

Jane Austen's Northanger Abbey and its Film Adaptation Revisited

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Abstract

This paper seeks to a). compare and contrast the narratives in Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey* and that in the movie adaptation, and b). discuss the differences in terms of Catherine Morland's gothic imaginations in the novel and movie adaptation and Austen's attitude towards the impacts that gothic romance brings about upon the novel narrator. The author also hopes that such relevant comparisons and contrasts might help mark out the gap of the plot between the original version and the movie adaptation. Before the author starts the discussion on the textual gap of the plot both in the novel and movie adaptation, he attempts to arouse people's attention to the connection why he thinks the movie adaptation is an effective way for readers to handle the given text. And in the introduction, the author mainly epitomizes the movie adaptation, which is followed by the story outline in the novel. And the author intends to point out some specific sections intentionally omitted and expanded, which causes "the disunity of narratives" (Keller 132). Finally, Austen's narratives style is compared with that of the film director.

Key Words: disunity of narratives, gothic imagination, Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey*, film adaptation

1. Introduction

Realistic Mode of Contemporary Life

Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey* has long remained a topical issue in the literary world when critics argue over the novel's narrative style since its publication in 1818, soon after Austen's death. However, the novel did not get published immediately soon after it had been finished but waited for its publication long after fifteen years. Although Austen did not see her novel published, she is aware of and curious about the reason that made her first novel unpublished behind the scene. As Austen herself reflects, "This little work was finished in the year 1803, and intended for immediate publication. It was disposed of to a bookseller, it was even advertised, and why the business proceeded no farther, the author has never been able to learn. That any bookseller should think it worth-while to purchase what he did not think it worthwhile to publish seems extraordinary..." (1).

Austen's instinct is quite sharp and very accurate. Her intention prevailing in *Northanger Abbey* is to make the story depart from Richardsonian romance¹. Richardsonian romance tells women of the day to sacrifice themselves for the sake of love or in order to win themselves love (Pamela). Therefore, Richardsonian romance, in essence, discords with that in *Northanger Abbey* because the former weighs love sentiment as the latter focuses on realistic mode of everyday life, particularly that of women of the day. *Northanger Abbey* might not be very well-known at first when it was published fifteen years after the novel had been finished. As Austen further says, "But with this, neither the author nor the public have any other concern than as some observation is necessary upon those parts of the work which thirteen years have made comparatively obsolete. The public are entreated to bear in mind that thirteen years have passed since it was finished, many more since it was begun, and that during that period, places, manners, books, and opinions have undergone considerable changes" (1).

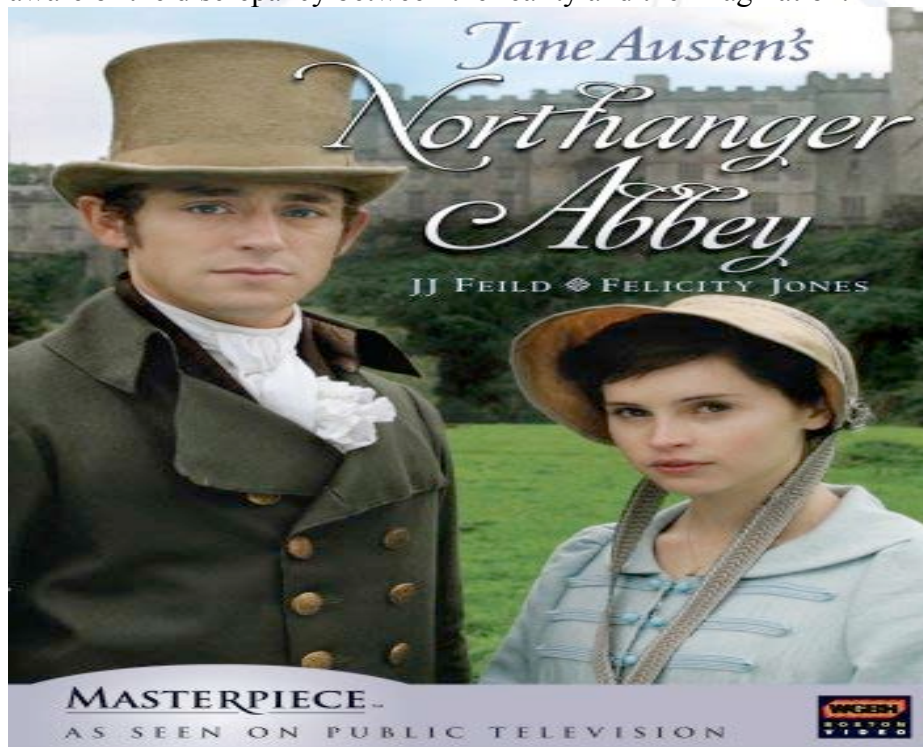
Literary Review and Criticism: Positive

Without complicated plot and characters, *Northanger Abbey* is deemed the novel as the precursor of the realistic mode and later influences Henry James², William Dean Howells, and Mark Twain when they discuss every subtle aspect of life with a *realistic observation* but with different ways. As Henry James notes, Jane Austen is ranked a very top-notch writer, literary critic, and "the fine painter of life" (James). As Carole Gerster and James R. Keller note, the arrangement of this novel (*Northanger Abbey*) in terms of its simple plot and characters very likely corresponds to the simple character of the female novel protagonist when she began to write her first novel. James Edward Austen-Leigh's *A Memoir of Jane Austen* reprinted in 1883 spurred what Leslie Stephen describes the public mania as "Austenolatry" (Stephen).

¹ Pamela, for example, written by Samuel Richardson is a great representative work that is filled with romantic sentiment.

² Henry James is one of the most well-know realistic writers in the 19th-century American literature. His brother, William James, explores the realistic mode from human mental mechanism in the Turn of Century. Both devoted to realistic mode from literary and psychological aspect with a great deal; yet, they came in "this stream" nearly a century late than Jane Austen. In other words, Austen, when it was about time to enter Victorian Age, began quite early searching for "exposure of real life—either public or privacy" in *Northanger Abbey*.

Moreover, Austen originally intends to title this novel as *Susan: A Novel in 2 Volumes* rather than *Northanger Abbey*. It can be guessed that Austen writes this novel not for the public but for her family and intimate friends. This novel serves as family's guide book, instructing girls of the day to discern reality from imagination. This novel can also be regarded as the first one, construing the female image in bildungsroman. How a girl proceeds from her girlhood, to puberty, and to the age of a lady is clearly depicted. And not only has the change of the female protagonist's countenance been stated with a careful description but also her disposition has been marked from immaturity to maturity. Also *Northanger Abbey* precedes *Great Expectation* by around seventy years something. It becomes a model of female bildungsroman novel. It is written and disseminated particularly among the family and relative circle for the exchange of intimacy. Though she is dissatisfied with her novel, Austen does attempt to make her first novel simple and reliable in terms of its plot. She wants her novel to touch the everyday life issue as she arranges her novel female protagonist to become aware of the discrepancy between the reality and the imagination.



“Jane Austen’s *Northanger Abbey* Film Adaptation, 2007” Web. 1 Aug. 2013.

Catherine Morland’s Gothic Imagination

The plot of *Northanger Abbey* progresses as the female protagonist grows up and is introduced into "the society." She is fond of reading gothic novels with romantic scenes. She is emotional and her five senses are susceptibly stirred. She meets her Mr. Right at the ball season and is invited to dance with him; yet, she does not know that she will marry him in the end but makes a chain of bold and biased judgment over the death of Mr. Right's mother and her death. The female protagonist is drawn by scenes in gothic romance in terms of her conception not only about men but also about her vision toward the "outside world." She is indeed very simple and plain in character. The female protagonist needs to be guided and the heroine's Mr. Right does not exist without any function. He acts like the heroine's mentor who observes the heroine's behavior and tells her some other possible resolutions to the matter. Yet, according to

Mary Waldron, "Mary Wollstonecraft was shortly to point out how much this sort of thing pandered to the desires of men rather than the well-being of women..." (Waldron 19). From Wollstonecraft's viewpoints, Austen's female character is "created" and "formulated" in order to correspond men's expectation to what an ideal woman looks like and how they should behave in a "polite society" (says Henry Tilney). Women's image is also manipulated in accord with men's "taste" and "passion" not "well-being" of women (Waldron 19). Catherine Morland falls into a particular male ideology that formulates a kind of spooky sphere in which women when threatened by danger should be saved by hero. This motif in Catherine Morland's imagination repetitiously appears.



"Catherine Morland reading *Udolpho*." Web. 1 Aug. 2013.

Although *Northanger Abbey* is less credited with its fame among the contemporaries (Keller), it is believed that Miss Austen triumphantly portrays her heroine as the one who tastes freshness and bitterness between the real life and girls' imagination. Interestingly, Austen was not satisfied with her first novel for it lacks such characteristic as disunity in terms of plot; yet, *Northanger Abbey* was not unpopular among critical realm. This novel induces three forces that have *Northanger Abbey* criticized with flatly different perspectives. As Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar argue in *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination*, "...Austen's novels, ..., are paradoxically, at once feminist and submissive..." (Keller 116).

"Arguing that Austen's novels subversively criticize but then submissively accept women's limited place in society, Gilbert and Gubar place Austen within the theory of palimpsest: that nineteenth-century women's writings contain subversive impulses but mask and ultimately dismiss them" (Keller 116).

This perspective mixes comments toward Austen's novels with both feminist and antifeminist viewpoints. The first force renders Austen's novels eventually subversive and submissive. Comments and criticism in the first force creates a kind of atmosphere under which readers considerably feel ambivalent when they classify Austen's *Northanger Abbey* into a specific category. Is it truly subversive or submit

ssive?

Second force contains praise for Austen's works, which faithfully convey the idea of society, life, and spirit of the day. As a review in *British Critic* applauds the novel, "[it's] one of the very best of Miss Austen's productions" (Keller 132) and very well "worth their time" (Keller 132). Austen's *Northanger Abbey* can stand the test of time because she is the first real female humorist writer who can raise the issue and induce sarcasm to support her perspective to it. As James R. Keller notes, "Austen's contemporaries admired her skill in creating authentic representations of...[the contemporary] middle class" (Keller 132). Austen's portrayal of the contemporary middle-class life is faithfully presented in the novel. For example, the "ball season," in *Northanger Abbey*, is actually a kind of occasion into which young ladies expected to step and made their acquaintances. "They [Austen's contemporaries] praised the modesty of her subject matter--her preoccupation with the events of domestic life" (Keller 132). "The events of domestic life" in *Northanger Abbey* propel Catherine Morland to bear in her mind the reality from the imagination she creates in her brain by means of reading the novel of romance. One reviewer even applauds that Austen's skill rests upon her "talent for observation" (Keller 132). Is Austen's observation realistic or unrealistic?

Literary Review and Criticism: Negative

On the other hand, "the negative observations of her contemporary readers focus primarily on her treatment of General Tilney and the Abbey portion of the novel" (Keller 132). Maria Edgeworth, in a letter to her friend, wrote that "the general is not realistically drawn" (Keller 132). Another reviewer even noted that "[the part about the General and the Abbey] are in considerable want of delicacy" (Keller 132). He even laments that "...Austen has not employed her usual sensitivity in the portrayal of General Tilney" (Keller 132). As Keller further argues, "*Northanger Abbey* may be accurately characterized as one of Jane Austen's problem novels--those works demonstrating a great deal of merit, enough to warrant the attention and delight of readers and critics...but nevertheless possessing flaws that cannot remain unnoticed by the discerning reader familiar with her later, more polished works: *Emma*, *Pride and Prejudice*, and *Mansfield Park*" (Keller 131).

Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey* might invoke absolutely opposite critical perspectives that either rejects or applauds her skills; yet, her employment of authoress portrayal of Catherine Morland shapes out a unprecedented heroine who learns from illusion, and grows from failure.

The intriguing point that makes the author do this research has clearly been stated. Both negative and positive literary review and criticism on Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey* has crossed and challenged against each other. One would definitely wonder why Austen juxtaposes the gothic and romantic scenes in the novel and how Jon Jones (the 2007 film director) deals with "the effects and impacts" Austen describes to fall upon Catherine Morland after her reading the gothic novel, *Udolpho*. And readers might be curious about the author's choice of *Northanger Abbey* and film adaptation rather than other more credited novels by Austen. Why does the author choose *Northanger Abbey* and its film adaptation? As Carole Gerster argues, "Austen revises established novel conventions [in *Northanger Abbey*] to take issue with conservative ideas about women, defends novel readers and novels written by and about women..."

(Gerster 115). A quick biographical exploration by Gerster indicates Austen's defense of her novel protagonist, Catherine Morland. As Gerster asserts, "...Jane Austen declared herself an avid novel reader and admirer, and wrote her own novels in reaction to conservative ideas about gender roles and relations" (Gerster 115). Therefore, what does Austen employ in her novel as the reversal in terms of narrative? How does Austen present the gothic images generated from women readers of the day rather than those images presented by the male readers?

As Carole Gerster argues, "Notable as her first mature work, *Northanger Abbey* reveals Austen's feminist impetus and intentions and demonstrates the strategies of parody and irony..." (Gerster 115). If *Northanger Abbey* is merely a kind of "feminist impetus" (Gerster 115), as the author will try to argue in this essay, there is still much to be attained and scrutinized for readers' better understanding of both the novel and the film adaptation. This paper which compares and contrasts the novel and its film adaptation is written due mainly to the following two reasons. First, Austen's *Northanger Abbey*, adapted as an one-and-half-hour film, is a great companion to those who have not read the novel or have read but do not fully understand the arrangements in terms of its plot, themes, narratives, and characterization. The movie adaptation provides its watchers with a great opportunity to expose themselves to the original text with a different view for examining the original text. Although this novel was less credited with popular attention and was unsophisticated as "the responses of her contemporaries to the publication of the novel were a [kind of] disappointment" (Keller, 132), it led its readers to the world in which they can go back and forth between the book and the film in order to have a better understanding toward the text. From the film adaptation, readers seem to be able to join the world of "the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century middle class" (Keller 132). For example, readers seem to join the party where people of the day could only make their acquaintances with others through the means of being introduced by their elderly family or relatives at the ball season. Readers can even appreciate the gothic architecture whose roof is towering and creates solemn atmosphere. Yet, the movie adaptation is divorced from the original version in the following dimensions: depth of characters' portrayal, and influence of "gothic romance" (Keller 131) toward the girls of the day. However, one thing that needs to be noticed is the fact that the narratives in the novel differentiates from that in the movie adaptation. And this induces a further study on the narratives. However, the film adaptation seems successfully deals with what critics are worried about the feature of the novel, the "disunity of narratives" (Keller).

Second, Catherine Morland is misled by her imaginations generated from gothic romance that is filled with romantic scenes and scary landscape in Nature. Her gothic imagination is mainly derived from her reading the novels, *Mysteries of Udolpho* and *The Romance of Forest* by Anne Radcliff. Miss Morland misunderstands the world she lives in from the one she creates and shapes out from daily reading. Too naive, Miss Morland visualizes everything in terms of human character, human dwelling places, and human eye contact with a biased viewpoints, which threaten her cognitive understanding toward the reality. Catherine's gothic imagination, as Paul Morrison argues, "reminds us that the gothic is conventionally associated with a deviant Catholicism" (Morrison 2). Gothic imagination's quality of deviance, on one hand, makes Catherine Morland excite about the outside world, Bath, that she is about to connect with; on the other, blinds her about the reality which is farther away from her imagination.

Disunity of the Narrative

The disunity of narratives and Catherine Morland's gothic imaginations play the important role not only in the novel but also in its film adaptation. As for the narratives, there are some gaps in terms of plot development between the text and the movie adaptation. These gaps not only play a major role of thematic significance by Jane Austen but also plays the role of what Syndy McMillen Conger argues, "the inapplicability of the gothic sentiments in the mundane world" (Keller 136) from Catherine Morland's imagination. This film adaptation acts like a quick snapshot which quickly records major scenes written in the novel.

Northanger Abbey is about the story of Catherine Morland who goes through the "trials and pitfalls" of the contemporary "courtship rituals" (Keller 133). Its film adaptation is directed by Jon Jones, the 2007 WBGH/Granada *Northanger Abbey* (directed by Jon Jones, written by Andrew Davies). Julia Dearden acts as Mrs. Morland and Gerry O'Brien as Mr. Morland. Felicity Jones is an actress playing the role, Miss Morland and JJ. Feild as Henry Tilney. Moreover, Sylvestra Le Touzel plays the role as Mrs. Allen and Desmond Barrit as Mr. Allen. The main characters mentioned above help the author delineate the significance of disjointed narrative of plot both in the novel and film adaptation.

The novel is divided into two sections, the first half is about the challenge that Miss Morland faces: to discern the bad from the good acquaintances, the Thorpes, and the Tilneys. And the rest of the novel mainly focuses on her gothic imagination about General Tilney's wife who died mysteriously in the Abbey. Arranged by Jane Austen, Catherine Morland grows very fine and reaches the age at which she will step into "the society" soon. It means that she will "squeeze into" the society of men and women. Catherine Morland's desire of stepping into the society derives mainly from her maturity from the age of girlhood and her desire to be "gazed" by potential Mr. Right. Moreover, it originates from her interest of reading gothic novels. However, before Catherine Morland readies to accept her adulthood and the world which belongs to adults, she must encounter a series of unexpected and unpredictable events that might shock her and subvert her single-sided conception toward this adult society. She when faces dilemma in terms of friendship³ and love⁴ should be trained so as to be a grown-up Miss Morland simultaneously.

As for Catherine Morland and the Morlands, the movie adaptation hardly opens with a very long description about them; yet, the novel expands the first chapter, describing Miss Morland and her family with a very vivid portrayal of Catherine Morland, the novel protagonist. In the movie adaptation, *Northanger Abbey* opens with the third person narrative viewpoint which makes readers believe that the narrator knows the Morlands very well. The narrator is omniscient. He/ She describes Catherine Morland as if they knew each other since their infancy. The third person narrator does not exist without any function. His description compared with that of the first person narrator is more reliable. He can be anyone among people with a faithful but critical perspective toward the protagonist's routine behavior, personal disposition, and mental

³ As for the female intimate relationship, Miss Morland must discern Isabella from Elena to decide whether either of which is genuine to her.

⁴ As for the love relationship with men, Miss Morland must discern John from Tilney to decide whether either of which is genuine to her.

mechanism. He stands with readers or film watchers, introducing the Morlands. This third person narrator informs readers of some basic upbringing and characteristics about the Morlands. He points out several things within three-to-five minutes episode about the Morlands. First, Catherine Morland, the female protagonist in the novel, has a kind of "personal disposition which is equally against her family" (Northanger Abbey, Adapted). Hardly can anyone who has ever seen Catherine Morland naturally think of her as her family's hope. Second, Mr. and Mrs. Morland have ten family members, which could be called a "fine family" of the day. Third, Catherine's family are, in general, "very plain" (Northanger Abbey, Adapted). Fourth, as Catherine grows up, her talent in dancing, playing baseball, and books becomes eminently enhanced.



"Catherine Morland." Web. 1 Aug. 2013.

In *Northanger Abbey*, "...Catherine, for many years of her life, as plain as any. She had a thin awkward figure, a sallow skin without color, dark lank hair, and strong features..." (Austen 3). Austen's intention originally befell upon an intimate description of Susan, as both her first novel's title and the name of female protagonist. However, the movie adaptation purposefully erases Austen's attempt of introducing her readers with Lady Susan or anything about Susan. Instead of it, the director of the film substitutes a very intimate portrayal of a girl for a series of events taking place to Catherine Morland. Therefore, a series of dramatic effects in the film arise jointly as Catherine Morland is led into "the society" by Mrs. Allen thereafter. Another example comes from the scene that is recounted in the novel but disappears in the film adaptation. When Catherine Morland is about to leave for Bath, Mrs. Morland's anxiety intensifies. "When the hour of departure drew near, the maternal anxiety of Mrs. Morland will be naturally supposed to be most severe" (10). Not only is Mrs. Morland sad about her daughter's departure, but also she is much alarmed because Catherine Morland has grown up such a beauty with fine lips and complexion. Although Mrs. Morland is supposed to worry about her daughter' safety in Bath, she does not mention any word about "lords," "baronets," and "scoundrels" (11) but just admonishes her daughter with a maternal farewell. As Mrs. Morland says, "I beg, Catherine, you will always wrap yourself up very warm about the throat, when you come from the rooms at night; and I wish you would try to keep some account of money you spend..." (11).

Another example that is never described in the movie adaptation but is carefully depicted by Austen is Mrs. Allen. As Austen introduces her to readers, "Mrs. Allen was one of that numerous class of females, whose society can raise no other emotion than surprise at there being any men in the world who could like them well enough to

marry them" (13). What Austen means is the fact that Mrs. Allen is like the one who *professionally* ushers her relatives and acquaintances into "the society." Mrs. Allen "functions" as "medium" to introduce Catherine Morland into "the society" with courtesy; otherwise, they will be expelled from "it" as Henry Tilney is aware of. In other words, Mrs. Allen, in *Northanger Abbey*, ushers Miss Morland into the world of adult and the world filled with women's sentiment. The world that Mrs. Allen ushers Miss Morland to step into is the one that magnifies Miss Morland's gothic imagination which is particularly formed based on women's perception to the world that they are unfamiliar with. General Tilney's abbey is a great example. The abbey not only signifies General Tilney's mysterious past but also represents the production "simulated" by women's problematic judgment. Problematic judgment is derived from women's sentiment. Women's sentiment indicates their desire to find their Mr. Right on whom they can depend for the rest of their lives. And this kind of women's sentiment has dangerously transformed, as for Catherine Morland, into uncontrollable fantasy, that affects her judgment and perception to people around her. As Keller argues, "gothic sentiment" (Keller 136) is threatening to Catherine Morland since her judgment is misled. However, the juxtaposition of women's gothic sentiment in the text disunite the panoramic third-person-narrative perspective because it has been transformed into the first-person-narrative perspective generated particularly from Catherine Morland's viewpoints. As Mary Lascelles, in *Jane Austen and Her Art* (1939), argues, "Catherine's suspicions of General Tilney's character, is not adequately integrated into the narrative. The gothic parody does not contribute to the advancement of the plot, nor does the crisis or conclusion of the novel rely on or even acknowledge the significance of this material" (Keller 134). Lascelles's observation does not come alone. Marvin Mudrick, in his book *Jane Austen: Irony as Defense and Discovery* (1952), asserts that "...the author has intentionally created a contrast and an aesthetic disharmony between the two halves of the narrative in order to demonstrate the superiority of one set of aesthetic principles over another..." (Keller 134).



"Mrs. Allen and Catherine Morland." Web. 1 Aug. 2013.

<<http://ts1.mm.bing.net/th?id=H.4892256599803220&pid=15.1>>

Another example is the description about Mrs. Allen who ushers Miss Morland into "the society" where Miss Morland made a delightful acquaintance with the Tilney

family and the Thropes. As the narrator in *Northanger Abbey* recounts, "had neither beauty, genius, accomplishment, nor manner. The air of a gentlewoman, a great deal of quiet, inactive good temper, and a trifling turn of mind were all that could account for her being the choice of a sensible, intelligent man, like Mr. Allen" (13).

Discussion and Conclusion

Northanger Abbey is not merely a great reader's companion. It also catches readers' attention in terms of its "aesthetic unity" (Keller 133) with the accompaniment of "gothic romance" (Keller 133). As Keller maintains, "the problem of aesthetic unity in the novel arises from the attempted parody of gothic romance...The narrative seems to get off track for a period while the author burlesques the common elements...[of] gothic and specifically Anne Radcliff's *Mysteries of Udolpho*" (Keller 133).

A series of events both in the novel and film adaptation are not arranged without function. Jane Austen seeks to parody Anne Radcliff's *Mysteries of Udolpho* for its preposterousness in terms of portraying women as the ones easily affected by their imaginations. However, their imaginations come mainly from gothic romance rather than their self-instinct with which they are believed to be born (Sarah Grand, Mona Caird, and Oliver Schreiner). Catherine Morland's struggle between the reality and the imagination interferes with her perception toward General Tilney, Henry Tilney's father. Also, Catherine Morland's imagination projects out her suspicion toward death of Henry Tilney's mother. Miss Morland is ambivalent when facing a specific situation and her judgment is problematically led by her daily reading of "romance novels" (Keller 131).

Therefore, the second dimension that appears as a major novel motif is girls' gothic imaginations influenced by reading gothic novels. This motif penetrates the novel. The film adaptation presents girls' gothic imaginations, which cannot be visualized and conceptualized through the text. The movie contains lots of scenes that parody problematic gothic imaginations generated from girls as they step into the age of puberty and as they are affected by adult vision toward defining men and women and their love. Girls' fantasy toward the role that either of the genders plays is kindled by their reading of novels with gothic and mysterious senses. Reading gothic romance becomes a kind of great fashion for contemporary girls. Reading itself formulates girls' imagination, which is very complex. They read gothic romance and are affected by their reading. Such concepts as heroes saving beauties and beauties abducted by villains are deeply rooted in their hearts. Their passion toward the unknown adult world that they have not yet "tasted" forms a great black hole that is magnified. Drawn by this "huge black hole" In the stage of puberty, girls of the day zealously imagined that heroes come to the rescue of a beauty in danger. In the movie adaptation, for example, when Catherine Morland is invited by Mr. and Mrs. Allen for taking a journey to Bath, she imagines that scoundrels on their way to Bath would abduct her because of her appearance despite the fact that the novel never directly points it out. Another example comes from Catherine Morland's making an acquaintance with Henry Tilney, from which her liking for Mr. Tilney grows at the ball. Henry Tilney, in the movie adaptation, becomes a typical hero, standing in rain and coming at the rescue of Miss Morland under the threat of John Thorpes. Still, in the movie adaptation, shortly after Miss Morland notices the scene in which Isabella

who has already revealed her affection to Miss Morland's brother, James, flirts with Captain Tilney, older brother of Henry Tilney, she dreams of dream in which Isabella falls a captive to Captain Tilney in the dungeon of the castle, the Abbey.



"Catherine Morland and her Fantasy." Web. 1 Aug. 2013.

From Gerster's observation, some critics regards "gothic portion of *Northanger Abbey* as a flaw in Austen's novel [and] often contend that the realistically depicted Catherine turns out to be a stereotyped heroine after all" (Gerster 121). Readers' first glance seems to correspond to Gerster's observation. However, Catherine Morland jumps out of the expectation of readers as not a typically fixed heroine who must resist any attraction from the male-constructed world. As Gerster argues,

"Austen's irony is effectively at work as, in Bakhtin fashion, her feminist stance takes the form of evoking, in order to negate reader expectation to find a heroine who must learn not to be influenced by novels and to accept reality as defined by the hero" (Gerster 121).

Austen's major concern about dealing with Catherine Morland's gothic imaginations lies primarily in two dimensions. One is that Austen ridicules gothic romance for its "inapplicability" in daily routine life. Its impact on young girls is overwhelming. Its impact leads a girl to the conclusion by which she defines the world in which she lives parallels to that in the gothic romance. However, what Austen is concerned about is the fact the world portrayed in gothic romance actually differentiates from the real world. Moreover, Austen, through Miss Morland's gothic imaginations, indicates that women of the day were living in "domestic carceral," (Morrison 3) that makes women limited to domestic space. Once constrained from the outer space, women of the day easily indulged in their beliefs, and even faiths they absorbed from the gothic romance. Their misled judgment blocks their vision and incidents involved in their life become indiscernible.

In the film adaptation, the cinematic narrative juxtaposes with Catherine Morland's imagination intertwined with perilous and emergent situations. In her imagination, Catherine Morland expects the event in which a lady is abducted and saved by a hero; yet, she outwardly remains reserved and very timid as a girl with a mixed feeling. On the way to Bath with the Allens, Catherine Morland imagines that Mr. Allen is slain and Mrs. Allen faints as they are threatened by "scoundrels" and "baronets." On one hand, she cannot imagine her being abducted really taking place because she thinks she will faint due to her emotion overwhelmed; on the other, she, somehow, looks forward to it. In other words, Miss Morland lingers around the boundary dispersed between girls' imaginations and social conventions. The movie adaptation also contains such imaginary scenes from Catherine Morland. Scenes are as horse chasing when she and the Allens are on the way to Bath. She, a cute lady, is abducted by scoundrels. And a great fighting happens between a hero and scoundrel. As Catherine

Morland imagines, Isabella falls the lady captive to Henry Tilney's older brother in the dungeon.



“Catherine Morland and Henry Tilney.” Web. 1 Aug. 2013.

<http://images5.fanpop.com/image/photos/3160000/Northanger-Abbey-northanger-abbey-31631147-427-640.jpg>

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