

willingness to work hard “out of character for a man who seemed to disdain everything and everyone in Lancaster, Pennsylvania” (p. 60).

In *Pride and Prejudice*, Mr. Bingley functions as a contrast to Mr. Darcy regarding manners and what they expect of a man of their standing. In *First Impressions*, Charles similarly contrasts Frederick. While Frederick is described through reference to his “disdain”, Charles is described as a “kind and charming man full of God’s grace and love”, and a “good-hearted and godly man” (p. 62). Lizzie’s opinion of him is further emphasised in a scene from later that evening. Frederick is writing a letter to his sister, Grace, when Carol Ann is “vying for Frederick’s attention”, which he is “naught ready to give to her”. Lizzie thinks Frederick is “too proud of himself and his status to catch or even desire a wife” (p. 64). In this scene, Carol Ann expresses similar opinions of him, stating that Frederick’s manners are “horrid”, and saying that “No wonder he is *leddich*” (p. 64). Here, we see how both Lizzie and Carol Ann point to pride and manners being the causes to why he is single. This leads to the question of what Frederick looks for in a woman, which he defines as “a love of God and His gifts”, “a love of community and family” and “humility with intelligence” (p. 65). These are traits related to values and attitudes rather than accomplishments related to competencies, which are seen as the desired traits of a woman in *Pride and Prejudice*. While Miss Elizabeth argues to Mr. Darcy that she believes very few women can live up to these expectations, Lizzy in *First Impressions* argues that “only God is perfect”. The narrator lets readers know that Lizzie thinks “perfection could only be found in God”, and that to desire such perfection “went against everything in the *Ordnung*” (p. 65). By basing her argumentation on their Amish faith and the superiority of God, Lizzy demonstrates having some of the qualities Frederick just stated as desired in a woman. We then can read how Frederick’s expressions changes “from disinterest to something else” making her feel “nervous under the intensity of his stare” (p. 66). Even if Frederick’s opinions of Lizzy seem to be altering, Lizzy’s opinions of him seem to remain, since we can read how she finds him to have “haughty manner” (p. 70) later. In a scene where Lizzie and Frederick discuss farming and their Amish attitudes towards work and relaxation, we can also read how Lizzie believes to have demonstrated “verbal superiority by matching wits with Frederick Detweiler and, she hoped, letting him see that first impressions are, often times, quite erroneous” (p. 75).

When Jane and Lizzie are about to return home, their *maem* and three sisters come to get them in their buggy, causing similar embarrassment about their *maem*’s manners as is the topic in *Pride and Prejudice*. We can read how *maem* is “sizing up the house”, imagining Jane

living there (p. 77), and that *maem* convinces Charles to host the next church service (p. 78) and the following singing (p. 79).

While the Netherfield stay in *Pride and Prejudice* shows the typification of Miss Elizabeth as proud, aimed at devaluing her in the eyes of Mr. Darcy, this retelling shows that Lizzie's behaviour causes reactions from Carol Ann and Frederick. These reactions seem to be more about her working alongside the men than about pride issues. The character portrayed as proud is Frederick, and his *manners* or *haughty manners* are what causes this labelling. When Lizzie leaves the Beachey farm, little is revealed about her and Frederick's feelings towards each other.

Rising action, complicating events

The plot part in *Pride and Prejudice* where the Bennet sisters stay at Netherfield Park leaves the impression of a positive development in the relationship between Miss Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy, involving attraction which seems one-sided and unwanted. Jane Austen then puts obstacles between the heroine and hero by introducing new characters and plot twists. The next chapter focuses on the rising action-part, which leads to the proposal and climax of the plotline. This chapter focuses on the parts where Mr Wickham lies, where Mr. Darcy is seen as prejudices and where he interferes in the relationship between Mr. Bingley and Miss Jane, and Mr. Darcy's first proposal to Miss Elizabeth. I argue that the parts preceding the proposal scene amplify Miss Elizabeth's negative opinions and feelings towards Mr. Darcy, due to negative portrayal of his behaviour, manners, and morality. This causes tension between them which rises towards the proposal scene, functions as the climax in the marriage plot.

Pride and Prejudice

Mr. Wickham's lie: One of the characters entering the plot after the Netherfield stay is Mr. Collins, the potential heir to the Bennet estate. Another is Mr. Wickham, a soldier and part of a regiment stationed outside Meryton. While Mr. Collins plays a minor role in the marriage plot studied here, the Mr. Wickham character has several functions in the plotline. In this part of the novel, he is portrayed as a charming man and potential love interest to Miss Elizabeth, and he contributes to strengthen her opinions of Mr. Darcy as proud. Later in the novel, he

damages the reputation of the Bennet family, which in turn allows Mr. Darcy to take on the role of a knight in shining armour. Here, we will look at the first of his functions.

The Bennet sisters are introduced to Mr. Wickham one day when Mr. Collins joins them for a walk to Meryton, where they run into Mr. Bingley and Mr. Darcy. Elizabeth observes that Mr. Darcy “just deigned to return” Mr. Wickham’s salute and wonders why (p. 55). A few days later, she gets an explanation from Mr. Wickham in the form of a lie. He describes how Mr. Darcy dishonoured his father’s wish to provide for Wickham after his death, preventing him from having a profession within the church (pp. 60-61). When Mr. Wickham declares that “his behaviour to myself has been scandalous” (p. 59), he makes Miss Elizabeth pity him. She points to Mr. Darcy’s pride as the cause of this behaviour: “[...] I wonder that the very pride of this Mr. Darcy has not made him just to you! [...] he should not have been too proud to be dishonest, - for dishonesty I must call it” (p. 61).

Here, Miss Elizabeth argues causality between having pride and being unjust and between being proud and being dishonest. In the novel, these are the words of the character Elizabeth, but they can be seen as indications of meanings that Jane Austen associated with pride and pride. Further links between the emotion pride and behaviour and specification of sub-categories of pride based on its antecedents are given through Mr. Wickham’s reply to Miss Elizabeth’s statement. He seems to agree with her typification and labelling of Mr. Darcy and indicates that this is a stable trait in Mr. Darcy, “[...] almost all his actions may be traced to pride; - and pride has often been his best friend” (p. 62). He continues talking of Mr. Darcy as having “family pride” and “brotherly pride” and defines Miss Darcy as “too much like her brother, - very, very proud” (p. 62). Mr. Wickham also argues that Mr. Darcy “can please where he chuses” and that “[...] his pride never deserts him; but with the rich, he is liberal-minded, just, sincere, rational, honourable, and perhaps agreeable [...]” (p. 62). At the end of this scene, the contrast to the first impressions and typification of Mr. Darcy is made visible through narration related to Mr. Wickham: “Whatever he said, was said well; and whatever he did, done gracefully” (p. 64). We are told that Elizabeth “went away with her head full of him” (p. 64).

While the Netherfield stay focuses on Miss Bingley’s attempts at typifying Elizabeth negatively, this part focuses on typifying Mr. Darcy negatively in the eyes of Elizabeth. The character typifying him is Mr. Wickham, and the antecedents to labelling him as proud and having pride are Mr. Darcy’s “fortune and consequence” and “high and imposing manners” (p. 59). Mr. Wickham succeeds in making Elizabeth believe in his lie, probably supported by her finding him “amiable” (p. 61) and with “truth in his looks” (p. 65). Her dislike of Mr.

Darcy is evident when she declares that she “did not suspect him of descending to such malicious revenge, such injustice, such inhumanity as this!” (p. 61). The effect of Mr. Wickham’s lie is that Miss Elizabeth’s negative and prejudicial attitude towards Mr. Darcy is strengthened, which affects her behaviour towards him at their next meeting.

Mr. Darcy’s interference: The following section covers the parts of the marriage plot from Miss Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy’s next meeting after Mr. Wickham has lied to the part where Mr. Darcy proposes for the first time. The next meeting between Miss Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy takes place at the Netherfield ball, some days after Mr. Wickham has told his lie. In the Regency period, balls were important social events and essential arenas for courtship, and at this ball, three different men are linked to Miss Elizabeth. One of them is Mr. Wickman, who Miss Elizabeth expects to dance with, but who is absent since he “wishes to avoid a certain gentleman” (p. 68). The other is Mr. Collins, with whom she must endure two “dances of mortification” (p. 68). The third is Mr. Darcy, whom she dances and has an awkward conversation with, briefly mentioning Mr. Wickham and Miss Elizabeth’s remarks on his being “so unlucky as to lose your friendship” (p. 70). During their second dance, Mr. Darcy tries to talk with her about books while she switches the topic towards his character, asking if he ever allows himself “to be blinded by prejudice” (p. 71). He questions her questioning, and she comments that she hears “such different accounts” of him, which “puzzle” her “exceedingly” (p. 71). They part in silence. Another character, Miss Bingley, advises Miss Elizabeth not to believe Mr. Wickham’s story and claims that he has treated Mr. Darcy “in a most infamous manner” (p. 72). Ironically, Miss Elizabeth - who asked if Mr. Darcy might be “blinded by prejudice”- displays prejudice towards him by only believing Mr. Wickham’s version. Later that evening, the narrator describes how members of Elizabeth’s family embarrass her with their ill-mannered behaviour and that she assumes Mr. Darcy to be critical to what he observes. Examples of bad manners and norm breaches are when Mr. Collins introduces himself to Mr. Darcy (p. 74), when Mrs. Bennet talks loudly of Jane’s expected marriage to Mr. Bingley (p. 75), and when Mary tries to sing and play but is shuffled away by her dad (p. 77). The ball ends without any more conversation between Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy, and a few days later, the Bennet family receive a message informing them that everybody at Netherfield has gone to London for the winter. They leave in November, and the heroine and hero do not meet again until March in Kent. During this period, Mr. Darcy is absent from the plot except for mentioning of him.

The day after the Netherfield ball, Mr. Collins proposes to Miss Elizabeth, who declines. He then proposes to Charlotte Lucas, who accepts, and her moving to Mr. Collins in Kent brings Miss Elizabeth there for a visit in March. Mr. Bingley's sudden departure from Netherfield and a letter from Caroline Bingley hinting at his marrying Miss Darcy (p. 101), bring Jane to London after some grieving. She hopes to see him there, but some weeks later, "all expectations from the brother" are over (p. 113), making Miss Jane and Miss Elizabeth wonder what happened. Miss Elizabeth, disappointed by Mr. Wickham's absence from the Netherfield ball, meets him several times later. When she understands that his attention is over and that he is with the rich Miss King, Miss Elizabeth finds that she has "never been much in love" with him (p. 113).

In March, she travels to Kent with Mr Lucas and his daughter to visit Charlotte and Mr. Collins. While Miss Elizabeth stays within walking distance from Lady Catherine de Bourgh at Rosings Park, the opinions and expectations of this Lady are present in large parts of the scenes. Either by reference to her, made by Mr. Collins, or as her being part of the scene, like when they dine at Rosings. While the narrator informs how the Collinses and Lucases get stressed by this, we also learn that "Elizabeth's courage did not fail her "[...] the mere stateliness of money and rank, she thought she could witness without trepidation" (p. 122). Her ability to withstand the demands and expectations of the Lady makes Lady Catherine de Bourgh declare that "you give your opinion very decidedly for so young a person" (p. 125).

Mr. Darcy re-enters the plot with Colonel Fitzwilliam a couple of weeks after Miss Elizabeth's arrival in Kent. Since their last encounter, the focus has been at Miss Elizabeth and her friends and family, and we know nothing of Mr. Darcy's whereabouts. The two gentlemen stop by shortly after they arrive in Kent, and one week later, Miss Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy meet at a dinner at Rosings. She is asked to play the piano, and Colonel Fitzwilliam urges her to tell him about Mr. Darcy, and "how he behaves among strangers" (p. 131). Elizabeth reminisces about the ball where they first met, complaining, "He danced only four dances, though gentlemen were scarce" (p. 131). To this, Mr Darcy replies that he is "ill qualified to recommend myself to strangers" (p. 132), and Elizabeth retorts that the cause of this is a lack of practice.

This scene and the dialogue between them represent a positive development in their relationship and their pride/ prejudice processes. Miss Elizabeth had just been served Mr. Wickham's lie the last time they met, which probably awoke her pride and prejudice and affected their dancing and conversation at the Netherfield ball. This time, Elizabeth is direct

when she talks with and about Mr. Darcy, but her comments are served in a witty tone. His reply to her, indicating his need to practice social skills, is delivered with a smile: “You are perfectly right. You have employed your time much better” (p. 132). The impression of a strengthened relationship is further nourished in the next scene, from the following day. Mr. Darcy visits Hunsford, where he and Elizabeth are alone for a short while. She asks about Mr. Bingley and Netherfield, and Mr. Darcy replies, “it is probable that he may spend very little time there in future” (p. 133). They also talk about what can be considered an “easy distance” from ones family (p. 134), and when Charlotte returns home, she suggests that his visit indicates that Mr. Darcy must be in love with Elizabeth. However, after many positive interactions between them, Elizabeth returns to her dislike of him when Colonel Fitzwilliam tells her how Mr. Darcy “congratulated himself on having lately saved a friend from the inconveniences of a most imprudent marriage” (p. 139). This explains Mr. Bingley’s withdrawal from Jane and makes Elizabeth reason that Mr. Darcy’s “[...] pride and caprice were the cause of all that Jane had suffered” (p. 140). The “agitation and tears” and following headache (p. 140) caused by this makes Elizabeth stay home when the others go to Rosings to drink tea.

Mr. Darcy’s first proposal: The first proposal of Mr. Darcy comes as a surprise to both Miss Elizabeth and the readers. In this scene, she is at the Collins’house ' house, reading letters from Jane, while Charlotte and Mr. Collins drink tea at Rosings. Miss Elizabeth has just learned that Mr. Darcy’s seems to have prohibited her sister Jane from marrying Mr. Bingley, and finds it to be “some consolation” that he is to leave a couple of days later (p. 141). The doorbell sounds, and to her “utter amazement” Mr. Darcy enters the room (p. 141). He offers some introductory greetings, which Elizabeth answers “with cold civility” (p. 141). Mr. Darcy then astonishes Elizabeth “beyond expression” by declaring his love: “In vain have I struggled. It will not do. My feelings will not be repressed. You must allow me to tell you how ardently I admire and love you” (p. 142). The narrator informs that he dwells with the topic of “[...] her inferiority - of its being a degradation - of the family obstacles” (p. 142), and that Elizabeth “was at first sorry for the pain he was to receive; till, roused to resentment by his subsequent language, she lost all compassion in anger” (p. 142) and thereby declines what is a proposal from him. Mr. Darcy asks why “with so little endeavour at civility” (p. 143) he is rejected, to which Elizabeth asks “why with so evident a design of offending and insulting me, you chose to tell me that you liked me against your will, against your reason, and even against your character?” (p. 143). She confronts him about his interference in the

relationship of Jane and Mr. Bingley, and about the story Mr. Wickham has served her. Mr. Darcy sees that in Elizabeth's eyes, his faults "are heavy indeed", and suggests that she might have overlooked these "had not your pride been hurt by my honest confession of the scruples that had long prevented my forming any serious design". The scruples he refers to are the "inferiority" of her connections, "whose condition in life is so decidedly beneath my own" (p. 144). Elizabeth's reply leaves no room for doubt either to readers or to Mr. Darcy about how she sees him:

"From the very beginning, from the first moment I may almost say, of my acquaintance with you, your manners impressing me with the fullest belief of your arrogance, your conceit, and your selfish disdain of the feelings of others, were such as to form that ground-work of disapprobation, on which succeeding events have built so immovable a dislike; and I had not known you a month before I felt that you were the last man in the world whom I could ever be prevailed on to marry" (p. 145).

The discussion between the heroine and hero in this scene is narrated as gradually more heated, and when he is about to leave he claims to be "ashamed" (p. 145) of what his feelings have been.

The pride within Miss Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy and the pride-/ prejudice processes between them reach their climax in this scene, and the build-up to it is skilfully done. Their interactions in Kent leave the impression that the heroine and hero are less filled with pride and prejudice towards each other and that their relationship is gradually developing. Then Miss Elizabeth is told about Mr. Darcy's interference in her sister's love life, which brings forth pride and prejudice towards him. While she is in tears about this revelation, Mr. Darcy bursts in, declaring his love for her at the same time as he acknowledges the same prejudicial and pride-related attitudes she already is in tears about; The inferiority of her and Miss Jane's connections, referring to the class-differences between the Bennets, the Bingleys and the Darcys.

This chapter has focused on plot elements which complicate the relationship between Miss Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy. The central theme is how Mr. Darcy is typified negatively based on his interactions with others. Both Elizabeth and Mr. Wickham label him as proud and having pride based on the lie about him not having honoured the wish of a dead man. Later, Elizabeth accuses Mr. Darcy of prejudice towards Mr. Wickham, making her the most prejudicial of them. When Elizabeth hears that Mr. Darcy interfered in the relationship

between Miss Jane and Mr. Bingley, she sees Mr. Darcy's *pride and caprice* as the cause of Jane's sufferings. When Mr. Darcy proposes, he awakes pride in Elizabeth because he typifies her family negatively. At that point, readers know that Mr. Darcy loves Elizabeth, and THAT she does not love him in return. In the next part of the plot, Miss Elizabeth receives an explanatory letter from Mr. Darcy, which makes a turning point in their relationship.

Eligible

This chapter analyses how *Eligible* retells the plot passages in *Pride and Prejudice* where Mr Wickham lies, Mr. Darcy interferes in the relationship between Mr. Bingley and Miss Jane, leading to his absence, and Mr. Darcy's first proposal to Miss Elizabeth. These plot parts strengthen Miss Elizabeth's negative opinions and feelings towards Mr. Darcy, gradually making their marriage seem less likely. I will argue that *Eligible* retells these passages comparably but with less complicating effects.

Jasper's lie: In *Pride and Prejudice*, Mr. Wickham portrays Mr. Darcy as a man who dishonoured his father's wishes, robbing himself of money and a desired occupation. He does so shortly after Miss Elizabeth has met him for the first time when she barely knows him. In *Eligible*, it is Liz's friend and sex partner Jasper Wick who tells a lie involving Darcy. Liz has known Jasper for most of her adult life, but the lie makes her realise how little she knows about him. Jasper's lie involves the question of education and Darcy not having supported him. On top of portraying Darcy negatively to Liz, the lying has repercussions for himself, contributing to their ending the relationship. In *Eligible*, this part of the plot precedes the "Netherfield stay"-part, presented in the previous chapter. Here, a dinner party where Liz realises that Darcy and Jasper went to college together serves as a prelude to the lie. Darcy tells her that Jasper was "kicked out of Stanford" (p. 123). When Liz asks Jasper about this, she reveals that the information comes from Darcy and that he lives in Cincinnati and is a surgeon. Jasper states, "the dude has had a god complex since he was twenty years old" (p. 128). This indicates that Jasper sees Darcy as a man who considers himself superior to others, which can signify pride. Jasper's opinion of Darcy is revealed when he promises Liz to tell her "the whole saga" when he visits her in Cincinnati, and says that he "wouldn't let that dude lick my shoe". Liz replies that she feels "the same way" (p. 129), indicating that they both have a low opinion of him. However, a later scene paralleling the brief meeting and

strange saluting between Mr. Darcy and Mr. Wickham in Meryton makes readers wonder if there is something between Liz and Darcy that she does not reveal. This scene also foreshadows the developments between them, which were topic in the “Netherfield stay”-chapter, which occurs after Liz and Jasper have ended their relationship.

When Jasper visits Liz in Cincinnati, they bump into Darcy at the Skyline restaurant, which is narrated as a display of “mutual antipathy” (p. 198). Jasper asks Liz if she is “banging” Darcy, sensing that Darcy is “giving off a territorial vibe” (p. 198). Liz denies this. After a jogging trip, in which Liz meets and confides to Darcy about Charlotte and Willie and the economic trouble of her family, Jasper tells her his version of the Stanford expulsion. He was “taking creative writing” with “a black poet” (p. 211) as the teacher and wrote a satirical story about guys at a frat party naming girls they wish to fuck, which the teacher found to be an “objectification of women” (p. 212). Jasper claims that his teacher decided to be offended by his story “not just as a woman but as a black woman”, making Jasper “caught in the middle of a racial controversy” (p. 212). Fitzwilliam Darcy’s role in the matter was being a member of the judicial affairs board which decided to expel Jasper, making Jasper think that Darcy threw him “under the bus (p. 212). Liz’s response to Jasper’s story focuses mainly on the charges against him and whether he got to attend graduation. When they go to bed, we are told that “she would not have wanted to” read this story and that she “very much hoped that no copies still existed” (p. 213).

In *Pride and Prejudice*, Miss Elizabeth seems agitated about the story Mr. Wickham serves her, and she sees Mr. Darcy’s pride as a cause to his dishonesty and actions towards Mr. Wickham. In *Eligible*, there are no indications that Jasper’s lie affects her opinions and feelings towards Darcy, and pride is neither mentioned, typified nor indicated through narration. This signals that the lie does not have the same complicating effect in *Eligible* as in *Pride and Prejudice*.

Darcy’s prejudice, interference, and visits: The “prejudice” part of this section refers to *Pride and Prejudice* and how Miss Elizabeth accuses Mr. Darcy of being prejudiced a few days after Mr. Wickham has told his lie. In this scene, Miss Elizabeth sides with Mr. Wickham and criticises Mr. Darcy, which displays her negative opinions of him. This part is not imitated in *Eligible*. Also, Liz and Jasper break up the day after he tells a lie, when Liz discovers that he is sleeping with his editorial assistant. Liz later thinks of Jasper as “a selfish, dishonest man” (p. 230), the narrator informs.

In *Pride and Prejudice*, Mr. Darcy interferes in the relationship between Mr. Charles Bingley and Miss Jane Bennet, causing anger from Miss Elizabeth. In *Eligible*, what has developed into a romantic and sexual relationship ends when Jane discovers she is pregnant. A few days later, Chip announces that he has left Cincinnati to join a reunion show of *Eligible* (p. 174). On the night Liz is about to leave Cincinnati, Jane tells her, "[...] if it weren't for Darcy, I have a hunch Chip and I would still be together". She explains, "The night he broke up with me, one of the things he said was that Darcy didn't think we made a good couple" (p. 280). Liz asks why Darcy would "have disapproved of" Jane and Chip, and Jane states that "[...] it's not like Darcy's low opinion of our family has ever been as secret" (p. 280).

In *Pride and Prejudice*, Mr. Darcy's interference makes him and Mr. Bingley leave Netherfield, removing them from the plot from November to March until Miss Elizabeth visits Kent. There, Miss Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy meet at Rosings Park, and he visits her in the home of Mrs. and Mr. Collins. These plot parts lead to Mr. Darcy's first proposal and are not imitated in *Eligible*. Instead, Darcy approaches Liz before she leaves Cincinnati.

Darcy declares his love: In *Pride and Prejudice*, Mr. Darcy surprises Miss Elizabeth with his proposal. His explanation of loving her despite her family connections awakens pride in her, making this an element which creates tension. At the same time, the explanatory letter from him creates a turning point in their relationship. These elements are imitated in *Eligible*, but after his declaration of love, the discussion between them is shorter and less heated compared to *Pride and Prejudice*. I will argue that this relates to the context of the retelling, where the consequences of the attitudes and actions Liz accuses Darcy of are less severe than the ones Miss Elizabeth accuses Mr. Darcy of in the source text.

The proposal takes place the morning Liz is about to return to New York. Darcy rings her sisters' apartment doorbell before seven (p. 282). When Liz opens, she finds a Darcy who in "a severe voice and without preamble" and tells her, "I'm in love with you" (p. 283). He rationalises this by stating that "it's probably an illusion caused by the release of oxytocin during sex [...] You're not beautiful, and you aren't nearly as funny as you think you are. You're a gossip fiend who tries to pass off your nosiness as anthropological interest in the human condition. And your family, obviously, is a disgrace. Yet in spite of all common sense, I can't stop thinking about you. The time has come for us to abandon this ridiculous pretense of hate sex and admit that we're a couple" (p. 283). After delivering his monologue

“stiffly, while mostly avoiding eye contact”, (p. 283) he looks expectantly at Liz, awaiting her reply. In this scene, readers are told that Liz’s first response when he declares his love for her is to laugh, seeing it as a joke. When she realises that he is serious, she reveals that she does not reciprocate her feelings and still has low opinions of him. She does so by asking, “how could we possibly be a couple? We don’t even like each other” (p. 283), before she states, “[...] sorry, but I still consider you a jackass. Do you imagine you’re doing me some big favor by overlooking how unattractive I am and how much you hate my family and declaring your love anyway?” (p. 283). Darcy argues that he believed she “appreciated candor” and that he did not mean to “offend” her (p. 283). Liz continues her arguing, asking how she could “possibly want to be with the person who pushed Chip and Jane apart?” and that she knows he “were part of getting Jasper kicked out of Stanford”. Darcy says that Chip leaving medicine and attending Eligible was his decision and asks - with a “haughty” expression - if Liz believes he “planted evidence on him” or if he should have “let him off the hook” (p. 284). Liz states that “Even if you hadn’t screwed over Jasper and Jane, I’d never want you to be my boyfriend” [...] “And even if you hadn’t just insulted my looks, my personality, and my family, and blamed your interest in me on sex hormones-even if you’d expressed your attraction like a normal human being, I still wouldn’t” (p. 284). Liz expects him to be angry, like she is, but finds that he seems “wounded”, which makes “a small seed of doubt” form within her. Darcy apologises for “misreading the situation so egregiously”, then leaves (p. 284).

In *Pride and Prejudice*, a common theme of the plot parts just presented is how Mr. Darcy is labelled as proud, having pride, and being prejudiced based on his interactions with others. In *Eligible*, there is no similar labelling. When Jasper lies to Liz about Darcy’s role in his expulsion, she does not follow up on Jasper’s anger towards Darcy. When Jane suggests to Liz that Darcy may have had a hand in Chip’s leaving her, Liz questions this, without evaluation and judgment. However, when Liz argues against Darcy’s suggestion of them being a couple, she uses both examples as arguments. Liz’s way of listening and observing, then arguing more based on facts than speculations, can be seen as a trait of her professional role as a writer and journalist. However, she labels Darcy negatively, using the term *jackass*, and states that he has *insulted* her looks, personality, and family. Here, Liz displays a hubristic kind of pride towards Darcy. As for Liz’s feelings, she states that they *don’t even like each other*. In this scene, Darcy displays a *haughty* expression towards Liz after her accusation about Jasper, signifying hubristic pride. As for Darcy’s feelings, the hero expressed it himself: He is in love with her. So, the complication lies in the fact that

while he admits that he loves her, she has told him that she does not like him - and both have expressed hubristic pride during the proposal scene. Still, there seems to be less conflict and tension between the heroine and hero in this retelling than what is the case in *Pride and Prejudice*.

First Impressions

This chapter analyses how *First Impressions* retells the plot passages in *Pride and Prejudice* where Mr Wickham lies, Mr. Darcy interferes in the relationship between Mr. Bingley and Miss Jane, and Mr. Darcy's first proposal to Miss Elizabeth. These plot parts strengthen Miss Elizabeth's negative opinions and feelings towards Mr. Darcy. When he proposes, the marriage plot climaxes because they reveal their opinions and feelings towards each other. I will here argue that *First Impressions* imitates these passages closely, pointing to God's word and Amish expectations as the contextual features which generate pride, prejudice, tension, and conflict in this retelling.

George Wickey's lie: In *Pride and Prejudice*, Mr. Wickham is a soldier who is first portrayed as a charming man and a potential love interest to Miss Elizabeth. He tells her the story of how Mr. Darcy dishonoured his father's wish to secure Mr. Wickham's future economically. This plot part is imitated in *First Impressions*, where the character Mr. Wickham is named George Wickey. He is the cousin of Charles Beachey and Frederick Detweiler and introduces himself to Lizzie while she is at the Beachey farm.

Already from their first meeting, Lizzie senses an "obvious dislike" from Frederick towards George, and she is curious about the cause of this (p. 58). One day, George tells her that his uncle, Jakob Beachey, raised him, since his parents died when he was a boy. His parents had left him a property in Ohio adjacent to his uncle's, and George had planned to make a farm on this land when he grew up and had the resources to do so. Frederick had "managed to buy the property away from [him]" (p. 100), prohibiting George from creating this farm. At this part, readers are reminded of Lizzie's opinions of Frederick as having a "proud demeanour and disapproving looks" (p. 100), before George continues his story. He explains that Frederick's family had worked the land while George was too young and that Frederick took over when his father died. George says that when he came of age and could begin working the farm, Frederick had argued that since he had been paying the taxes for

years, the land was his and no longer George's. He now considers coming to Pennsylvania as an opportunity to "start fresh in a new place" since "it's not in our nature to argue or sue" (p. 101). The Blank sisters respond to his story with "disbelief" (p. 101), and the story makes Lizzie call Frederick a "selfish and heartless man" (p. 101). She thinks that if this story is true, Frederick is a "very proud man with more focus on personal elevation than spiritual" (p. 101). Lizzie even uses the term "awful" to describe him.

In this scene, we see how George manages to add fuel to the negative opinion Lizzie has about Frederick by portraying him as a man who stole farmland. He also portrays himself as an Amish man doing what is expected of him, which contrasts the alleged wrongdoings of Frederick and amplifies the negative assessment of these. George does not speak ill of Frederick, but his story makes Lizzie do so. She typifies and labels Frederick negatively both by referral to his body language (*proud demeanour* and *disapproving looks*) and by her labelling of him as *selfish, heartless, very proud, and awful*. Lizzie even points out that she believes the cause of his action is that he has *more focus on personal elevation than spiritual*. This explanation reveals that to her, representing Amish norms and values, an Amish man is expected to be guided by spiritual aims primarily.

Frederick Detweiler's prejudice, interference, and visit: In *Pride and Prejudice*, the story Mr. Wickham tells Miss Elizabeth affects her behaviour towards Mr. Darcy when they next meet at a ball, where she accuses him of being prejudiced. He is then absent from the plot for some time until they meet again in Kent, where he proposes to her for the first time. The *First Impression* - versions of these plot parts start when Lizzie and Frederick next meet on church Sunday at the Beachey farm, and the subsequent events from the source text are then imitated.

During the church service at the Beachey farm, we can read how Lizzie observes Frederick and how her observations generate a more favourable impression of him. She notices how attentively he sings the Amish hymn *Loblieb* and admits him to be "a very godly, if not also a very intense, man" (p. 104). She is also "surprised" when he finds a glass of water for Wilmer, and when she observes Frederick listening to Wilmer's preach, Lizzie thinks him to be "a most polite and attentive listener" (p. 105).

The next part reveals how pride is viewed in this Amish context through a narration of Lizzie's prayer during this church service: "[...] she prayed that God would continue to guide her against being prideful, for the Bible often spoke that no sin was ever to be punished more severely than pride" (p. 106). In a context where the characters' ways of living are guided by

the word of God, mediated through the Bible, seeing pride as the worst kind of sin would mean sanctioning those displaying pride. It would also mean that an Amish character should avoid being prideful. This explains why Lizzie scolds herself for feeling rage after having eavesdropped on Charles and Frederick, where the latter hurt her pride. It also explains why her typifying Frederick's body language and behaviour as proud has made her think and react negatively towards him.

However, the positive impressions Lizzie gets of Frederick during church service are further supported during the fellowship meal, when Frederick saves Lizzie from two embarrassing situations. First, Wilmer asks Lizzie directly to refill his glass with water, which we are told is seen as a norm violation since "such requests were usually saved for courting couples" (p. 107). Lizzie worries that "she would be the talk of many on the Amish grapewine" (p. 107). She trips on an *Ausbund* book, falls, and is caught by Frederick. In addition to preventing her from falling, he manages to direct Wilmer's attention away from Lizzie by asking Carol Ann to refill his glass. We are told how she afterwards feels "embarrassment" and "conflicting emotions" towards Frederick (p. 108), and she sees in him a "softness that she couldn't quite fathom". This indicates altering opinions towards him. Later the same day, when they are at the singing, Frederick asks if he might be allowed to take her home after the singing if that is "agreeable" to her (p. 116). Lizzie accepts and is surprised to hear herself utter this to him. She later realises that Frederick came to the singing merely to offer Lizzie a ride home in his closed buggy.

While driving, they have a conversation which resembles the *Pride and Prejudice* ball scene where Miss Elizabeth tries to make Mr. Darcy conversate and where she accuses him of being prejudiced. This heroine, Lizzie, urges Frederick to "begin a conversation" since she believes this what was he intended by offering her a ride (p. 117). Their conversation steers towards George and reveals more about Frederick's opinion of him when he indicates that he thinks George might be unable to keep new friends (p. 119). Lizzie suggests that George had been unable to keep his friendship, causing Frederick to "not consider him a good man" (p. 119). Frederick then imitates Mr. Darcy in *Pride and Prejudice* when he states about himself, "I have a flaw in character that, once lost, my good opinion of someone is lost forever" (p. 119). This leads to a discussion where Frederick states that he does not "judge" George, nor "condone" him for "things that he has done", without revealing what he believes George did (p. 119). Lizzie, who does not know that Frederick is referring to a different narrative than the one George had presented her, reacts negatively and states that "[...] Unlike you, I do not form prejudice as easily" (p. 119). They continue discussing which of them might be the

prejudiced one, which Lizzie defines as “an unchristian trait” (p. 120). The discussion ends when they arrive at Lizzie’s house. While Frederick is said to help her out of the buggy “with care and tenderness”, Lizzie thinks she has “never met a man as insufferable” as him (p. 121). This narration indicates them having different opinions and feelings towards each other.

The plotline continues to resemble *Pride and Prejudice* through the following events: Wilmer Kaufman proposes to Lizzie, who declines. Soon after, Frederick Detweiler, Charles Beachey and Carol Ann Beachey return to Ohio. They do not hear from the Beacheys for some time, and when they do, Carol Ann tells them that he will be marrying Frederick’s sister Grace. Charlotte marries Wilmer and moves to Ohio, bringing Lizzie to visit them. There, Wilmer tells her that Frederick was the one who convinced Charles not to return to Leola, Pennsylvania, since he “was not impressed with Leola for Charles’s future” (p. 150). Lizzie sees this as “treachery”, and we can read how this strengthens her negative opinion of him; before, she “did not care for” him, but now she “would have to pray for forgiveness for simply despising him” (p. 151). Again, we see how her commitment to God’s word makes her sanction herself for feelings she knows to be considered sinful.

A few days after Lizzie arrives in Ohio, she and Frederick meet again at dinner in Christiana Bechler’s house. She is the widow of the previous bishop in the *g’may* where Wilmer now is the bishop (p. 90) and has in this retelling the role of the Lady Catherine de Bourgh-character from *Pride and Prejudice*. Christiana Bechler is portrayed as equally opinionated as the Lady in the source text. She gets critical when she hears that Lizzie “work in the fields” (p. 156), which she sees as boys’ work, and that none of the five Blank sisters are married (p. 157). Another element which is imitated in *First Impressions* is how Lizzie and Frederick interact while she stays in Ohio and how her comments to him and thoughts about him still indicate a critical and “not caring” attitude towards Frederick (p. 162). He comes to visit Lizzie while the Kaufman family are out of the house one Monday morning, and he leaves equally awkwardly, as did Mr. Darcy in a similar scene in the source text. Lizzie’s opinion of Frederick is displayed when the narrator informs how she observes him leave, not once turning to look back, which she sees as his determination to leave “with his pride intact after what was, clearly, a disastrous visit on his part” (p. 165). Charlotte, when told of this episode, claims that he must be *ferhoodled*, to which Lizzie replies, “I don’t want a man such as Frederick Detweiler being *ferhoodled* on my account!” (p. 167). Her statement is based on what she knows about his interference in the relationship between Jane and Charles, as well as George’s story, we are told (p. 166). However, since this retelling features characters who let God’s words govern their lives, they see this as a possible plan of God -

something which must be accepted rather than controlled by Lizzie. Even so, the following part of the plot, where Frederick proposes to Lizzie, displays how her emotions sometimes overpower her reasoning.

Frederick Detweiler's first proposal: In *Pride and Prejudice*, Mr. Darcy's proposal comes as a surprise to Miss Elizabeth, since she still believes that he dislikes her. In addition, she has just learned about his interference in the romantic life of her sister Jane, which has strengthened her dislike towards him. The first proposal functions as the climax of the marriage plot. The proposal in *First Impressions* has the same function, with differing argumentation. It occurs when Lizzie is outside for a walk, and Frederick approaches her. When he says that he must speak to her, she tries to joke with him, having his previous and awkward visit in mind. Frederick then begins his proposal, which contains the same elements as Mr. Darcy's proposal in *Pride and Prejudice*, but with more dialogue and less narration. First, he tells Lizzie that he has "struggled in vain" with his feelings for her (p. 171). He then reveals the causes of these struggles, and how he now succumbs:

"Our cultural upbringings are so different that any type of relationship would clearly bring extra hardships, especially given the differences in our family backgrounds and our financial standings [...] I have fought against my family expectations as well as against my better judgment, hoping that distance would come my better my feelings, but I stand before you today to express my sincere desire to have you agree to my to end my torment" (*Pride*, 2014, p. 171).

After declaring that he loves her and that he wants her to marry her, Lizzie says that she must decline "for reasons that [he] is well aware of" (p. 172). She then enlightens him about these three reasons. First, she argues that if he expressed his feelings to her equally well as he explained his reasons not to have such feelings, she "might have been inclined to consider such an offer" (p. 172). Lizzie asks how she could marry "a man who has worked so hard to destroy the one bit of happiness for my dearest sister?" (p. 173). Frederick does not deny his interference in this matter. Her last objection refers to how Frederick had "stolen the land of his birthright [...] leaving him landless and without a means of earning a living" (p. 173). Lizzie follows up by calling him "callous and prideful" (p. 173) and indicates that he had destroyed the "happiness of two people" for his "selfish gain" (p. 173). In the discussion which follows, Frederick accuses Lizzie of speaking in an "overbearing tone of pride" and

says that “Your pride has tainted your eyes” (p. 174). By doing so, he typifies her by referring to her verbal pride expressions, and he indicates that pride is the cause of her misjudging the situation and misjudging his actions. These are similar accusations as Mr. Darcy in *Pride and Prejudice* directs towards Miss Elizabeth. Lizzie responds by laughing and retorts, “From the first moment I met you, you have done nothing but display a pride in your own position in life while looking with complete disdain at those around you. Nothing could be good enough for the proud Frederick Detweiler!” (p. 174). Lizzie uses a similar phrase as Miss Elizabeth in *Pride and Prejudice* does when she states that she finds him “the last man on earth that I could ever be prevailed upon to accept an offer of marriage!” (p. 174)

The scene ends not long after, and when Frederick leaves, we are told how Lizzie wonders if she has been “as prideful as him?” (p. 174). This contemplation marks a turning point in how Lizzie sees herself, Frederick and their relationship.

Through the three plot parts discussed in this chapter, I have pointed out how pride is a theme within all of these and that the antecedents to this pride relate to God’s word and Amish expectations as to how people should behave. Pride is seen as a sin in this context, and the faith of the main characters dictates them to avoid sin, therefore to avoid and scorn pride. This creates tension and conflict between the main characters, as the chapter has shown.

Towards resolution: overcoming various notions of pride

The “resolution” part of *Pride and Prejudice* is where Miss Elizabeth Bennet and Mr. Fitzwilliam Darcy overcome the obstacles between them, acknowledge their mutual love, and decide to get married. While the events in the part *rising action* portray Mr. Darcy negatively, the key to their marrying is that Miss Elizabeth must alter her perception of him and see him as a man of honour, excellent manners, good morality and no improper pride. Also, Mr. Darcy must get the motivation to approach Miss Elizabeth a second time. The study of the processes leading to the resolution of their relationship will focus on these elements and plot parts: Mr. Darcy’s explanatory letter, Miss Elizabeth’s Pemberley visit, the elopement of Lydia and Mr. Wickham, the confrontation with Lady Catherine de Bourgh, the uniting of Jane and Mr. Bingley and Mr. Darcy’s proposal. These are analysed in the next chapter, first in *Pride and Prejudice*, then in the retellings.

Pride and Prejudice

Mr. Darcy's explanatory letter: The response and outburst from Miss Elizabeth to Mr. Darcy in the proposal scene reveals her opinions and affection towards him. He responds through a letter which offers explanations to her "two offences" against him (p. 147), where he also acknowledges that he accepts her not reciprocating his feelings.

Regarding Jane, Mr. Darcy says he found her "indifferent" towards Mr. Bingley, in addition to the "total want of propriety" shown by the Bennet family. Mr. Darcy honours Elizabeth and Jane for having "conducted yourselves so as to avoid any share of the like censure" (p. 148). He also admits that speaking with Mr. Bingley about these matters made him decide not to return to Netherfield. Regarding Mr. Wickham, Mr. Darcy explains that Mr. Wickham had received money to study law instead of becoming a clergyman but had lived a "life of idleness and dissipation" (p. 150). He also tried seducing Mr. Darcy's 15-year-old sister, Georgiana, last summer. Mr. Darcy claims, "Mr. Wickham's chief object was unquestionably my sister's fortune" (p. 151). The letter is signed Fitzwilliam Darcy, revealing his first name.

This letter makes a turning point in the marriage plot studied here since it alters Miss Elizabeth's opinions of Mr. Darcy. The process which generates this alteration is narrated with a focus on Miss Elizabeth's internal and mental processes. We first hear how she initially reacts with "a strong prejudice against every thing he might say" (p. 152). Then we learn that she reads, re-reads and contemplates which stories to believe until she finds Mr. Darcy "blameless" (p. 154), and directs the blame at herself, thinking that "she had been blind, partial, prejudiced, absurd" (p. 155). While seeing herself in a new light, as having been prejudiced herself, she also realises that Mr. Wickham's moral is dubious since he lied to her and had "no scruples in sinking Mr. Darcy's character" (p. 155). Miss Elizabeth understands that she has been mistaken in her perception and typification of Mr. Darcy, and she blames herself for how she has behaved towards him. This alteration within her affects her behaviour towards Mr. Darcy the next time they meet.

The Pemberley visit: After Mr. Darcy's proposal, he and Miss Elizabeth do not meet for a while. It is mid-May when Miss Elizabeth returns home from Kent, and two months later, she visits Pemberley House with her aunt and uncle. Miss Elizabeth is initially reluctant to visit Mr. Darcy's house but agrees when hearing that he is away. When she unexpectedly meets him outside, she gets embarrassed and angry for having "thrown herself" in his way (p. 186).

However, this visit alters Miss Elizabeth's view of Mr. Darcy through a series of occurrences: When she first sees the estate, she feels that "to be mistress of Pemberley might be something" (p. 181). The housekeeper declares Mr. Darcy to be "the best landlord, and the best master" and argues that "some people call him proud; but I am sure I never saw any thing of it" (p. 184). When Miss Elizabeth meets Mr. Darcy, she finds his behaviour to be "strikingly altered" - his manners "little dignified", and his speaking with "such gentleness", and she wonders if she is "still dear to him" (p. 187). After the visit, they are invited to dine at Pemberley, signalling an improved relationship between Miss Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy. As for Mr. Darcy's feelings, we are told that he considers her as "one of the handsomest women of my acquaintance" (p. 201).

In this part of the plot, Miss Elizabeth sees Mr. Darcy as less of the man she has declared never to marry. Her use of the words dignified and gentleness and her wish that he still has feelings for her indicate that her opinions and feelings towards Mr. Darcy has changed. The fact that Mr. Darcy refers to her as one of the handsomest women of my acquaintance contrasts his view of her as tolerable in their first meeting and signal a change of opinions and feelings in him, too. None of them displays pride or prejudice towards each other during their encounter, and their relationship seems to improve. Then, the plot twist of Miss Lydia and Mr. Wickham's elopement occurs, again directing the focus to Miss Elizabeth's family background.

The elopement: In *Pride and Prejudice*, Miss Elizabeth's sister Lydia elopes with Mr. Wickham - the soldier telling a lie about Mr. Darcy. An elopement was a scandal in that context, making this a reputational crisis for the Bennet family. The elopement damages the Bennet sisters' reputation, lowering their value in the marriage market. However, what poses a crisis is beneficial for the relationship between Mr. Darcy and Miss Elizabeth due to his taking the reins in solving the matter.

When Miss Elizabeth travels with her aunt and uncle, Miss Jane keeps her updated about life at home in Longbourn by letters. One day, Miss Jane informs her that their sister Lydia has left with Mr. Wickham while staying in Brighton, and shortly after, Miss Jane informs that they are dealing with an elopement (p. 205). At this part of the plot, the relationship between Mr. Darcy and Miss Elizabeth has never been better. Mr. Darcy visits her when she has just read the news, and he is consequently informed immediately. He reacts by becoming distant, "walking up and down the room in earnest meditation" (p. 205), which Miss Elizabeth interprets as him distancing himself from her due to this disgrace to her

family. Seeing him like this gives her “distress” (p. 205), and she realises that “never had she so honestly felt that she could have loved him, as now, when all love must be vain” (p. 206). How an elopement is viewed in that context and the lesson they may draw from it is voiced through their sister, Miss Mary Bennet: “[...] loss of virtue in a female is irretrievable - that one false step involves her in endless ruin” (p. 214). However, Mr. Darcy sees himself partly responsible for the elopement since he never warned anyone of Mr. Wickham’s behaviour towards his sister. This, and a wish to solve the troubles of Miss Elizabeth’s family, makes him find Miss Lydia and Mr. Wickham, pay off his debts, and have them married. By doing so, Mr. Darcy restores the Bennet sisters’ value in the marriage market. His actions can also be seen as Mr. Darcy correcting any wrongdoings he may have been accused of towards Mr. Wickham. Mr. Darcy does not want the Bennet family to know about his involvement, but Lydia reveals it. When their aunt informs Miss Elizabeth about Mr. Darcy’s role, “Her heart did whisper, that he had done it for her” (p. 242). She realises that “They owed the restoration of Lydia, her character, every thing to him” and she regrets “every ungracious sensation she had ever encouraged, every saucy speech she had ever directed towards him” (p. 243). Miss Elizabeth’s altered perception and typification of Mr. Darcy is pointed out by the narrator’s statement, “For herself she was humbled; but she was proud of him. Proud that in a cause of compassion and honour, he had been able to get the better of himself” (p. 243). This notion of the label *proud* is quite the opposite of how the term proud has been used earlier in the novel. Here, Miss Elizabeth refers to authentic pride based on accomplishments and not personal traits.

Uniting Miss Jane and Mr. Bingley: When Mr. Darcy proposed, Miss Elizabeth accused him of being arrogant and conceited and of having a “selfish disdain of the feelings of others” (p. 145) Here, she was referring to his contribution to separate Mr. Bingley and her sister Jane, which Mr. Darcy in his explanatory letter admitted having done. Shortly after the newlyweds, Mrs. and Mr. Wickham, have visited the Bennet family, Mr. Darcy and Mr. Bingley return to Netherfield. Mr. Bingley continues courting Miss Jane by paying visits to her and her family, and Mr. Darcy accompanies him. When they visit the Bennet family, readers are informed how Miss Elizabeth is in a “misery of shame” (p. 250) when she observes her mother being rude towards Mr. Darcy. This indicates her affection for him and her seeing her mother through Mr. Darcy’s perspective. The expected proposal to Miss Jane is carried out within a short time. Miss Elizabeth is glad to hear that her sister was never told of Mr. Darcy’s interference since she believes this would have made Jane prejudiced towards him (p. 260).

This is also an indication of her affection for Mr. Darcy. At this point of the plot, Mr. Darcy has demonstrated that any objections Miss Elizabeth must have had against him are out of the question. It also seems that Mr. Darcy still is interested in her. Then Mr. Darcy's objections towards Miss Elizabeth are put into focus one more time through the visit of his aunt, Lady Catherine de Bourgh.

Confrontation with Lady Catherine de Bourgh: One week after Mr. Bingley's proposal to Miss Jane, Lady Catherine de Bourgh visits the Bennet house (p. 261), aiming to avoid a marriage between her nephew, Mr. Darcy, and Miss Elizabeth. The effect of her visit is quite the contrary, giving renewed hope of their marrying. Lady Catherine's visit has a surprising effect. Readers might have wished for a proposal from Mr. Darcy following Mr. Bingley's. However, when Lady Catherine confronts Miss Elizabeth with a "report of a most alarming nature" about her soon to be "united" to her nephew, Mr. Darcy (p. 263), Lady Catherine seems to know more than both readers and Miss Elizabeth do. Lady Catherine informs Miss Elizabeth that such a match "can never take place", since Mr. Darcy is promised to her daughter (p. 264), and she wants assurances from Miss Elizabeth that she will never marry him. The dialogue between Lady Catherine and Miss Elizabeth, which follows, resembles a power battle where the Lady tries to uncover if the rumours are true and if Miss Elizabeth will obey her demand, and where the Miss demonstrates excellent rhetorical communication skills in avoiding direct answers to her questions. Lady Catherine gets annoyed with Miss Elizabeth's answers and unwillingness to obey her demand and calls her a "Obstinate, headstrong girl!" (p. 265). The Lady continues her arguing by pointing to the class differences between Mr. Darcy and Miss Elizabeth, and that she should "not quit the sphere, in which you have been brought up" (p. 265).

The dialogue in this scene is lengthy and portrays a strong-willed Lady Catherine used at being obeyed and a heroine with the courage, strength and pride to match the Lady's upper-class expectations and fight for her possible future relationship. Miss Elizabeth counters Lady Catherine's objections when she brings Mr. Darcy's opinions of her into the discussion; "Whatever my connections are [...] if your nephew does not object to them, they can be nothing to you" (p. 265). Later, we learn that this confrontation gives Mr. Darcy hope of Miss Elizabeth reciprocating his feelings (p. 273) and motivates him to approach her again.

Mr. Darcy's second proposal: After the confrontation with Lady Catherine, we know more about Miss Elizabeth's affection for Mr. Darcy than we do about his feelings and opinions

towards her. A few days after the confrontation, the marriage plot resolves when Mr. Bingley and Mr. Darcy visit the Bennet family. Miss Jane and Miss Elizabeth join the two gentlemen for a walk, and Miss Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy talk through their interactions since they first met. They discuss without pride or prejudice, admitting they have thought and behaved wrongly towards the other. When Mr. Darcy asks if her feelings “are still what they were in April” (p. 273), the narrator informs how she tells him that “her sentiments” has undergone a material change (p. 273). In other words, Mr. Darcy finally gets the message he has been hoping for, that Miss Elizabeth reciprocates his feelings. As the next step towards their marriage, Mr. Darcy speaks with Mr. Bennet to ask his permission to marry his daughter. This plot element relates to the context in which *Pride and Prejudice* is set, where men are women’s providers and protectors. When Mr. Darcy marries Miss Elizabeth, she becomes his economic responsibility. He also becomes the most significant person in Miss Elizabeth’s life regarding her future well-being. Her father, Mr. Bennet, is well aware of this and speaks with his daughter to ensure himself that she wants this marriage. In this dialogue, Mr. Bennet voices how they used to view Mr. Darcy, while Miss Elizabeth voices her current opinions of him. She also indicates that Mr. Bennet needs to know him better and that she wants her father to speak differently about her future husband:

“[...] We all know him to be a proud, unpleasant sort of man; but this would be nothing if you really liked him.”

“I do, I do like him,” she replied, with tears in her eyes, “I love him. Indeed he has no improper pride. He is perfectly amiable. You do not know what he really is; then pray do not pain me by speaking of him in in such terms.” (Austen, 2019, p. 281)

Mr. Bennet’s labelling of Mr. Darcy as *a proud, unpleasant sort of man* versus Miss Elizabeth declaring that *he has no improper pride. He is perfectly amiable* sums up the altered impression of Miss Elizabeth from the start to the end of the novel. Mr. Bennet’s view of him is based on the typification made during their first meeting. Mr. Darcy’s manners were frowned upon by a society with clearly defined norms and expectations for how a gentleman should behave. Throughout the novel, Mr. Bennet has had little or no information or experiences to alter his typification and labelling. On the other hand, Miss Elizabeth has gone from having her initial impressions positively altered to seeing Mr. Darcy portrayed even worse through a series of complicating events until the explanatory letter starts a process of altering her typification and labelling of him.

The mental processes governing the typification are related to the context functioning as a backdrop for the marriage plot. As previously argued, we mainly find the hubristic kind of pride in the novel. We also find an authentic kind when Elizabeth expresses that she is proud of Mr. Darcy for solving the elopement situation. This shows that Austen was aware of more than one type of pride. She was also aware that people could call each other “proud” based on their behaviour, and this labelling could make other people look down at the “proud” one. In other words, the novel shows that pride display could cause prejudice. The novel also shows that prejudicial attitudes can generate pride in a person. Austen does not use descriptions of body language to define a character as proud, and the terms pride and proud are frequently used, more than using synonyms to these terms.

The complicating events indicate antecedents to hubristic and negative pride and pride-typification: To disobey a dead man’s wishes, to rob another human of future possibilities, to separate two people that love each other and to deny people marrying based on different backgrounds. The actions leading to Miss Bennet’s view of Mr. Darcy as having *no improper pride* and being *perfectly amiable* point to desirable behaviour and attitudes: Being honest and honourable, saving other people from reputational and economic trouble, admitting wrong, and displaying good manners. Here, we find traces of Austen’s morality, an essential factor in Austen’s notions of pride embedded in *Pride and Prejudice*.

Eligible

In *Pride and Prejudice*, the resolution lies in Miss Elizabeth’s seeing Mr. Darcy as a man of honour, excellent manners, good morality, and no improper pride, and his finding the motivation and courage to approach her again. In *Eligible*, Darcy does not have to be the one approaching Liz for them to become a couple since the context of this novel implies more gender equality on the matter of courtship. However, the resolution lies in Liz’s no longer seeing him as a jackass towards herself and others. On top of this, Liz must believe that what she and Darcy have together can develop into a great relationship. The processes leading to this are somewhat imitated, somewhat altered to the source text, and will be studied here.

Darcy’s explanatory letter: In *Pride and Prejudice*, Mr. Darcy explains in a letter to Miss Elizabeth why he made Mr. Bingley stop courting Jane, and his version of the story Mr. Wickham told. This part of the plot is imitated in *Eligible*. So is the artefact itself, since Darcy in *Eligible* uses a handwritten letter to convey his information, even if letters in the

21st century often are substituted by text messages or emails. Regarding Jane, his explanation relates to her feelings for Chip and Darcy's negative assessment of the suitability of the Bennet family as Chip's in-laws. These resemble Mr. Darcy's assessments of Miss Jane being "indifferent" to Mr. Bingley and the Bennet family's "total want of propriety" (p. 148). Darcy in *Eligible* expresses his assessments in less definite terms, writing that he "wasn't convinced that she reciprocated his interest", and that he "didn't think your family was the ideal one for Chip to marry into" (p. 289). He argues this based on Liz's mother's "pushiness and preoccupation with social climbing", as well as Lydia and Kitty's "indifference to basic manners" (p. 289). However, while Mr. Darcy in *Pride and Prejudice* admits that he kept Mr. Bingley away from Jane, Darcy claims that Chip joined *Eligible* of his own will and that he assumes Chip used Jane's pregnancy as an excuse to "take a break from medicine" (p. 289). As for Liz's accusation of Darcy having "mistreated Jasper Wick", Darcy explains that the main reason for Jasper's expulsion was what he had done to his teacher. Jasper had removed a window screen to her ground-floor apartment and left "puddles of urine all over the papers on her desk and the keyboard of her laptop computer" (p. 290). Darcy also states that "you're much too good for him", acknowledges that Liz's opinions of him are "abundantly clear", and wishes her "luck back in New York" (p. 291)

The way Darcy shows that he respects her rejection of him resembles the attitude of Mr. Darcy in *Pride and Prejudice*. So do the changes in Liz's opinions of Darcy, yet this is briefly explained. The narrator informs that when Liz reads the letter, her "stomach had tightened", and she realises that "the uncomfortable sensation was one of shame" (p. 293). Liz then admits that "both her rudeness to Darcy on nearly every occasion and her faith in Jasper had been wrongly directed." (p. 293). We then read Liz reflecting on her relationship with Darcy: how she "didn't regret" having "dismissed Darcy's declaration of love", since they scarcely knew each other (p. 293). We also get a glimpse of her ambiguity on this topic, admitting that she had had fun with Darcy before asking herself, "fun could not be the basis of a relationship. Could it?" (p. 293) The *shame* Liz feels and the *rudeness* towards Darcy, which Liz admits to, point to similar sentiments and reflections as Miss Elizabeth in *Pride and Prejudice* experiences, but more briefly and with less accusing attitudes directed at herself. As an aftermath to this letter, there is a dialogue where Liz tells Jane about having sex with Darcy and his declaring his love for her. While the term *pride* barely is written within *Eligible*, Jane uses this term to point out Darcy's feelings for Liz; "Think how infatuated with you he must be to swallow his pride, which we all know he has lots of" (p. 298). The expression *swallow his pride* points to Darcy doing something he considers

beneath him in his actions towards Liz. By using this expression, Jane indicates that Darcy has hubristic pride and that the love he feels for Liz makes him try to rise above his own proud feelings to experience love with her.

Conversation with the feminist Kathy de Bourgh: In *Pride and Prejudice*, Lady Catherine tries to prevent the marriage between Mr. Darcy and Miss Elizabeth, demanding regard for an existing marriage deal and class differences. Instead, the confrontation with Miss Elizabeth gives Mr. Darcy hope and motivation to court her again. In *Eligible*, a similarly named character is Kathy de Bourgh, but her function in this retelling is different. While Lady Catherine de Bourgh voices upper-class expectations, norms and traditions of the Regency period, Kathy de Bourgh voices contemporary and feminist expectations towards women. Through an interview with Liz, the feminist Kathy de Bourgh makes Liz realise it is possible to be an independent woman of the 21st century and marry a man. This plot part comes right after Darcy's explanatory letter and alters Liz's opinions about. Liz asks Kathy de Bourgh if her not marrying before she was 67 was due to "difficulty of finding a spouse who would treat you as an equal partner" (p. 304). Kathy de Bourgh replies that being able to be herself and how they looked out for each other was an essential aspect of their relationship. She also argues that feminism and mutual devotion and commitment can exist simultaneously: "There's a belief that to take care of someone else, or to let someone else take care of you - that both are inherently unfeminist. I don't agree. There's no shame in devoting yourself to another person, as long as he devotes himself to you in return" (p. 305).

A few pages later in the novel, we can read how Liz is indulging in a "imaginative exercise about what it would be like if Darcy were her boyfriend" (p. 311). Then she considers how she may have destroyed her chances with him by treating him "with rash and unrepentant rudeness", and she considers calling him to say "I'm sorry" (p. 312). This plot part tells readers that Liz has altered her opinions of Darcy and is considering a future with him. This positive development is reinforced in the next part of the plot.

Visiting 1813 Pemberley Lane: In *Pride and Prejudice*, Miss Elizabeth visits her friend Mrs. Charlotte Collins and Mr. Collins in Kent, where Mr. Darcy proposes for the first time. A few months later, a trip with her aunt and uncle leads her to Pemberley. This visit, where she hears the other characters' favourable opinions of him and finds that his behaviour has improved, alters her opinion of Mr. Darcy. In *Eligible*, these two trips are combined into one. Liz visits her friend Charlotte in Palo Alto, which in the same area as Darcy's family estate.

The address of this estate alludes to Mr. Darcy's estate in *Pride and Prejudice* and the publication year of this novel; "1813 Pemberley Lane" (p. 317). Liz and Charlotte drive to Darcy's house, and he looks "shocked" to see them there since he thought Liz was in New York. Darcy shows them around the house and tells them the story of his great-great-grandfather, who got rich as a "railroad and borax-mining magnate", and started building Pemberley in 1915. He says they think of donating the house, since Darcy believes neither he nor Georgie will ever have "a family big enough to justify this kind of space" (p. 322). After a description of the various rooms of the house, demonstrating its space, the narrator reveals Liz's thoughts, displaying her altered perception of Darcy; "Who was this man, gracious and genial host sharing his time, demonstrating impeccable manners in a context in which he'd have been justified showing the opposite?" (p. 323). Liz's feelings towards Darcy is further emphasised when the two women are leaving. Darcy greets both women by kissing their cheek, and when he leans in to kiss Liz's cheek, "she resisted the impulse to cling to him" (p. 324). Darcy invites Liz, Charlotte, Willie, and his parents to dinner the same night, and the exchange of cell phone numbers makes Liz feel "as giddy as if the cutest boy in seventh grade had slipped a note into her locker" (p. 325). In addition to pointing out and describing Liz's altered opinions and feelings for Darcy, the Pemberley Lane visit also offers an introspection displaying Liz regretting her behaviour towards him in the past:

"[...] She could see, with a sudden and not entirely welcome clarity, that in Cincinnati, she had cultivated her own rancor toward him; she had made rude and provocative remarks, had searched for offense in his responses, and had relished the slights that may or may not have been delivered [...] His present behavior wasn't a sarcastic impersonation of good manners; it wasn't meant to count, technically, as kindness, without containing true warmth; it simply was kindness. He treated his guests, her included, as if he couldn't imagine a greater pleasure than spending the evening with them, and in doing so he exacerbated Liz's shame about her past pettiness toward him" (p. 331).

In this part, we are again presented with Liz's reproach towards herself. The *shame* she felt and the *rudeness* she accused herself of after reading Darcy's explanatory letter is repeated here. This time *rude* is used to describe her remarks, which she also sees as provocative. Her *shame* is now directed towards her *pettiness* directed at Darcy, whose behaviour at the

party she considers representing *kindness*. This resembles the similar part in *Pride and Prejudice* where the heroine directs the blame towards herself.

The elopement and Darcy's salvaging the family's happiness: In *Pride and Prejudice*, the elopement of Miss Lydia and Mr. Wickham damages the reputation of the whole Bennet family and creates surprise and complication in the marriage plot studied here. At first, Miss Elizabeth believes Mr. Darcy to withdraw from her due to this, but he turns out to prove himself as a man of honour and determination by having them married and restoring the family's reputation. There is also an elopement in *Eligible*, but with less surprising and complicating effects. Here, the eloping couple is Jane and Ham, but readers have already known for some time that they are a couple. Readers are informed about the elopement through a scene where Liz and Darcy are in his car and on their way to a restaurant. Liz gets a text from her sister Mary, saying that Lydia and Ham have eloped to Chicago, that Ham is "transgender/born female" and that "M & D freaking out" (p. 349). Mary asks Liz to come home, which makes Liz ask Darcy to drive her to the airport instead of going to the restaurant with him.

The elopement turns out to be Lydia and Ham's reaction to the "lack of acceptance or grace" from Mr. and Mrs. Bennet about Ham's "disclosure" of being transgender (p. 356). While an elopement had reputational consequences and transgenderism was not a medical possibility in the context portrayed in *Pride and Prejudice*, there are few reactions to the combination of these in the *Eligible* context. Darcy's response when Liz explains what has happened and that she is needed home due to her parents' expected reactions to the news indicates this; "Isn't that their problem? It doesn't seem like Lydia or her boyfriend did anything wrong" (p. 353). This argument is emphasised by the family lawyer, who tells the Bennet family that the eloped have committed no crime (p. 356). The elopement and marriage do not cause reputational damage comparable to what is the case in *Pride and Prejudice*. Instead, it causes an internal family conflict between Mrs. and Mr. Bennet, who do not accept this marriage, and Lydia's sisters, who do. The elopement does not create a conflict or complication between Liz and Darcy. What makes a complication between them is a text from Darcy's sister Georgie (p. 367), which Liz misinterprets as a message that Darcy and Caroline are together. This makes Liz heartbroken. Through the following chapters of the novel, Liz dates other men, she meets Jasper, her sisters move out, and the Tudor house is sold. When this economically focused subplot ends, another subplot begins, where Jane and Chip's love story and wedding become part of the *Eligible* show. This subplot starts as a

imitated version of Darcy's uniting Jane and Chip when Darcy invites Liz and Jane to dinner in Manhattan, and it turns out that Chip also is invited (p. 412). In this scene, Jane and Chip's joy contrasts Liz's experiences as "enmity between her and Darcy" (p. 416). At this point, Liz still believes Darcy and Caroline, Chip's sister, are a couple, and Liz leaves the restaurant in tears. The narration of this scene does not indicate neither pride nor prejudice being the cause, rather that their behaviour is driven by a mixture of feelings related to love and longing, which complicates their interaction.

The subsequent chapters focus at the Eligible show and Jane and Chip's wedding in this show, gathering the Bingley and Bennet families, including Lydia and Ham. Within this show, the marriage plot finds its resolution. One factor leading to this is Lydia's revealing that Darcy made Mrs. and Mr. Bennet accept Ham, and his and Lydia's marriage. At the bachelorette party, Lydia reveals that Darcy "told Mom that stupid shit about transpeople and birth defects" (p. 451). Lydia is angry with him for this, while Liz seems to think that it was a good idea, giving their Mom "a framework for understanding Ham" (p. 451) From here on, we get a glimpse of the journalist Liz, who questions how Darcy knew that "there was a reason for him to intervene" (p. 452), and discovers that this was due to Mary meeting him at Skyline (p. 453). Liz concludes that "[...] Darcy had salvaged her family's happiness in not one but two ways; in addition to bringing Jane and Chip back together, he had facilitated the reconciliation between Lydia and Mrs. Bennet" (p. 454). This strengthens further the positive opinion Liz has of Darcy.

Confrontation with the Bingley version of Lady Catherine de Bourgh: Right before Mr. Darcy's second proposal in *Pride and Prejudice*, Lady Catherine de Bourgh tries to avoid the marriage, demanding regard for an existing marriage deal and class differences. In *Eligible*, Caroline Bingley functions similarly to Lady Catherine when she confronts Liz after the rehearsal dinner. Caroline tells Liz that she is "[...] completely wrong for Darcy" (p. 459). She criticises Liz's family and argues that there always has been an understanding that Caroline and Darcy would "end up together" (p. 459). After some arguing, where Caroline asks if they are "already together", Liz retorts by, "How could we be when it would be such a breach of propriety?" (p. 460). Then Liz realises that her microphone has been on during the whole conversation. Before this confrontation, Liz still believes that Caroline and Darcy are a couple, so the effect of Caroline's words is the opposite of what she intends. Now Liz knows that Darcy may be single and that she may have misunderstood the text from Georgie. This is confirmed in a chat with Georgie, who referred to a car accident Darcy and Caroline were

involved in (p. 462). From this point, Liz takes charge in resolving the relationship with Darcy.

Liz's proposal to Darcy: In *Pride and Prejudice*, Miss Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy are outside walking and talking when they admit their mutual love and wish to have a future together, which in that context implies getting married. In *Eligible*, Liz and Darcy are outside at the *Eligible* set right after the wedding ceremony when Liz makes him join her to a spot in the garden. She turns off their mics and asks if he did talk with her mom about Ham. Darcy admits this, and Liz thanks him for having helped her parents understand and accept Ham, “with the authority conferred by his medical degree”. She also thanks him for reuniting Jane and Chip (p. 467). After having discussed their previous interactions and misunderstandings, Liz apologises for having been “rude” and “obnoxious”, stating that he had not deserved her “rudeness” (p. 468). Darcy also uses the term “rude” about himself in this scene, referring to the morning he declared his love for her, when he had thought he “needed to be rude to overcompensate for being in love with you” (p. 469).

When Darcy declares, “my feelings for you have never changed”, Liz summons “the guiding spirit of Kathy de Bourgh” (p. 469). Liz has found inspiration in this feminist woman before, and this time she directs this inspiration into her proposal to Darcy, “[...] Darcy - I ardently love you [...] will you marry me? Will you do me the honor of becoming my husband?” (p. 470).

This way of resolving the marriage plot in which Liz and Darcy are the main characters fits with the portrayal of Liz as a woman used to leading in matters relating to her own and others' lives. Darcy's reply, where he smiles and says “I thought you'd never ask” (p. 470) portrays him as a suitable partner to her, who acknowledges and respects her for the empowered woman she is. Throughout this retelling, the Liz character has been operating in a 21st-century context where it is acceptable for a woman to lead her family, including her parents, through an economic family crisis. It is also acceptable for a woman to demonstrate competence in a wide variety of areas and to initiate sex, to date casually, and propose to a man. The pride Darcy evokes within her from their first meeting must be understood from this context. A woman aware of her capabilities, used to leading other people and used to fixing things on her own will likely react when she feels overlooked and criticised, which I will argue relates to her pride. If Darcy, in this retelling, had been a more conservative man, he might have seen Liz as too powerful, even intimidating and as a threat to his role as a man. Based on conservative male roles, he might have been too proud to accept and respect Liz

and her way of being a woman. By accepting and respecting each other's feelings, opinions and behaviour, they portray gender roles of the 21-st century with more equality regarding acceptable ways of being a man and a woman and how to interact.

The term pride is not used much in this retelling, and pride is less of a complicating factor in this novel than it is in *Pride and Prejudice*, which I will argue relates to the context of the retelling. When Liz and Darcy first meet, her negative impression of him relates to his educational and occupational background and what he says about her and Cincinnati. While love across class boundaries poses a challenge in *Pride and Prejudice*, generating both pride and prejudice, *Eligible* has no societal objections as to why the magazine writer Liz and the wealthy Darcy should not be allowed to marry. One objection towards Miss Elizabeth in *Pride and Prejudice* is the lack of manners displayed by members of the Bennet family. This objection by the upper-class man Mr. Darcy is seen as prejudicial and generates pride in Miss Elizabeth. Manners is a topic in *Eligible*, too, but more a matter of taste and expectations than a symbol of class belonging. Another difference is how little the actions of other characters affect the marriage plot line involving Liz and Darcy in *Eligible*. Jasper's story indicates that Darcy could have influenced Jasper's education and future occupation, a topic also in *Pride and Prejudice*. However, we learn that Jasper got a second change, which makes Darcy's alleged involvement less shocking. In *Pride and Prejudice*, the elopement damages the reputation of the Bennet family, and the fact that Mr. Wickham's character has been portrayed negatively adds to the seriousness of this plot part. Here, the worry is the society's prejudice towards the family, since the eloped were disgraced. In *Eligible*, the elopement has no similar consequences.

First Impressions

In *Pride and Prejudice*, the resolution lies in Miss Elizabeth's seeing Mr. Darcy as a man of honour, excellent manners, good morality, and no improper pride, and his finding the motivation and courage to approach her again. In *First Impressions*, the resolution lies in Lizzie seeing Frederick as a hardworking and kind man without pride. The next part discusses the plot parts where these alterations occur.

Frederick's explanatory letter: In *Pride and Prejudice*, Miss Elizabeth receives a letter from Mr. Darcy shortly after his first proposal, where he explains why he acted as he did towards

Miss Jane, Mr. Bingley and Mr. Wickham. His letter makes Miss Elizabeth realise that she has been prejudiced towards him, which makes a turning point in the marriage plot.

In *First Impression*, Frederick delivers a similar letter of explanation to Lizzie, which he calls “an answer to the two charges against me” (p. 177). Regarding George, Frederick says that when he was young, he had “refused baptism” and spent time with “less reputable” men who did not wish to join the church. George had disappeared for days, making his farm “unworked” and his bills to “accumulate”. He also “acquired a gambling habit” and much debt (p. 178). His uncle, Jakob Beachey, had wanted to pay the debt but “did not have the extra funds to save George from his own sins” (p. 179). Therefore, Frederick offered to purchase the property to save George from debt. He also explains that another motivation for doing so had been to “save the community” from letting valuable farmland be “turned into housing for the Englische” (p. 179). Then Frederick reveals a similar story about his sister, Grace, as we find in *Pride and Prejudice*: George had begun to take Grace from singings while she was only sixteen, and he had planned an elopement with her. Frederick states that “an elopement before baptism and one that would certainly have been her ruination” (p. 179). Grace had told Frederick about this, making him able to prevent this from happening. Frederick ends his letter by asking “forgiveness” (p. 179) for misinterpreting Jane’s feelings towards Charles. However, he also points out that he had doubts regarding the Blank family: their *maem* proving to be “prone to gossip”, and the younger sisters being prone to “such silliness” (p. 180).

The explanations Frederick offers imitate the ones from Mr. Darcy and portray Frederick as a man who wanted to help both George and Jakob Beachey financially, his community territorially, and his sister reputationally. Still, he maintains his views of the Blank family. The letter makes Lizzie go through a similar internal processing as Miss Elizabeth in *Pride and Prejudice* does. However, while Miss Elizabeth sanctions herself for having been prejudiced, Lizzie turns to the most powerful source of sanctioning in this context, God, and prays for forgiveness.

The Detweiler farm visit: In *Pride and Prejudice*, Miss Elizabeth, and Mr. Darcy’s next meeting takes place in his estate, Pemberley House. She is there with her aunt and uncle and does not expect to find Mr. Darcy at home. Their encounter makes Miss Elizabeth see him as a well-mannered and gentle man and makes him experience a more well-behaved part of Miss Elizabeth’s family.

In *First Impressions*, a similar plot part is introduced with narration of how Lizzie thinks back on her initial opinions of Frederick, compared to what she later learned about him. Her contemplations take place in a buggy, where she is accompanied by her friend, Charlotte, and Charlotte's parents. Lizzie is "horrified" when she realises that they are at the Detweiler farm, unannounced, after all that happened recently (p. 185). In this retelling, his aunt welcomes them into the house. Like in *Pride and Prejudice*, this visit alters Lizzie's opinions about Frederick by providing new information about him. His aunt tells how "hardworking" (p. 186) he is and how he helps Amish youth from large families by employing them. She also reveals that he shares the profit of the crops with these youth and has helped other people financially. Frederick's *aendi* portrays him positively by calling him "kind", "generous", and "the least proud man" (p. 187-188). The narrator reveals this new information's conflicting thoughts in Lizzie, who goes outside, where she meets Frederick. This is the first time she sees him in work clothes and the first time she hears him laugh, and his altered behaviour makes both Charlotte and Lizzie "stunned" (p. 191). The narrator also says that Lizzie wishes she could say "something, anything, to correct the prejudice that she had shown by misjudging him so poorly" (p. 190). Before Lizzie leaves, we can read how she experiences a "feeling of confusion", and that Frederick's eyes are "dancing and sparkling at her in a way she had never seen prior to this moment" (p. 193).

In this part, Lizzie is provided with information which portrays Frederick as the type of man she would find suitable: hardworking, kind, generous, not proud, and welcoming to his guests. This confuses her. At the same time, Frederick's body language is described as someone having loving feelings towards her. This combination of the heroine gradually having a favourable opinion of him, while readers get to know that he already has feelings for her, resembles what is found in *Pride and Prejudice*. Like in the source text, an elopement again brings questions of Lizzie's background into focus.

The elopement: In *Pride and Prejudice*, Miss Elizabeth's sister Lydia elopes with Mr. Wickham. He is the soldier who lied about Mr. Darcy and having one of the Bennet sisters elope with him causes a reputational crisis for the Bennet family. Since Mr. Darcy takes charge of having them married, the elopement increases Miss Elizabeth's positive opinions of him, making her proud of him.

In *First Impressions*, Lizzie is about to leave Ohio when she gets news from home about the elopement. The news is delivered while she is at the Bechler farm for dinner,

invited by Frederick, who wants her to meet his sister Grace for the first time (p. 198). Christiana Bechler instructs Lizzie to read the letter aloud, saying, “Lydia had run off with George Wickey” (p. 198). When Lizzie tells Frederick about this, we are shown how he “inhaled sharply and narrowed his eyes” (p. 199), and Lizzie is in tears about this negative reaction to the news. The narrator informs how she is aware of the consequences of Lydia’s actions and that she “had most likely ruined her chances of finding a proper suitor now that speculation would run through the Amish grapevine about her time alone with George” (p. 200). This is the second time we hear Lizzie refer to gossiping within her community, which she knows will follow such a scandalous incident.

About a day after Lizzie’s return home, they get news that Lydia and George are back, married, and planning to be baptized to become a member of the Amish church (p. 204). A few days later, the newlyweds attend church Sunday, where a woman tells Lizzie that it was Frederick who “was able to locate them” (p. 210). This woman also tells how he had been “instrumental” in having them “legally married before returning them to the Beachey farm” (p. 211). The woman says she is “impressed” with Frederick, whom she calls “one right gut and most godly man” (p. 211) and adds that Frederick also was the one who arranged for them to take “the October kneeling vow”, to join the church (p. 211). To point out the effect of Frederick’s actions, she tells Lizzie, “He saved your schwester from ruination, that’s for sure and certain” (p. 211).

This plot illustrates well which offences cause disgrace in an Amish context, as well as which actions are considered acceptable or desirable. By being the one who made Lydia and George marry, ask for baptism, and salvage the family's reputation, Frederick proves to be a man adhering to Lizzie’s standards. Lizzie even gets to hear Frederick typified as *one right gut and most godly man*, and towards the end of this plot passage, we hear how she is unable to think of a man with “less pride” than Frederick (p. 212). Still, she contemplates why he acted as he did, finding no answers to her question.

Uniting Jane and Bingley: When Mr. Darcy in *Pride and Prejudice* proposes, Miss Elizabeth accuses him of being arrogant and conceited and of having a “selfish disdain of the feelings of others” (Austen, 2019, p. 145). When Frederick in *First Impressions* proposes, Lizzie accuses him of having destroyed the “happiness of two people” for his “selfish gain” (Price, 2014, p. 173). Uniting these two is another part of the plot that makes the heroine look at the hero as a desirable man.

Some weeks after the elopement, Charles Beachey and Frederick Detweiler return to Leola and show up at church service “as if they had never left” (p. 213). *Maem* Blank whispers to her daughters that it “takes some nerve” to show up like that, which Lizzie sees as a display of pride. Later that day, they visit the Blank farm and inform the Blank family that Lydia and George will be moving to Strasburg, making the Beachey farm “unattended once again” (p. 219). The family ponders how these two could afford to buy a farm, and Lizzie realises that Frederick had played a part in this, too. “Without being told”, Lizzie understands that the family has bought George a farm, giving him “a chance to begin again” (p. 220). Charles asks to have “a word alone with Jane” (p. 221). He asks to take her to the singing, which the family interprets as “it’s all but settled” between Jane and Charles (p. 223).

This plot part ends without being explicit about Lizzie and Frederick’s opinions towards each other. However, the narrator tells how Lizzie wants to approach Frederick to speak with him, but “Being bold with a man was not something that any Amish woman would dare to do” (p. 222). Again, we see how religion governs attitudes and behaviours of the heroine in this context.

Confrontation with Christiana Bechler: In *Pride and Prejudice*, Lady Catherine de Bourgh visits the Bennet house, aiming to prohibit marriage between her nephew, Mr. Darcy, and Miss Elizabeth. The effect of her visit is quite the contrary, giving him renewed hope.

In *First Impressions*, Lizzie has a telephone call from Christiana Bechler one day. The Blank family’s telephone is mainly for work purposes and is in the barn, making the announcement “there’s a phone call for you” (p. 226) an unusual event. Christiana’s voice is “sharp and piercing” (p. 227), and she argues that Lizzie already knows why she is calling. Her message resembles that of Lady Catherine de Bourgh; she has had “the most disturbing news” that Lizzie has the “designs to marry” her nephew (p. 228), and she wants to know if this is true. Christiana gets mad for not having the answers she demands and calls Lizzie an “insolent girl” (p. 230). She then informs Lizzie about Frederick’s “obligations to this family and to my husband’s niece”, whom he has been planned to marry. Christiana also labels Lizzie’s family a “disgraced family from Pennsylvania” (p. 230). It is Lizzie who ends the phone call (p. 230), and the narrator later says, “Despite learning so much about Frederick and growing in her respect for him, she knew that Frederick would never renew his offer, lest he be forever linked to George Wickey as a brother-in-law” (p. 231).

With this, readers learn that Lizzie now has *respect* for Frederick, and her “knowing” that he would *never renew his offer* seems like wishful thinking. Lizzie indicates that she believes Frederick would not marry her because of her brother-in-law, who represents her family background.

Frederick’s second proposal: After the confrontation with Christiana Bechler, we know more about Lizzie’s affection for Frederick than we do about his feelings and opinions towards her. This is like the plotline in *Pride and Prejudice*. What differs a bit in *First Impressions* is that this confrontation takes place before Charles has proposed to Jane, which he does a week after he takes her to the singing. Lizzie talks with Frederick while they both wait for the outcome, and she takes the opportunity to thank him. She tells him how her family owes him “so much gratitude for your kindness and willingness to be so unselfish in helping them” (p. 238). He replies that he did not do it for her family, but for her; “It was only for you...only you” (p. 238). Jane and Charles return, announcing that they will marry. While they are beaming with happiness, Lizzie’s thoughts contrast their joy, thinking that it was “too late for any chance to correct the wrongs that she had done to him” (p. 239). Not long after, this is proven to be untrue. On Jane and Charles wedding day, Frederick approaches her, saying that he will be leaving in a few days. Lizzie thanks him for what he has done and admits, “You have proven me quite wrong [...] and I have learned a valuable lesson about pride” (p. 251). What this lesson might be is not revealed, and soon, Frederick makes his proposal. He asks if her feelings for him have changed, stating that his feelings for her are unchanged. He wants to postpone his return, to travel “with a companion...a wife” (p. 252), and when Frederick asks for a kiss Lizzie replies that “A good *fraa* always obeys her husband” (p. 253). A bit later, Lizzie says to Jane that they had “misjudged him” (p. 255), and to her *daed* she admits having been “so very, very wrong” about him (p. 256). Her *daed* calls him a “right gut man” (p. 257), which sum up well how Frederick is seen in this part of the plot: As a man living up to the expectations for what being a “gut man” means in this Amish context.

The complicating events indicate antecedents to hubristic and negative pride and pride-typification: To disobey a dead man’s wishes, to rob another human of future possibilities, to separate two people that love each other and to deny people marrying based on different backgrounds. This parallels what is found in *Pride and Prejudice*, and connects the novel to traces of Austen’s morality.

Conclusions

This thesis has studied how a theme can take on new meanings when translated into a different context from where it first was used and how altered notions of a theme can alter its function within the new context. The theme studied is pride, and the study's starting point is Jane Austen's novel *Pride and Prejudice* from 1813. The novel *Eligible* by Curtis Sittenfield (2016) and *First Impressions* by Sarah Price (2014) represent the theme translations. The two new contexts are fictional Amish societies in Pennsylvania and Ohio in the 21st century (*First Impressions*) and Urban societies in Cincinnati and New York around 2013 (*Eligible*). The study relates to the broader question of intertextuality within written cultures and how meaning is altered through processes of imitation and adaptation. It also relates to questions of how a text derives its meaning from the reader and how retellings convey information about the reception of the source text which inspired the retelling.

The method used is close reading, focusing on the term pride, related terms and phrases, and scenes depicting pride. The three novels in this study differ as to how pride is observable through the texts. In *Pride and Prejudice* the term is used both by characters and the narrator, through the frequent use of free indirect discourse, which Jane Austen was renowned for. In *Eligible*, the terms pride and proud are barely used, and there is more talk about being insulted, someone being rude etc. These are terms that indicate pride. In *First Impressions*, pride is pointed out through the usage of the term, through descriptions of body language indicating pride, and narration about reflections around pride. I will compare all three novels here to argue how altered notions of pride have altered the functioning of this topic as a plot device, which I will relate to the differing contexts.

Contextual differences and how these generate differing notions of pride

In *Pride and Prejudice*, questions of manners are a central theme. When Mr. Darcy and Miss Elizabeth meet at the ball in Meryton for the first time, he is typified as proud based on his manners. This is based on the other characters' expectations towards a gentleman. He is expected to show interest in getting to know the others, dance with the ladies, and display a welcoming countenance. When he does none of these, the other characters call him proud, lowering his value in the marriage market. What makes Miss Elizabeth see him as the man she wants to marry towards the end of the novel, having no improper pride, is his acting as a gentleman and being kind and helpful towards others. When he displays such behaviour, he adheres to her expectations and societal norms for being a well-mannered gentleman.

In *Eligible*, there is more talk of being rude than being proud, which points to expectations towards other characters' behaviour. When Liz and Darcy meet for the first time, she gets insulted when he does not offer her the available chair beside him. Liz describes him as a man who would think it beneath him to share his table with her. She directs the blame to his Harvard Medical School education and his neurosurgeon occupation. *Pride* is not mentioned in this part, but Liz describes him negatively by calling him offensive, obnoxious, judgmental, off-putting etc. These terms indicate pride, and they signal that Liz expects him to behave contrary. At the novel's end, Liz sees Darcy as kind and generous, based on his behaviour towards herself and others. This imitates the resolution in *Pride and Prejudice*.

In *First Impressions*, work ethics and godliness are two central themes. When Lizzie and Frederick meet for the first time, she interprets his body language as being proud, which in the eyes of this Amish woman is sinful behaviour. When she learns that he employs workers on his farm, she interprets this as him being too proud to work his own land. Through this retelling, we are told that being godly and being hardworking are expected of Amish people. Since Frederick appears to be neither when he and Lizzie first meet, she gets an unfavourable opinion of him. What makes her change her opinions of him and decide to marry him imitates the resolution in *Pride and Prejudice*; she learns that he is hardworking, kind, and a godly, Amish man.

In all three novels, the hero's objections to the heroine's family are the cause of his pride towards the heroine. I will, therefore, argue that when it comes to the hero's pride, this is mostly imitated from the source text to the retelling. This pride prohibits him from telling the heroine that he loves her. I will argue that the cause of the hero's decision to marry the heroine can be summed up in the phrase "love conquers all", since the family members of the heroine continue to be who they are at the end of the novel.

To conclude, I will argue that questions of displaying proper behaviour underlie the notions of pride found in all three novels, even if this is expressed in various ways.

How the differing notions of pride function differently as conflict-creating plot devices

Throughout the discussion part, I have pointed out how the characters' opinions and feelings towards each other change throughout the novels. In all three novels, pride originates from the first meeting between the heroine and the hero. Since the focus is mainly on the heroine, we do not know if the hero is annoyed or feels pride towards her from their first meeting. What we do know is that all three heroines do so towards the hero. The negative emotions elicited in this scene are narrated as well as displayed through the heroine's utterances. The most specific explanation is given in *First Impressions*, where Lizzie feels a feeling she interprets as pride, and since she knows that pride is sinful, she struggles to suppress this feeling. The Amish context is where pride is sanctioned the most since it is defined as a sin, and it, therefore, generates a high amount of tension when pride is observed. This is also visible in *Pride and Prejudice*. However, the general impression is that the pride creating tension in Miss Elizabeth might be equally related to the characterisation of her as a strong-willed woman in a context which limits her. There is much tension between her and Mr. Darcy, which can be related to pride and can be traced to their class differences. In *Eligible*, there is overall less tension and conflict within the marriage plot. Liz gets annoyed, she gets proud, and she gets sad at times. However, her being occupied with solving her family's financial troubles, in addition to the relationship she has with Jasper, removes some of the tension from the marriage plot. To sum up, I will argue that while pride functions as a plot device which creates tension and conflict in both *Pride and Prejudice* and *First Impression*, it does not function in the same way in *Eligible*.

Similarities in characterization which generate similar notions of pride

One feature that needs to be discussed is how woman pride, as I have labelled it in the discussion part, is found in all three heroines and generate pride in them. By woman pride I mean pride in being a woman, and pride based on not being treated as the woman one expects to be treated as. This notion of pride is also generated from the first meetings between the heroine and the hero, based on how the heroine observes and typifies the hero's behaviour, and what she hears him say in the eavesdropping scene.

In *Pride and Prejudice*, we are not explicitly told if Miss Elizabeth shares the opinion of Mr. Darcy as proud based on his manners displayed at the ball. However, the narrator seems to tell readers that him being proud was the general opinion of him. We do know that Mr. Darcy mortifies Miss Elizabeth's pride when he calls her tolerable and says that she is not pretty enough to tempt him.

In *Eligible*, Liz's being insulted by not being offered a chair might be caused by woman pride more than her being insulted because he did not live up to societal expectations of being polite towards strangers. In addition, the eavesdropping scene where Darcy criticises Cincinnati women can be interpreted as having awoken pride within her, based on how she reacts and her negative comments about him later. However, this interpretation might be seen as biased by the scholar, and a sign of how interpretations are affected by previous knowledge.

In *First Impressions*, Frederick evokes pride in Lizzie when she hears him call her tolerable at best, which closely resemble this part of *Pride and Prejudice*.

Had these three heroines not been the strong-willed and determined women they are characterized as there would probably be less pride generated in them. They repeatedly react towards the hero with emotions and attitudes, which can be assigned to having one's pride hurt. This points to how characterisation is an important plot device regarding the notions of pride in the novels. I will argue that an interplay exists between characterization, context and pride through the theme of social control. In *Pride and Prejudice*, Miss Elizabeth is headstrong and determined, but her surroundings limit her actions and opportunities. This is due to the power inequalities related to gender and class, which concern both informal norms and expectations and the legal system. Her pride may be seen as a reaction to these limitations in some scenes, like when Lady Catherine de Bourgh offends her during her visit.

In *First Impressions*, we are told how Lizzie experiences pride on a couple of occasions and how she asks forgiveness for having feelings she is not supposed to have. We also hear her react passionately in some of the scenes in the novel, indicating that she might have to sanction her own feelings repeatedly. She is characterised as a godly Amish woman. She seems to adhere to Christian faith and Amish lifestyles, which limits not only her opportunities in society but also her bodily reactions.

In *Eligible*, we are presented with the most empowered woman of these three heroines. She lives a modern lifestyle, and she is competent and determined enough to solve her family's economic matters. The context of the novel allows her to be this empowered character, without much resistance from her surroundings. Liz does not need a man. She proves that she can manage on her own. Liz is also the one who proposes to Darcy, an offer he gladly accepts. She is in other words allowed to venture into what has traditionally been seen as a man's job without any reprimanding. By doing so, she acts as the novel repeatedly has hinted at: a woman adhering to norms and expectations related to feminism. In this sense, this retelling can be seen as a response to feminist reception of *Pride and Prejudice*.

I will end this part by arguing that woman pride is one central notion of pride in all three novels, indicating that traces of Jane Austen's work are embedded within the retellings.

It would have been interesting to continue this study with a more significant number of retellings, using qualitative methods, to see if the level of social control in the context can be argued to cause differing notions of pride. This study does not allow for such conclusions, but I believe to have found a plausible link. Now that I have studied and dwelled on these retellings, I will let them rest on my bookshelf for a while. For my own future research, I see two possible ways: To be the scholar who continues studying this subject, or perhaps I will do as the authors of these retellings did before me: Be the one who adds another retelling into the archive of Jane Austen's writing and into this part of written culture which I still will continue to read and enjoy for years to come.

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