

Emma and clueless



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The film *Clueless*, written and directed by Amy Heckerling, a somewhat modern adaptation of Jane Austen's novel *Emma* examines the congruent ideas of self-knowledge and social obligation. Through the characterization of the protagonists, Cher and Emma, who are perceived to be perfect in every way, possessing many virtues, as they are 'handsome, clever and rich'. However they are only seemingly 'perfect', as we soon find out that they are flawed by a deluded sense of importance and a general lack of insight.

Austen and Heckerling acknowledge their potential for insight, thus we are able to witness the transformation of their characters as they undergo a catastrophe, forcing them to confront their flaws and enabling their growth. Both Cher and Emma live parallel lives to each other. Living the life of luxury secluded from lower-class society due to their wealth. Emma lives in the 'large and populous Village of Highborn whilst Cher lives in flashy, rich Beverly Hills, USA.

Cher's father is a litigation lawyer a highly lucrative and immoral occupation, he is seen walking down the staircase as their maid runs off in fear indicating Cher extinguished social power through her father's status. Emma also displays high social power as she is described to have 'a comfortable home and a happy disposition'. The leisurely lifestyle that they live foreshadows their ultimate downfall as they are blinded by their own self-indulgence and arrogance the power of having rather too much her own way.

These flaws are elicited by the absence of a maternal figure, or in fact any sort of guidance at all. Mr. Horowitz contributes to Cher's flaws through bad

guidance and rapacious ideals. Heckling adaptation focuses on the stereotypical American youth culture to appeal to a contemporary audience using humor to convey the message. By using an opening montage Heckling establishes the superficial and consumerist values of modern society as we are bombarded with saturated images of teenagers sporting bright clothes in flattering angles, it almost seems as if they are posing for a photo-shoot.

Ocher's naivety is apparent from the very start as she states 'I have a way normal life for a teenager' Juxtaposed with her enormous wardrobe of clothes, revealing her insular view on the world around her. The school grounds are used to introduce the various cliques or social classes but Cheer only associates herself with the 'popular' group as everyone else is deemed lower class. Relationships are used as a prime tool in Cheer and Enema's meddling. In both texts it represents Emma and Cheer arrogant and stubborn belief that their 'guidance' is needed in other peoples lives.

Mr. Hall and Ms Ageist are used for Cheer own selfish endeavours as she only 'match makes' to gain marks and enhance her social power. Emma sees herself as playing a vital role in the marriage of Mr. Weston and Ms Taylor after all how could they have possibly managed on their own? This successful matchmaking only encourages them to do more, as both characters undertake a 'project'. ATA is immediately seen as lower class with her, doggy clothes and ditsy nature, seen is promptly taken unaware then wing AT caner Ana Dillon won are unintentionally patronizing towards her, they propose a 'makeover'.

Harriet Smith, equal to Taxi's character is also taken under the wing of Emma, who dismisses the friends that Harriet has made though very could sort of people, must be doing her harm' when in actual fact Emma has never met Robert Martin and is causing more harm than help. Seeing Harriet's potential as she was pretty 'blue eyes and light hair', she considered what she was doing as a 'kind undertaking' to detach her from 'bad acquaintance'. This was an example of both characters self-garnishment. The two characters that are recognized as insightful and willingly honest are that of Josh and Mr. Knightly.

They both perceive the danger Emma and Cheer are putting on ATA and Harriet, Knightly sees Harriet as 'the worst sort of companion' as she is advocating Emma's already big ego with her flattery. Upon seeing Tat, Josh states 'you've found someone even more clueless' inspired by her compliance to change for Cheer. Josh's insight is displayed in his appearance and the books he reads as he wears an Amnesty International T-shirt and reads Frederica Nietzsche supporting his admirable morals and knowledge.

Contrast is shown in the TV channels that Cheer and Josh watch whilst he is interested in current affairs Cheer only wants to watch cartoons, demonstrating her immaturity and resistance to comprehend what's going on in the world. Bloodcurdling is used as a structure in both texts we see this in the film through Cheer driving, debating and love interest. Her first challenge was debate where she absurdly compares oppressed people to her father's dinner party, showing how she values trivial things over real issues and using teen speech 'like totally bugging' expressing her immaturity and lack of seriousness on the subject.

The whole class claps even though none of them were paying attention. The Jeep is used a metaphor for Cheer life as she is confident in what she's doing but lacks skill and is altogether reckless. When she fails her driving test she is blatantly shut down by the instructor who refuses to indulge her, undermining her with the term 'girl, in some ways he is a wake up call for her as he represents reality.