

From Novel to Film: A Study of Memory, Illness, and Symbols in *All the Bright Places* in Light of Eneste's Ecranisation Theory

Deepika T¹ & Bhuvanawari R²

¹Research Scholar, School of Social Sciences and Languages, Vellore Institute of Technology, Chennai, India

²Associate Professor, School of Social Sciences and Languages, Vellore Institute of Technology, Chennai, India

Correspondence: Bhuvanawari R, Associate Professor, School of Social Sciences and Languages, Vellore Institute of Technology, Chennai, India. E-mail: bhuvanadoss@yahoo.co.in

Received: September 19, 2023

Accepted: October 21, 2023

Online Published: November 8, 2023

doi:10.5430/wjel.v14n1p57

URL: <https://doi.org/10.5430/wjel.v14n1p57>

Abstract

A person's psyche is composed of three distinct yet related components: memory, illness, and symbols. The American teen romance film *All the Bright Places* (2020b) is based on the Jennifer Niven novel of the same name and is available to stream on Netflix. The term 'adaptation' describes how books, stories, and comics are interpreted, reworked, and reimagined for use in movies, music, video games, and webcomics. It has an intertextual and reciprocal structure. The narrative of Theodore Finch's and Violet Markey's mental illness and suicidality is the focus of Jennifer Niven's young adult book *All the Bright Places* (2015a). As it's vital to maintain screentime, dramatic effect, and censorship, sequences are frequently altered and excluded in Adaptation. These changes are often not well received by the audience. It was also widely criticised that Brett Haley's adaptation of the book, *All the Bright Places* (2020b), failed to do the novel justice. The objective of the investigation is to ascertain the modifications implemented in the film and the rationale behind them. Through the lens of Eneste's Ecranisation theory, this study explores the moments that are included and excluded from the movie *All the Bright Places* (2020b). The three steps in the Ecranisation theory are reduction, variation, and addition. This paper delves into the memory shared by the characters, the portrayal of their illness and the use of symbolism in both the novel and the film. The researcher identifies that the ecranised contents in the film shift the focus from Finch and Violet's struggle with suicidality to their love story. This shift portrays the film and the story in a lighter way. It also aids the director in preventing the film from being an example of the Werther effect, the phenomenon of suicide contagion.

Keywords: Adaptation Studies, Memory, Illness, Symbolism, Ecranisation, Werther Effect

1. Introduction

Adaptation has been a crucial component of filmmaking since the late nineteenth century. The process of adapting a movie from a book has become much more complex over time. MacCabe (2011) emphasizes that the cinema "produces a completely new kind of adaptation that claims that the source material is being faithfully translated into a new medium. It is important to stress that this relation between source and adaptation is effectively unknown to previous cultural eras" (quoted in Jellenik, 2017). Ecranisation is one of the initial steps in a sequence of steps that go into cinema adaptation. A book and a movie belong to two different mediums: text and audio-visual, making comparisons between them is difficult. While a book engages the imagination, a movie appeals to the audio-visual senses. This essay contrasts the book and movie, *All the Bright Places* (2020b), in order to highlight the specifics that the filmmakers chose for the screenplay. In this article, the ecranised section of the movie is divided into three categories: memory, illness, and symbols. Memory is a complex and uninterpreted part of humans. In our minds, certain symbols reveal memories, and these memories trigger emotions (fear, trauma), which cause illness. Even if memory, sickness, and symbols are distinct from one another, they are interconnected to create a unique viewpoint. This research paper attempts to connect these elements to the social conscience with which the movie *All the Bright Places* (2020b) is produced, to avoid a potential Werther effect result.

2. Methodology

The reduction and variation in the movie *All the Bright Places* (2020b) are examined using the framework of Eneste's Ecranisation theory. In his Ecranisation hypothesis, Eneste outlined three categories: reduction, variation, and addition. Comparative examination of Niven's *All the Bright Places* (2015a), the book, and Haley's *All the Bright Places* (2020b), the movie, reveals the omission and alterations. The research paper focuses on the changes in the aspect of memory shared by the characters, the portrayal of their illness, and the use of symbolism in both the novel and film. This essay offers a brief overview of the Werther effect, which claims that media has a detrimental impact on suicide. It also focuses on how, although dealing with suicide, the movie avoids setting a bad precedent.

3. Literature Review

"The Psychopathology of Cinema: How Mental Illness and Psychotherapy are Portrayed in Film" by Lauren Beachum, published in 2010, is a study about those who have mental illnesses. The study discusses stereotypes associated with electroconvulsive therapy and people

with mental illness in the media. It focuses on clinical training, cinematherapy, and misconceptions about those with mental illnesses and the medical professionals who care for them (Beachum, 2010).

The 2016 article "Ecranisation of Plot in the Novel and Film of *Breaking Dawn* by Stephanie Meyer" by Yuni Triswela compares the plots of the *Breaking Dawn* book and *Breaking Dawn Part I*, the first instalment in the Twilight saga. The author discusses the reduction, variation, and addition made in the novel by following the ecranisation of the plot in the film (Triswela, 2016).

In his 2016 article "Comparison Between Novel and Film 'Divergent' (Ecranisation Theory)", Muh. Kayyis notes the differences between the film and the first book in the trilogy, *Divergent*, in terms of setting and style. The ideas, historical context, and point of view from the novel have been carried over into the movie (Kayyis, 2016).

Isatadiyanantha compares the novel and the movie *Ayat-Ayat Cinta (2008)* in "Ecranisation from Textual Tradition to Cinema: The Infidelity against the Values of Literary Writing?" (2017). Although the novel and the film both have the title *Ayat-Ayat Cinta*, the dissertation explores the alterations made to the film, the accidental meeting of the lead characters that becomes an intentional one, and how the dialogues linked to the description of the scenery are eliminated. Given that the writer and the filmmaker follow two separate paths, she places a strong emphasis on embracing the modifications made in the movie (Isatadiyanantha, 2017).

According to "Adaptation of Narrative Elements Novel to Film *Surga Yang Tak Dirindukan (The Heaven None Missed)*" (2018) by Doni Subrata and Suminto A. Sayuti, there are variances between media and the elements of religious values in the narrative. The authors claim that due to this shift in media, changes occur in both textual and audio-visual media, with films falling under the latter category. A character in the book named Mei Pei embraces Islam and studies it under Prasetya's tutelage. In addition, the movie presents the idea that not all men engage in polygamy out of lust (Subrata & Sayuti, 2018).

In her essay "Trauma and Memory in Select Works of Margaret Atwood and Margaret Laurence" published in 2019 by Maya Nair, the author discusses trauma and memory. The study explores the requirement to create a socially inclusive strategy, a narrative of the past, as a coping mechanism to deal with trauma (Nair, 2019).

The 2020 essay "Depiction of Mental Illness within the Medium of Modern Film" by Thomas Buttigieg examines how mental illness is currently portrayed in ten films that were produced between 2010 and 2019. Buttigieg talks about the stigma and preconceptions associated with trauma serving as the root cause of mental illness. According to the study, films continue to stigmatize and stereotype mentally ill persons as violent and wild while portraying characters with mental illnesses like depression and post-traumatic stress disorder in a favourable light (Buttigieg, 2020).

Facts regarding suicide and self-harm are included in "Depiction of Suicide and Self-harm in Literature" (2020). The "Werther Effect" and the "Papageno Effect" are explained in detail. The Werther effect is the idea that when suicide is portrayed negatively in media and literature, it encourages imitational or copycat suicide. According to Solomon, the Papageno effect is the idea that by showing characters who are struggling with suicidal thoughts seeking assistance and overcoming them, hope and optimism are generated for those in the same circumstance (Solomon, 2020).

"A Semiotic Analysis of Trauma Recovery on the *All the Bright Places Film*" (2021), a research on the signs in the movie, was written by Astri Habibah and Dr. Yeny Prastiwi. The researcher identifies clues throughout the movie such as the exchange of stones, the sticky notes on the wall, and Finch holding his breath while riding. The symbols stand for trauma, healing, independence, and support (Habibah & Yeny, 2021).

The South Korean movie, *Parasite* uses symbols including the morse code, rain, and the subterranean, according to Tira Nur Fitiria's "Representation of 'Symbols' in Parasite Movie" (2021). The subterranean represented Kim's family, the rain represented money, and the morse code served as a call for assistance (Fitiria, 2021).

"The Werther Effect, the Papageno Effect, or No Effect? A Literature Review" (2021) investigates the connection between media coverage of suicide and the subsequent research on it. One hundred and eight research papers examining various media influences on suicide constitute the sample for this study. The media, according to the study, can work in both triggering and protecting ways, like a two-edged knife. He asserted that the risk of contagious suicide may be reduced if the media altered and enhanced its unfavourable reporting style on suicide (Domaradzki, 2021).

The literature review includes books, essays, and dissertations on Ecranisation in various novels-to-movie adaptations. Notes on theories of cinema adaptation and the portrayal of mental illness in films are also included in the review. The research paper examines the notion of adaptation and Ecranisation of the story in the film *All the Bright Places (2020b)*.

4. Overview of the Novel

A novel, in the opinion of Robert Stanton, presents the development of one-character, complex social situations, relationships that involved many or few characters, and various complex events that occurred some time ago. (Stanton, 1965). *All the Bright Places* by Jennifer Niven was published in 2015. Theodore Finch and Violet Markey are two high school students whose lives are the focus of the narrative. Theodore Finch has bipolar disorder but dislikes having his condition classified. He simply refers to his days as having an 'awake' and 'asleep' interval. He forgets the events while he is 'asleep', and he frequently leaves his house without telling anyone. He conducts himself normally when he is 'awake'. Finch comes from an unhappy household. Following his parent's divorce, Finch now lives

with his mother and siblings and spends the weekends with his father's family. While Violet Markey battles survivor's guilt following the death of her sister in a car accident, Finch fights his suicidal inclinations in an effort to remain alive. Finch seeks advice from Mr Embryo, the school counsellor, over his prohibition. Violet and her sister were involved in an automobile accident, but Violet was injured, and Violet felt responsible because her sister had died. Following the incident, Violet ceased writing, shied away from automobile trips, and became more reserved. Her parents have been extremely helpful and supportive of her in every way. Violet receives counselling guidance from her school counsellor, but she is hesitant to talk to anyone about her problems. By chance, Violet and Finch cross paths at their school's bell tower. They later worked on a geography project together after a series of events stemming from this meeting. They must go around Indiana and write about the two spots they enjoyed best in order to finish the project. Finch supports Violet's exploration and travel. She gradually resumes her daily activities, such as laughing, writing, and sleeping, and she starts driving. Along with her new group of schoolmates, she launches a new magazine and becomes active. Finch only feels happy and better when he is with Violet, and he refers to her as Ultraviolet because she has given him life colours he had never before experienced. Finch gets worse as Violet becomes more occupied. Finch's therapist believes he might have bipolar disorder and advises him to join support groups to discuss his problems. He attempts suicide but repents afterwards. Finch begins to live in his wardrobe and even goes missing for a few days from his house. He ends his life by drowning in Blue Hole Lake. Finch makes the final stops on the list of locations he had intended to see with Violet before taking his own life. He then communicates with her via messaging from those locations. In one of the locations, he also leaves her a song. His song and messages enabled Violet to maintain her cheerful persona despite the sorrow she felt in the wake of Finch's death.

5. Overview of the Film, *All the Bright Places*

According to Linda Hutcheon, "Adaptation is repetition, but repetition without replication" (Hutcheon, 2013). This creative technique is employed by Brett Haley, director of *All the Bright Places* (2020b). He borrows the storyline from Niven's *All the Bright Places* (2015a), although he presents some of the characters and events in a distinctive way. Despite the plot of the movie, Haley was quite clear that he did not want it to be interpreted as a message movie. *All the Bright Places* (2015a) is more than just a look at mental health; instead, the director wanted it to be "artistic and romantic" (Nast, 2022). In contrast to the novel, which centres on Theodore Finch and Violet Markey's mental health, the movie's plot mostly centres on their love story. The novel's author, Jenifer Niven, collaborated with Liz Hannah on the screenplay. The background music fits the movie perfectly. The film depicts the irrevocable impact that Violet and Finch's love had on one another's lives.

6. Ecranisation Theory

Pamusuk Eneste, an Indonesian author, wrote a book titled *Novel Dan Film* (Novels and Films) in 1991. Eneste uses examples of locally (Indonesian) adapted films to illustrate the Ecranisation theory. The word ecranise refers to wide-screening. It involves turning a text into a motion picture. "Ecranization is a wide-screening or transferring process of a novel into a movie. Ecranization can be a process of shifting, transferring or removing characteristics of a novel into a film. Moving from novel to white-screen inevitably leads to various changes" (quoted in Istadiyantha, 2017). According to a 2016 book review, "Ecranisation is the process of changing the world of words into a world of images that moves continuously and transforms images/linguistics into visual images" (Selesa, 2016). It entails three steps: reduction, variation, and addition. Reduction is the term used to describe the film's deletion of certain sequences or characters that were featured in the novel. Due to time constraints, it is almost impossible for filmmakers to incorporate all of the novel's incidents into the final product. Variation describes the differences between the scenes or characters in the movie and the book. The term "addition" refers to the incorporation of previously unwritten characters or sequences into the film. The narrative is ecranised in order to heighten audience interest and create a more dramatic effect.

7. Memory: Suicidal Ideation of Finch and Violet

Memory becomes a chisel with which authors sculpt their work, albeit in different ways and perspectives. Each work of fiction uses memory to shape the plot, and it becomes an integral part of the authorial technique. The use of language, ordering of time, space, and relationships help forge memory and its role in the quest for salvation. (Nair, 2019)

The novel *All the Bright Places* (2015a) by Niven places considerable emphasis on the theme of memory, as the narrative revolves around the recollections of two characters, Violet Markey and Theodore Finch. First-person narration is used throughout, and Finch and Violet's recollections are used to describe the events. The film does not incorporate this specific segment from the book. In comparison to the portrayal of memories in the novel, the plot has undergone significant alterations. The majority of Finch's memories of his parents, bullying, and battles with his sickness are not covered in the film. Although Eleanor, Violet's sister, is mentioned as being deceased from the start of the book, Eleanor and Violet's recollections and flashbacks was not filmed. The influence of Theodore Finch's father on his life is especially noteworthy in light of Finch's condition. Finch's father severely beats him. According to Finch in the book, "Ever since I was ten and he sent Mom to the hospital with a busted chin, and then a year later it was my turn" (Niven, 2015a) is one of the memories he shares about his father. He has bipolar disorder, like his father. Finch and his sisters will go on weekend trips to see his father following his parent's divorce. He feels jealous and becomes irate at his father's affection for the new family. Though he shows respect for the new family, Finch's father still gets upset and strikes him. Finch is annoyed and agitated by this. Finch only speaks of his father once throughout the movie, saying that "his dad left a while ago" (Haley, 2022b). In contrast to how his mother is shown in the book, where she is a single mother who is fighting to balance her life, career, and children, Finch's mother is portrayed as a busy working woman who has no time for her children. The text claims that Violet, who also blogs alongside her sister, aspires to be a writer. She even pays a visit to

New York University and enrolls in the summer writing program. Violet treasures the memories of her trip to New York University. Violet's long-held dream was realized with this. Finch's illness is triggered by the separation between Violet and him. The summer camp visit by Violet and the texts Finch sent to her while he was there—places they had hoped to visit together but were unable to—are not included in the film. These letters and texts inform Violet of his whereabouts and the lake where he commits suicide. Finch composed a song for Violet and left it at the chapel for her to read.

You make me happy,
Whenever you're around, I'm safe inside your smile,
You make me handsome,
Whenever I feel my nose just seems a bit too round,
You make me special, and God knows I've longed to be
that kind of guy to have around,
You make me love you,
And that could be the greatest thing my heart was ever fit
to do...
You make me lovely, and it's so lovely to be lovely
to the one I love...
You make me happy...
You make me special...
You make me lovely... (Niven, 2015a)

Despite its importance, this particular moment is not included in the movie, the song mentioned above aids Violet in getting past his death. Everyone values their first encounters, especially those with their loved ones, which are particularly precious memories. At their school's bell tower, Finch and Violet happen to run into each other. Finch and Violet both want to commit suicide at the bell tower. To dispel rumours, Finch pretends that Violet went up the ladder to save him. In this particular scenario, it is established that Finch is ridiculed at school and is always referred to as a "freak," whereas Violet is a popular girl who is adored by many students. The movie shows that they cross paths near the bridge where Violet attempts suicide and Finch chases after her to stop her. In the book, two bullies named Eric and Roamer regularly call Finch a "freak," but in the movie, Roamer, the two characters' actions and conversations are blended into one person. In middle school, Finch was friends with Roamer. When Finch tells Roamer that he has headaches and hears "strange sounds," Roamer calls him a "freak" and starts bullying him. Finch will always become violent when the word "freak" is mentioned. Roamer frequently hurls a ball at Finch and his companions. Roamer corners Finch and beats him in the changing rooms, but Finch maintains his composure out of concern for Violet and because he doesn't think Roamer is deserving of the attention. When Roamer labels Finch a "freak" one day, Finch loses control and beats him. Additionally, he promises Roamer that "You will never call me that again" (Niven, 2015a). As in the novel, the bullying incidents and trauma that Finch experienced and his recollections of them are not depicted in the movie. In the course of the story, Finch and Violet stop at a number of places, one of which is a car that has been converted into a library. There are several moments in the book where Finch is looking for *The Waves* by Virginia Woolf. Later, Violet presents the first edition of the same book with the inscription, "You make me feel gold, flowing too. I love you. Ultraviolet Remarkable" (Niven, 2015a) to Finch, which she purchased in the USA during her visit to New York University. Violet is accompanied by Finch to a quarry that has a wall. The phrase "before I die" and a hyphen served as the response, which was then filled in. Finch writes that he wants to kiss Violet Markey in the paperback but says he just wants to "stay awake" in the movie. These recollections provide a more comprehensive picture of Finch and Violet's battles with their suicidal thoughts, which are not shown in the movie.

8. Illness: Finch's Suicidal Behaviour

A mental disorder is a syndrome characterized by clinically significant disturbance in an individual's cognition, emotion regulation, or behaviour that reflects a dysfunction in the psychological, biological, or developmental processes underlying mental functioning. Mental disorders are usually associated with significant distress or disability in social, occupational, or other important activities. An expectable or culturally approved response to a common stressor or loss, such as the death of a loved one, is not a mental disorder. Socially deviant behaviours (e.g., political, religious, or sexual) and conflicts that are primarily between the individual and society are not mental disorders unless the deviance or conflict results from a dysfunction in the individual, as described above (Black and Grant, 2014).

"Mental illness is a theme often explored in media. Studies indicate that media representations of mental illness have a detrimental impact on public opinion and contribute to the stigma" (quoted in Beachum, 2010). *All the Bright Places* (2020b) differs from films where characters with mental illness are depicted as being bad. Finch's condition and his suicidal tendencies were not the director's main points of emphasis. The movie withholds information about Finch's mental instability. His problems, symptoms, and suicidal behaviour have changed. Due to this alteration, Finch's persona in the film is reduced to that of an ordinary adolescent boy until the very end. *All the*

Bright Places (2015a) is a well-known book that depicts significant teenage problems like mental illness, sadness, and bullying. These difficulties were not emphasized in the movie adaptation. The movie doesn't show Finch's suicidal tendencies. His suicidal ideas and actions are depicted in the novel on numerous occasions. "Is today a good day to die?" (Niven, 2015a), the book's opening phrase indicates that Finch had suicidal thoughts. Additionally, there have been times when he has expressed a desire to live. He takes sleeping pills in an attempt to end his life, but he later runs to the hospital and says, "I swallowed pills and can't get them out of me. Get them out of me" (Niven, 2015a). Finch discusses his pain and headaches, which are signs of his illness, in the novel, but these aren't included in the movie.

It's like my brain is firing so fast that it can't keep up with itself. Words. Colors. Sounds. Sometime everything else fades into the background and all I'm left with is sound. I can hear everything, but not just hear it- I can feel it too. But then it all came at once- the sounds turn into light, and the light goes too bright, and it's like it's slicing me in two, and then comes the headache. But it's not just a headache I feel, I can see it, like it's made up of million colors, all of them blinding. (Niven, 2015a)

Additionally, there are incidences that point to his bipolar disorder, which is not depicted in the film. As an illustration, Finch employs various personas to allude to himself, including "British Badass Finch," "Slacker Finch," and "80's Finch." Even in attire, he will conform to these appellations. Finch uses the words 'awake' and 'asleep' to distinguish between his manic and depressive days. It gives readers a clearer understanding of Finch's sickness and helps them understand his mood and state of mind. A significant and early recollection of Finch's illness that is not depicted in the movie is the memory of a cardinal bird. The film adaptation resulted in a more pronounced reduction of Finch's suicidal tendencies.

9. Symbols: Prophecies of Finch's Suicide

According to Hausman (1991), a symbol can be changed from one context to another without altering or changing its meaning. A book uses symbols to convey meaning, and these symbols have both universal and cultural significance. The use of symbols is a technique for subtly expressing thoughts, feelings, and mental processes. *All the Bright Places* (2015a) by Jenifer Niven employs a lot of symbols. As a result of his bipolar disorder, Finch lends himself nicknames that reflect his fluctuating behaviour. The novel and the movie both mention Virginia Woolf's works. In the hardcover version of the book, Finch recalls Woolf's 1941 communication to her husband, which begins, "Dearest, I feel certain I am going mad again. I feel we can't go through another of those terrible times... So I am doing what seems the best thing to do" (quoted in Niven, 2015a). Despite not citing Woolf's comments, they show Finch holding his breath in a bathtub while submerged in the water. Virginia Woolf's suicide and her body of work serve as a metaphor for Finch's suicidal impulses, which is why Jenifer Niven chose them. Sticky notes cover every surface in Finch's room. It includes positive words and phrases that make him think about his joy. It aids in his ability to maintain his composure. Words like "warmth, belong, trust, promise, wander, you, etc." (Niven, 2015a) are included. There are phrases like "run, I'm awake, love, sorry, tease," etc. in movies. The meaning of the words on the sticky note is lost in the movie since they are quite different from what they are in real life. Finch's walls are initially painted red. He starts painting his walls blue when his illness worsens. The more the surroundings are blue, the worse his condition is affecting him. As a result of his illness, the blue paint on the wall represents Finch's asphyxia. After Finch commits suicide by drowning in the water, his chamber is completely submerged in blue. There is no mention of this subtle change in wall colour in the film.

Violet wears her sister's glasses after she dies and doesn't take them off until she gets over her remorse for surviving the accident. Violet says, "Thanks for the loan but they make my head hurt. And they're ugly" (Niven, 2015a) as she lays the glasses on the dresser in Eleanor's room. This represents Violet overcoming her survivor's guilt and ultimately improving in life. Only at the beginning of the film does Violet don the glasses, and the movie skips over the fact that Eleanor was the owner of them.

Finch describes a cardinal bird in the novel, but it is not addressed in the movie. This cardinal bird represents Finch's shattered household and mental health. A male cardinal bird continuously tries to enter their residence but is beaten against the window. Kate, Finch's sister calls the Audubon Society and finds out that the cardinal's nest was built in the place of their new house. Finch pleads with his parents to let the cardinal inside their house but they refuse. One day, he finds the cardinal dead after hitting hard in the glass. Finch feels miserable and weeps a lot. Even many years later, Finch remarks about the cardinal, "He would have died in here, only slower, because that's what happens when you're Finch" (Niven, 2015a). It is his first "sleep" phase, the first time he experienced the symptoms of his sickness, and Finch was unable to recall the events of the subsequent few weeks. In the book, water is depicted in a variety of ways. It represents the connection between life and death. Finch says in the book that holding his breath in the water makes him feel more alive and is his preferred method of tricking himself into falling asleep. "Water is peaceful. I am at rest. In the water, I am safe and pulled in where I can't go out" (Niven, 2015a). His most cherished recollection of Violet is of the time they spent together at the lake. He spends the most memorable times of his life in the water, and he passes away there as well. While some of these recollections are preserved in the movie, other symbols are either changed or left out.

Memories of Finch and Violet excluded in the movie are significant in better understanding their suicidal ideation. The movie fully ignores Finch's bipolar condition in order to avoid depicting Finch as a sick person. These symbols are omitted since they highlight Finch's suicidal behaviour owing to a shortage of time. Symbolism is an intriguing approach that draws readers into a book. Haley purposefully edited these parts in order to portray a typical teen love tale.

10. Findings: The Film Evades the Werther Effect

The ecranisation of memory, illness, and symbols prevents the movie from potentially becoming an example of the Werther effect.

Werther's effect states the negative influence of media on suicide. When a film, book, or news is released, many people who watch and read it, get influenced by it. When a character in a film or a book attempts suicide, there is a high chance that people may try the same thing. "The Werther Effect describes the phenomenon of suicide emulation. Research has shown that when suicide is prominently featured in the news, copycat suicides start popping up. Within two months of a famous suicide, there are about 58 more suicides than there otherwise would be" (Shah, 2020). The first incident of imitational suicide noted in history happened in Germany. *The Sorrows of Young Werther* is a German novel published in 1774. The main character is Werther a middle-aged man in the novel who took his own life because of his unrequited love. After this novel's release, many middle-aged men start dressing in Werther's style and many deaths are also noticed. Because of this outbreak, the novel is banned in countries like Germany, Italy, and Denmark. From 1946 to 1968, post-war suicides increased because of newspapers publishing this news on the front page.

National post-war suicide statistics are available for each month during the period 1946-1968. These statistics can be used to determine the effect of front-page suicides during the period 1947-1967. If front-page suicides stimulate a rise in national suicides, this increase can be detected by a technique developed in an earlier paper (Phillips and Feldman, 1973). The use of this technique can be illustrated in the case of Daniel Burros, a leader of the Ku Klux Klan who committed suicide on November 1, 1965, when the newspapers revealed that he was Jewish. In the month after Burros' death, November of 1965, 1,710 suicides were recorded. There were 1,639 suicides in November of the previous year (1964) and 1,665 suicides in November of the subsequent year (1966). The average, $(1,639 + 1,665)/2 = 1,652$ can be taken as an estimate of the number of suicides expected in November of 1965, under the null hypothesis that Burros' death had no effect on national suicides. (Phillips, 1974)

A dramatic rise in suicide rates, particularly among teenage girls, was seen in 2017 following the premiere of the Netflix series *13 Reasons Why*.

The rates of suicide for 10- to 17- year-olds was significantly higher in the months of April, June, and December 2017 than were expected based on past data. This increase translated into an additional estimated 195 suicide deaths between April 1, 2017, and Dec. 31, 2017. The observed suicide rate for March 2017 — the month prior to the release of "13 Reasons Why" — was also higher than forecast. The researchers note that the show was highly promoted during the month of March, exposing audiences to the show's premise and content through trailers. The researchers did not find any significant trends in suicide rates in people 18- to 64 years of age. ("NIMH", 2022)

These events manifest the Werther effect. Subsequent to this occurrence, the web series omits explicit details regarding the suicide of the primary character, Hannah. The Werther effect is evident in these occurrences. Therefore, social consciousness is essential when producing a film that deals with sensitive topics such as suicide. The ecranisation of the narrative in the film *All the Bright Places* (2020b) produces a favourable outcome. Through the implementation of reduction and variation, the film's focus was redirected from Finch's illness and suicidal endeavours to the love storyline. Upon comparing the film to the book, audiences are dissatisfied with the alterations that were implemented. Upon reorientation, the film's positive influence becomes more apparent, given that it circumvents the Werther effect and was produced with a social conscience in mind. This strategic decision yields a favourable consequence as the film circumvents any potential adverse impacts associated with suicide on young viewers.

11. Conclusion

Jenifer Niven's book *All the Bright Places* (2015a) weaves the lives of two adolescents who are grappling with mental illness, specifically bipolar disorder and survivor's remorse. In Haley's *All the Bright Places* (2020b), a love story unfolds between two young individuals who were previously dormant in their lives. Producing a motion picture is virtually impossible without ecranisation. "Time restriction" is a principal rationale cited in support of ecranisation. In contrast to books, which are generally not bound by a duration restriction, films are conventionally capped at three hours. In order to elevate the quality of the film, the directors must revise the script. An additional rationale for making concessions on the themes of memory, illness, and symbols in *All the Bright Places* (2020b) was to circumvent the controversy and adverse consequences associated with suicide. The sequence depicting Finch's suicide is only briefly featured in the film. According to the filmmakers' assertion in an interview, these modifications were implemented due to their perception of Finch's character as intricate and multifaceted. Haley, the director, declared in an interview:

This is a gray and complex issue.... I hope if you see the film, you can see that we were not in any way, shape, or form trying to be flippant or manipulative or sensationalize any of these issues, but rather ground them in reality in a human way and make people feel and think and take a moment and hopefully speak up if they are suffering. (Nast, 2022)

Theoretically, audiences expect a film adaptation of a book to adhere to its plot, ideas, themes and central messages. In producing the movie *All the Bright Places* (2020b), the filmmakers were obligated to do so with a sense of social responsibility and awareness. Through the substitution of Finch and Violet's love story for Finch's illness, suicidal thoughts, and suicide, the audience's focus is effectively redirected from Finch's predicament. Despite the incorporation of sequences portraying Finch's act of suicide, the film effectively maintained a succinct narrative. The film *All the Bright Places* (2020b) exemplifies the appropriate cinematic treatment of a sensitive subject matter. The film serves as an exemplification of how cinema ought to depict mental illness and suicidal ideation in a responsible and sensitive manner.

Acknowledgements

We express our gratitude to the anonymous reviewers for their critical evaluation of the paper and their insightful comments, which significantly contributed to the paper's clarity.

Authors contributions

Deepika T has conceptualised, collected resources, analysed and wrote the original draft.

Dr Bhuvanewari R is the corresponding author and supervisor. She edited, reviewed and developed the final draft.

Funding

No funding has been received for the publication of the paper.

Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Ethics approval

The Publication Ethics Committee of the Sciedu Press.

The journal's policies adhere to the Core Practices established by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE).

Provenance and peer review

Not commissioned; externally double-blind peer reviewed.

Data availability statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy or ethical restrictions.

Data sharing statement

No additional data are available.

Open access

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

Copyrights

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.

References

- Beachum, L. (2010). The Psychopathology of Cinema: How Mental Illness and Psychotherapy are Portrayed in Film. *Honors Project*, 56. Retrieved from <https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/honorsprojects/56>
- Black, D. W., & Jon, E. G. (2014). *DSM-5™ Guidebook*. Washington: American Psychiatric Association.
- Buttigieg, T. (2020). *Depictions of Mental Illness within the Medium of Modern Film*. Undergraduate diss., University of Malta. Retrieved from https://www.academia.edu/49052519/Depictions_of_Mental_Illness_within_the_Medium_of_Modern_Film?source=swp_share
- Domaradzki, J. (2021). The Werther effect, the Papageno Effect or No Effect? A Literature Review. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18(5). <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph18052396>
- Fitiria, T. N. (2021). Representation of Symbols in 'Parasite' Movie, *ISLLAC: Journal of Intensive Studies on Language, Literature, Art, and Culture*, 5(2), 239-250. <https://doi.org/10.17977/um006v5i22021p239-250>
- Habibah, A., & Dr Yeny, P. (2021). A Semiotic Analysis of Trauma Recovery on The All the Bright Places Film. Undergraduate diss., Muhabadiyya University of Surakarta. Retrieved from <http://eprints.ums.ac.id/id/eprint/94507>
- Haley, B. (2020b). *All The Bright Places*. Netflix.
- Hausman, C. R. (1989). *Metaphor and Art: Interactionism and Reference in the Verbal and Nonverbal Arts*. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press.
- Hutcheon, L. (2013). *A Theory of Adaptation* (2nd ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203095010>
- Isatadiyanantha. (2017). Ecranisation from Textual Tradition to Cinema: The Infidelity Against the Values of Literary Writing? *Humanus Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu-ilmu Humaniora (Humanus Scientific Journal of Humanities Sciences)* 1, 83-92. <https://doi.org/10.24036/humanus.v1i1.7961>
- Jellenik, G. (2017). On the Origins of Adaptation, as Such: The Birth of a Simple Abstraction. In *The Oxford Handbook of Adaptation Studies*, edited by Thomas M. Leitch. New York: Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199331000.013.2>

- Kayyis, M. (2016). *Comparison Between the Novel and Film Divergent*. Undergraduate diss., Alauddin State Islamic University. Retrieved from <http://repositori.uin-alauddin.ac.id/id/eprint/367>
- Nair, M. (2019). Trauma and Memory in Select Works of Margaret Atwood and Margaret Laurence. Ph D diss., University of Calicut. Retrieved from <http://hdl.handle.net/10603/328053>
- Nast, C. (2022). How Netflix's All the Bright Places Tackled Teen Suicide in the Wake of 13 Reasons Why. *Vanity Fair*. Retrieved from <https://www.vanityfair.com/hollywood/2020/02/all-the-bright-places-movie#:~:text=The%20book%20opens%20with%20two,the%20death%20of%20her%20sister>.
- Niven, J. (2015a). *All The Bright Places*. New York.
- Phillips, D. P. (1974). The Influence of Suggestion on Suicide: Substantive and Theoretical Implications of the Werther Effect. *American Sociological Review*, 39(3), 340. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2094294>
- Release of '13 Reasons Why' Associated with Increase in Youth Suicide Rates. *National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)*. Retrieved from www.nimh.nih.gov/news/science-news/2019/release-of-13-reasons-why-associated-with-increase-in-youth-suicide-rates
- Selesa. (2016, April 26). *Book Review of 'Novels and Films' by Pamusuk Eneste*. Retrieved from <https://bahayabaca.blogspot.com/2016/04/review-buku-novel-dan-film-karya.html>
- Shah, R. (2020). The Werther Effect: Why Suicide is Contagious. *Shortform Books*. Retrieved from <http://www.shortform.com/blog/werther-effect-suicide-emulation>
- Solomon, N. (2020). *Guidance for Depictions of Suicide and Self-harm in literature*. Samaritans. Retrieved from <https://www.samaritans.org/about-samaritans/media-guidelines/guidance-depictions-suicide-and-self-harm-literature/>
- Stanton, R. (1965). *Introduction To Fiction* (1st ed.). New York.
- Subrata, D., & Sayuti S A. (2018). Adaptation of Narrative Elements Novel to Film Surga Yang Tak Dirindukan. *International Journal of Language and Literature*, 6(2), 118-123. <https://doi.org/10.15640/ijll.v6n2a14>
- Triswela, Y. (2016). Ecranisation of Plot in The Novel and Film of Breaking Dawn by Stephanie Meyer. *Journal of Language and Literature*, 4(1), 60-68. Retrieved from <https://ejournal.gunadarma.ac.id/index.php/sastra/article/view/1566>