

WHITEWASHING HEATHCLIFF: RACIAL ERASURE IN WUTHERING HEIGHTS ADAPTATIONS (2011, 2026)

Nasywa Salsabila Putri, Zulidyana Dwi Rusnalasari

Universitas Negeri Surabaya (UNESA), Surabaya, Indonesia

E-mail: nasywasalsabilaputri0@gmail.com

Received: 2026-04-30

Accepted: 2026-06-05

Published: 2026-06-17

Abstract

This study examines the whitewashing of Heathcliff in film adaptations of Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* and argues that such practices constitute a form of structural racial erasure. Drawing on Critical Race Theory (CRT), adaptation theory, close reading, and Visual Discourse Analysis (VDA), the study investigates how Heathcliff's racial identity is constructed in the novel and represented in the 2011 and 2026 film adaptations. Film adaptations play a crucial role in shaping public interpretations of literary texts, yet they often reproduce dominant racial ideologies through casting practices. The findings reveal that Heathcliff's racial otherness is central to the narrative, shaping his experiences of exclusion, marginalization, and revenge. A review of adaptation history demonstrates a persistent pattern of whitewashing, with Andrea Arnold's 2011 adaptation serving as a notable exception through its casting of a Black actor as Heathcliff. Comparative visual analysis further shows that the 2011 adaptation foregrounds Heathcliff's racial identity through casting and cinematographic techniques, whereas Emerald Fennell's 2026 adaptation minimizes racial difference and reconstructs Heathcliff as a racially unmarked romantic hero. The study concludes that the repeated erasure of Heathcliff's racial identity reflects broader structural inequalities within the film industry and significantly alters the cultural interpretation of Brontë's novel. By integrating CRT, close reading, and VDA, this research contributes to adaptation studies and media representation scholarship by demonstrating how racial erasure operates across literary adaptations and reinforces dominant racial narratives within contemporary visual culture.

Keywords: *miscasting; mischaracterization; movie adaptation; perfect casting; racism; wuthering heights.*

1. Introduction

The whitewashing of characters of color in film adaptations of canonical literary works represents one of the most visible manifestations of structural racism within contemporary media industries. Whitewashing, defined here as the systematic practice of casting white actors in roles associated with characters of color, or of erasing a character's established racial identity through visual and narrative recoding, has been documented across a wide range of Hollywood adaptations (Dowie-Chin et al., 2020). Far from being an isolated casting anomaly, it constitutes what Critical Race Theory identifies as a systemic institutional behavior: one in which racism operates not through the explicit prejudice of

individuals but through the normalized conventions and commercial logics that structure the film industry as a whole (Bhopal, 2023; Delgado et al., 2017)

Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* (1847) offers a particularly instructive case for examining this phenomenon. Heathcliff, the novel's central protagonist, is constructed through a dense network of racially marked language described variously as a "dark-skinned gipsy" (Chapter I), "a little Lascar" (Chapter VI), and "an American or Spanish castaway" (Chapter VI) terminology that, within the social and colonial context of mid-Victorian England, functions to position him as a racial and cultural outsider (Meyer, 1996; Michie, 1993). His racial otherness is not peripheral to the narrative but structurally constitutive of the social exclusion, humiliation, and dispossession he endures, and therefore of the resentment that drives the novel's central conflict. To misread or visually erase Heathcliff's racial identity is to alter the interpretive conditions of the text fundamentally. Despite this textual foundation, the overwhelming majority of film adaptations spanning from the 1920 silent film to the 2026 adaptation directed by Emerald Fennell have cast white or light-skinned actors in the role. Of all major English-language adaptations produced across more than a century, only Andrea Arnold's 2011 film cast a Black actor, James Howson, in the central role (Abraham, 2024; Thalken et al., 2024). The 2026 adaptation, in which Jacob Elordi plays a role, represents not an aberration but a continuation of a deeply entrenched pattern, one whose consistency across directorial generations and industrial contexts strongly suggests systemic rather than individual causes.

Scholarship at the intersection of film adaptation, racial representation, and Critical Race Theory has grown substantially in recent years, addressing whitewashing in Hollywood adaptations (Dowie-Chin et al., 2020), the reproduction of racial ideology through casting norms (Bhopal, 2023; Brown & Zuo, 2025), and the role of adaptation in reshaping literary characterization for commercial audiences (Abraham, 2024; Hutcheon & O'Flynn, 2013). However, a focused critical examination of how racial erasure specifically operates across the long adaptation history of *Wuthering Heights*, one that attends to both textual characterization and the visual strategies through which that characterization is retained or suppressed, remains absent from the literature. This gap is significant because *Wuthering Heights* presents a case in which racial identity is not incidental to but constitutive of the source text's thematic structure, making the repeated visual suppression of that identity a matter of both representational politics and literary interpretation.

This study addresses that gap through a three-method approach combining close reading of Brontë's novel, visual discourse analysis (VDA) of selected scenes from the 2011 Arnold and 2026 Fennell adaptations, and Critical Race Theory (CRT) as the primary interpretive framework. It is guided by three research questions: How is Heathcliff's racial identity constructed through language and narrative in Brontë's novel, and what is the structural function of that identity within the text? How has that identity been represented, minimized, or erased across the adaptation history of *Wuthering Heights*, and what structural factors account for this pattern? How do the Arnold and Fennell adaptations construct Heathcliff's racial identity visually, and what do the differences between them reveal about the industrial conditions governing racial representation in contemporary film? By situating the analysis of individual adaptations within both the textual evidence of the source novel and the broader structural context of the film industry, this study contributes a detailed literary-critical account of how racial identity functions within the original text, and demonstrates how Critical Race Theory, applied alongside visual discourse analysis, can illuminate the mechanisms by which racial erasure is produced and normalized across a

culturally significant adaptation history. This analysis contributes to film and cultural studies by highlighting how miscasting perpetuates systemic racism and distorts literary meaning.

This study addresses this gap by bringing the three fields into direct conversation. Through close reading of the novel, visual discourse analysis of the 2011 and 2026 film adaptations, and a CRT-informed structural analysis of adaptation history, it examines not only how Heathcliff's racial identity has been erased but why, and with what consequences for the cultural interpretation of a novel whose racial politics are inseparable from its literary significance.

The repeated casting of white actors as Heathcliff reflects broader structural biases within film industries, resulting in the gradual erasure of the character's racial identity. Although contemporary discussions on diversity and representation in media have increased, racial ambiguity in literary characters is still frequently minimized in adaptation practices.

Despite extensive scholarship on adaptation and representation, and racism in film, limited studies specifically examine Heathcliff's racial identity and its erasure in film adaptations of *Wuthering Heights*. This study addresses that gap by analyzing how whitewashing and racial misrepresentation reshape the interpretation of Heathcliff in contemporary adaptations.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Heathcliff's Racial Identity in Brontë's Novel: Textual Evidence and Scholarly Context

The question of Heathcliff's racial identity has occupied Victorian literary scholarship for several decades. Susan Meyer's foundational study argues that Brontë's novel is deeply engaged with the racial politics of British imperialism, and that Heathcliff's darkened, ambiguous body functions as a site where the colonial anxieties of mid-Victorian England are played out within the domestic space of the family home (Meyer, 1996). Meyer identifies the novel's repeated racial epithets "dark-skinned gipsy" (Chapter I), "a little Lascar" (Chapter VI), "an American or Spanish castaway" (Chapter VI), not as casual characterization but as deliberate textual markers that situate Heathcliff within a recognizable Victorian taxonomy of racial otherness. Similarly, Elsie Michie reads Heathcliff's ambiguous origins as reflecting the instability of racial categories within a colonial society simultaneously dependent on and anxious about racial mixing (Michie, 1993). His darkness, both literal and figurative, marks him as outside the boundaries of normative English identity, a figure through whom Brontë mediates broader social tensions around class, race, and imperial order.

This body of Victorian scholarship establishes a clear critical consensus: Heathcliff's racial identity is not incidental but structurally constitutive of the novel's central conflicts. His social exclusion within the Earnshaw household, the systematic humiliation he endures at Hindley's hands, and his subsequent transformation into a figure of calculated revenge are all inseparable from his positioning as a racial outsider. As Cannon Schmitt has observed in his work on the Gothic and colonial bodies, the racially othered figure in Victorian fiction frequently functions as both symptom and critique of the social order that excludes him. Heathcliff's desire for social ascension and revenge can thus be understood not merely as personal grievance but as a colonial counter-narrative embedded within the domestic realist genre, a dimension that any adaptation suppressing his racial identity necessarily forecloses. Despite this scholarly consensus, the adaptation history of *Wuthering Heights* reveals a sustained and systematic departure from the novel's racial characterization. Across more

than a century of film adaptations, the textual evidence for Heathcliff's racial otherness has been consistently minimized or suppressed in the visual medium. The critical task for this study is therefore not merely to note this discrepancy but to account for it to examine what structural conditions produce and sustain racial erasure across such a long adaptation history.

2.2 Adaptation Theory: Fidelity, Reinterpretation, and Ideological Reproduction

Adaptation theory provides the conceptual vocabulary through which the transformation of literary texts into cinematic form can be analyzed. Linda Hutcheon's foundational account defines adaptation as a form of "repetition without replication," in which the adapted work maintains a palimpsestic relationship with its source, simultaneously invoking and departing from the original (Hutcheon & O'Flynn, 2013, p. 7). For Hutcheon, adaptations are not inferior copies but independent interpretive acts shaped by the cultural, institutional, and technological conditions of their moment of production. This framework is significant for the present study because it licenses an analysis attentive not only to what adaptations change but to why, to the cultural and institutional logics that determine which elements of a source text are retained, transformed, or discarded.

Robert Stam's work on adaptation and ideology extends Hutcheon's framework in a direction directly relevant to questions of race. Stam argues that film adaptations are not culturally neutral translations but ideologically freighted acts of rewriting, in which the selection and emphasis of narrative elements reflect the dominant cultural assumptions of the production context (Stam, 2004). Applied to the case of *Wuthering Heights*, this framework suggests that the repeated suppression of Heathcliff's racial identity across adaptation history is not a neutral aesthetic choice but an ideological one, a systematic privileging of whiteness that aligns with, and thereby reproduces, the racial hierarchies embedded in the structures of the Anglo-American film industry.

The role of audience reception in shaping the cultural life of adaptations further complicates the picture. Diko and Saule (2024) demonstrate that readers frequently develop strong personal interpretations of literary characters, causing film adaptations to become contested sites when visual representations depart significantly from textual descriptions. Thalken (2024) adds that, for many audiences, adaptation films function as the primary and sometimes sole point of access to a literary work, meaning that the visual characterization of a figure like Heathcliff effectively becomes the culturally dominant version of the character. The implications for racial representation are significant: when whitewashed adaptations become the dominant cultural referent for a literary text, they do not merely misrepresent the source but actively reshape its cultural memory, producing an audience whose understanding of the character is divorced from the racial identity that drives the original narrative.

2.3 Critical Race Theory and Structural Racism in Media Representation

Critical Race Theory (CRT) provides the primary analytical framework for this study. As elaborated by Delgado and Stefancic (2017) CRT holds that racism is not reducible to individual prejudice but is embedded within the structures, institutions, and normalized practices of society. The theory's insistence on examining the systemic rather than the interpersonal dimensions of racial inequality makes it particularly well-suited for analyzing patterns of behavior, such as the sustained whitewashing of a literary character across more than a century, that cannot be attributed to the intentions or biases of any single individual.

Within media studies, this structural perspective has been developed by several scholars whose work is directly relevant to the present analysis. Brown and Zuo (2025) demonstrate that race in film functions as a social and political construct sustained by institutional power, operating through casting norms, distribution decisions, and the commercial logics of the studio system rather than through explicit individual discrimination. Bhopal (2023) extends this argument to cultural institutions more broadly, showing that racial inequality persists through structural systems that normalize whiteness as an unremarked default, a normalization so deep that departures from it (such as Arnold's 2011 casting of a Black Heathcliff) require explicit justification in critical discourse, while adherence to it does not. Sere et al. (2020) further argue that film representation actively constructs cultural identity: when media systems consistently render certain racial identities invisible or marginal, they do not merely reflect social norms but participate in producing them.

The specific practice of whitewashing has been examined within this structural framework by Dowie-Chin (2020), whose analysis of Hollywood's adaptation of Angie Thomas's *The Hate U Give* demonstrates how the racial identity of a source text is systematically minimized in the visual medium through a combination of casting choices, narrative framing, and aesthetic decisions. Dowie-Chin argues that critical race media literacy, the capacity to recognize and interrogate these practices, is essential for audiences and scholars alike. Her case study provides a directly comparable parallel to the *Wuthering Heights* adaptations examined in this study: in both instances, a text in which the protagonist's racial identity is structurally central to the narrative is adapted in ways that render that identity visually and narratively peripheral.

Lawrence and Hylton (2022) further demonstrate that CRT can be productively combined with visual and semiotic methods of analysis, providing a methodological basis for examining racial representation in film. Their approach informs the integration of Critical Race Theory with visual discourse analysis in the present study's methodology, discussed in Section 3.

3. Research Method

3.1 Research Design

This study employs a qualitative interpretive research design situated within the humanities tradition of literary and cultural analysis. Qualitative methods are appropriate here because the object of inquiry, the construction and suppression of racial identity across literary and cinematic texts, is not reducible to quantifiable variables but requires sustained interpretive engagement with language, image, and cultural context (Creswell & Poth, 2017).

The study integrates three complementary methods: close reading of Brontë's novel, visual discourse analysis (VDA) of selected scenes from two film adaptations, and comparative textual and cinematic analysis. These three methods are not applied sequentially, but in dialogue with one another. The close reading of the novel establishes the textual baseline against which the VDA findings are evaluated, and the comparative analysis synthesizes both to address the study's three research questions.

Critical Race Theory (CRT), as elaborated by Delgado and Stefancic (2017). It functions as the overarching theoretical framework within which all three methods operate. CRT is not employed here as a method in itself but as an interpretive lens that orients the analytical questions: it directs attention toward structural rather than individual explanations of racial patterns, foregrounds the normalization of whiteness as an institutional default, and requires the analyst to examine whose racial identity is rendered

visible and whose is suppressed and by what institutional mechanisms. This distinction between CRT as a framework and the three named methods as analytical procedures is critical; conflating them, as prior studies sometimes do, produces methodological imprecision that weakens the analysis.

3.2 Data Sources and Selection Criteria

The primary literary data source is Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*, cited throughout from the Norris Classics edition physical book (1847/2025), which is used for its scholarly apparatus and critical introduction. Passages for close reading were selected according to two criteria: (1) they contain explicit racial or ethnic descriptors applied to Heathcliff, and (2) they situate Heathcliff's racial otherness in direct relation to acts of social exclusion, class discrimination, or narrative conflict. This produced a corpus of fourteen passages distributed across Volumes I and II of the novel, ranging from Mr. Lockwood's initial description of Heathcliff in Chapter I to Nelly Dean's retrospective characterizations in the late chapters.

The two film adaptations selected as cinematic data sources are Andrea Arnold's *Wuthering Heights* (2011, UK, Film4/Ecosse Films) and Emerald Fennell's *Wuthering Heights* (2026, UK/USA). These two adaptations were selected for three convergent reasons. First, they represent the two most recent major English-language theatrical adaptations of the novel, meaning they are the most culturally proximate to contemporary discourses about diversity and racial representation in film, making any casting decision within them a culturally legible choice rather than a historically distant one. Second, and crucially, they represent opposed casting choices in relation to Heathcliff's racial identity: Arnold cast a Black actor (James Howson) in the role, while Fennell cast a white actor (Jacob Elordi), making the two films a natural contrastive pair for comparative analysis. Third, both adaptations have generated significant critical commentary on the question of Heathcliff's race, providing a substantial secondary corpus of film reviews and scholarly responses against which the VDA findings can be triangulated.

The decision to exclude earlier adaptations (1920, 1939, 1970, 1992) from the primary analysis is an acknowledged limitation of the study. These films are not ignored in the contextual account of adaptation history (Section 2.1) but are not subjected to full VDA due to the constraints of the present study's scope. Future research extending the VDA methodology to the complete adaptation history of the novel would provide a more comprehensive longitudinal account of racial erasure across the twentieth century.

3.3 Method 1: Close Reading

Close reading, as the foundational method of literary studies, involves sustained, theoretically informed attention to the language, rhetoric, and semantic structure of a literary text to connect textual particulars to broader interpretive, historical, and cultural questions (Culler, 2007; Ohrvik, 2024). In this study, close reading is applied to *Wuthering Heights* to establish what the novel's language actually says about Heathcliff's racial and ethnic identity, a necessary prior step before any evaluation of how adaptations depart from it can be made.

The close reading procedure was organized around three analytical categories derived from the CRT framework and from the existing Victorian scholarship reviewed in Section 2.1:

Category	Description	Example from text
RACIAL MARKER	Explicit ethnic or racial descriptors applied to Heathcliff by the narrator or other characters	"a little Lascar," "dark-skinned gipsy," "American or Spanish castaway" (Ch. I, VI)
SOCIAL EXCLUSION	Passages in which Heathcliff's racial or cultural otherness is directly linked to acts of social rejection, humiliation, or dispossession	Hindley's degradation of Heathcliff after Mr. Earnshaw's death (Ch. VI); Edgar's refusal to treat Heathcliff as a social equal (Ch. VIII)
COUNTER-NARRATIVE	Passages in which Heathcliff reclaims or weaponizes his outsider identity — moments of resistance or reversal that can be read as a colonial counter-narrative (cf. Schmitt, 1997)	Heathcliff's return as a wealthy gentleman (Ch. X); his systematic acquisition of Thrushcross Grange and Wuthering Heights

3.4 Method 2: Visual Discourse Analysis (VDA)

Visual discourse analysis, as developed by Gillian Rose in her landmark methodological text *Visual Methodologies* (Rose, 2014). It provides a systematic framework for examining how images, including moving images, construct meaning through their compositional, technological, and social dimensions. Rose's framework identifies three "sites" at which meaning is produced in visual texts: the site of production (the conditions and decisions through which an image is made), the site of the image itself (its formal and compositional properties), and the site of audiencing (how the image is received and interpreted). Applied to film, this three-site model allows the analyst to examine not only what an image shows but how it shows it, under what industrial conditions it was produced, and how it positions its audience in relation to what it depicts.

For each of the two film adaptations, scenes were selected for VDA according to the following criteria: (1) scenes in which Heathcliff appears prominently as the focal subject of the frame, allowing assessment of how his physical appearance and racial identity are visually constructed; (2) scenes that correspond directly to source passages in the novel coded under the three categories above, enabling systematic text-to-film comparison; and (3) scenes that have been specifically discussed in published critical reviews or scholarly commentary, providing a secondary body of evidence against which the analysis can be triangulated.

This produced a corpus of eight scenes for detailed VDA, four from the Arnold (2011) adaptation and four from the Fennell (2026) adaptation as specified in Table 2 below. For each scene, the following visual elements were analyzed:

Visual element	Analytical question
Casting and physical appearance	How does the actor's physical appearance (skin tone, features, body language) correspond to or depart from the novel's racial descriptors?

Visual element	Analytical question
Cinematography and lighting	How does the film's visual grammar — lens choice, lighting, color grading — construct or suppress the racial visibility of the character?
Framing and shot scale	Is Heathcliff framed as an object of spectacle, agent of action, or object of romantic idealization? What does the shot scale (close-up, long shot) emphasize?
Costume and production design	How does the costuming of Heathcliff position him within or outside the social world of the film's <i>mise-en-scène</i> ?
Narrative emphasis and dialogue	Are racial epithets from the novel retained, adapted, or deleted in the screenplay? How does the screenplay handle scenes of racial exclusion?

3.5 Method 3: Comparative Analysis

The comparative analysis synthesizes the findings of the close reading and VDA by systematically evaluating correspondence and divergence across three axes: (1) the textual-to-visual axis, comparing how the novel's racial language is rendered (or not rendered) in each adaptation's visual language; (2) the inter-adaptation axis, comparing the two films with each other to identify what specifically differs between Arnold's and Fennell's representational choices; and (3) the structural axis, reading both sets of differences through the CRT framework to ask what institutional and structural conditions make each set of choices intelligible.

This three-axis structure directly corresponds to the study's three research questions: RQ1 is addressed primarily through close reading and the textual-to-visual comparison; RQ2 through the inter-adaptation comparison situated within the broader adaptation history; and RQ3 through the structural CRT analysis. This mapping ensures that the methodology is fully accountable to the research questions and that the findings section can address each question with evidence drawn from the appropriate analytical procedure.

3.6 Trustworthiness, Positionality, and Ethical Considerations

Trustworthiness in qualitative literary and cultural analysis is achieved not through statistical replication but through interpretive rigour: the transparency of analytical procedures, the consistency of category application, and the triangulation of findings across multiple evidence types (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In this study, trustworthiness is strengthened in three ways. First, the close reading categories (Table 1) were defined prior to the analysis and applied consistently across all fourteen passages, with each coding decision supported by a direct quotation from the text. Second, the VDA findings are triangulated against published scholarly commentary and critical film reviews, which are cited as secondary evidence throughout Section 4. Third, where the analysis involves interpretive judgment, for example, in deciding whether a particular cinematographic choice constitutes racial suppression, the reasoning is made explicit in the analysis rather than presented as self-evident, allowing the reader to assess and, if necessary, contest the interpretation.

Positionality requires explicit acknowledgment in any study employing CRT as its framework, because CRT demands that researchers recognize how their own social positioning, including their racial identity, shapes their interpretive perspective (Delgado et al., 2017). The researchers in this study are Indonesian academics working within an English-language literary studies tradition. This positioning produces both specific strengths and specific limitations. As researchers writing from outside the dominant Anglo-American cultural context within which both the novel and its film adaptations were produced, we bring a perspective that is less likely to naturalize the whiteness normalization that CRT analysis seeks to denaturalize. At the same time, our distance from the specific cultural and historical contexts of Victorian racial discourse and contemporary Hollywood casting practices means that our analysis is necessarily dependent on published scholarly accounts of those contexts, which we have cited accordingly throughout.

All film material is analyzed under the provisions of fair dealing for criticism, research, and private study, in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 (UK). No copyrighted material is reproduced beyond the extent necessary for critical commentary. All citations from Brontë's novel refer to the Norris Classics edition physical copy (1847/2025) and include chapter references to enable reader verification.

4. Results and Discussion

This section presents and interprets the findings of the study across three subsections, each corresponding directly to one of the three research questions established in Section 1. Section 4.1 addresses RQ1 through a close reading of Brontë's novel, establishing the textual evidence for Heathcliff's racial identity and its narrative function. Section 4.2 addresses RQ2 through a comparative account of adaptation history, analyzing the structural conditions that have produced a sustained pattern of racial erasure across more than a century of film adaptations. Section 4.3 addresses RQ3 through a visual discourse analysis of selected scenes from the 2011 Arnold and 2026 Fennell adaptations, reading the visual evidence through the CRT framework developed in the literature review.

4.1 Heathcliff's Racial Identity in Brontë's Novel: Close Reading Findings (RQ1)

4.1.1 Racial Markers: Textual Evidence and Victorian Semantic Context

The close reading of *Wuthering Heights* (1847/2025) identified fourteen passages containing explicit or implied racial markers applied to Heathcliff, distributed across Volumes I and II of the novel. Table 1 presents the six most analytically significant passages, coded according to the three categories established in the methodology (RACIAL MARKER, SOCIAL EXCLUSION, COUNTER-NARRATIVE).

Table 1.

Selected close reading findings: racial markers, social exclusion, and counter-narrative coding in Wuthering Heights

Passage (chapter)	Racial descriptor	Code	Narrative function
"a dark-skinned gipsy in aspect" (Ch. I)	Gipsy; dark-skinned	RACIAL MARKER	First description of Heathcliff establishes racial otherness as foundational to his identity before any other characterization

Passage (chapter)	Racial descriptor	Code	Narrative function
"a little Lascar, or an American or Spanish castaway" (Ch. VI)	Lascar; Spanish; American	RACIAL MARKER	Three competing ethnic identities, all non-English, underline the deliberate ambiguity of his origins within a Victorian colonial taxonomy
Hindley degrades Heathcliff to the status of a servant after Mr. Earnshaw's death (Ch.VI)	[implicit: racial/class inferiority]	SOCIAL EXCLUSION	Heathcliff's racial otherness is directly weaponized to justify social dispossession; the structural link between racial marking and economic exclusion is established
Edgar Linton refuses to acknowledge Heathcliff as a social equal (Ch. VIII)	[implicit: racial inferiority]	SOCIAL EXCLUSION	Racial otherness operates not only within the Earnshaw household but within the broader social order; exclusion is systemic, not merely domestic
Heathcliff returns as a wealthy gentleman of unknown origin (Ch. X)	[racial ambiguity now weaponized]	COUNTER- NARRATIVE	Heathcliff's unreadable racial identity becomes a tool of social destabilization; the colonial counter-narrative begins when the excluded outsider acquires power within the system that excluded him
Heathcliff acquires legal ownership of both Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange (Ch. XXIX–XXXIII)	[racial other now dominant]	COUNTER- NARRATIVE	The colonial reversal is complete: the figure marked as racially inferior now owns the property of those who excluded him, a narrative resolution inseparable from the racial logic that drives it

4.2 The Counter-Narrative Category: Racial Identity as Structural Driver

The counter-narrative coding category requires separate discussion, because it is the dimension of Heathcliff's racial characterization most consistently suppressed in both adaptation scholarship and in the adaptations themselves. Meyer (1996) establishes that Heathcliff's revenge narrative can be read as a colonial counter-narrative: a story in which the racially othered subject, after systematic dispossession by the dominant social order, acquires the very instruments of that order, property, economic power, and legal authority,

and turns them against those who dispossessed him. Schmitt (1997) reinforces this reading by locating Heathcliff within a Gothic tradition of colonial return, in which the excluded racial other re-enters the domestic space he was expelled from, not as a suppliant but as a structural threat.

This dimension of the novel's racial politics is not incidental to its literary value; it is constitutive of it. The novel's power as a critique of Victorian class and racial hierarchy depends on the reader recognizing that Heathcliff's dispossession is racially motivated and that his revenge is therefore legible as a structural response to structural injustice. An adaptation that casts a white actor in the role of Heathcliff does not merely alter his appearance; it removes the foundational logic of the counter-narrative. A white Heathcliff who acquires Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange is simply a wealthy man pursuing personal vengeance. A racially othered Heathcliff who does the same is enacting a form of colonial reversal, a categorically different story with categorically different social and critical stakes.

4.2.1 Structural Racism and Adaptation History: CRT Analysis (RQ2)

The findings establish that Heathcliff's racial identity is textually unambiguous and narratively essential. The question posed by RQ2 is therefore not whether racial erasure has occurred across the adaptation history of *Wuthering Heights*; the evidence is clear that it has, but why it has occurred with such consistency, and what structural conditions account for its persistence across directorial generations, production contexts, and shifting cultural attitudes toward racial representation.

A longitudinal review of the adaptation record reveals a pattern of near-total whitewashing. Table 2 summarizes the casting of Heathcliff across the seven major English-language adaptations produced between 1920 and 2026.

Table 2.

Casting of Heathcliff across major English-language adaptations, 1920–2026

Year	Director	Actor (Heathcliff)	Racial identity of the actor	Production context
1920	A.V. Bramble	Milton Rosmer	White British	UK silent film
1939	William Wyler	Laurence Olivier	White British	Hollywood studio (Goldwyn)
1970	Robert Fuest	Timothy Dalton	White British	UK/US co-production
1992	Peter Kosminsky	Ralph Fiennes	White British	Paramount Pictures
2009	Coky Giedroyc	Tom Hardy	White British	ITV television production
2011	Andrea Arnold	James Howson	Black British	Film4 / Ecosse Films — only racially accurate casting in adaptation history

Year	Director	Actor (Heathcliff)	Racial identity of the actor	Production context
2026	Emerald Fennell	Jacob Elordi	White Australian	Major studio theatrical release

The pattern in Table 2 is unambiguous: six of seven major adaptations cast white actors in the role of Heathcliff, with the sole exception being Arnold's 2011 film. This consistency across more than a century, across multiple production companies, multiple national contexts (British and American), and across a period that has seen substantial shifts in public discourse about racial representation, cannot be attributed to individual directorial preference. It points instead to what Delgado and Stefancic (2017) identify as the ordinary functioning of structural racism: the routinization of racial hierarchy through normalized institutional practices that do not require individual prejudice to reproduce themselves.

Brown and Zuo (2025) provide the specific institutional mechanisms through which this structural normalization operates in film: casting decisions are shaped by commercial risk assessments in which the perceived "bankability" of actors, their capacity to generate box office return, is assessed in racialized terms, with white actors systematically rated as lower-risk investments for commercially significant roles. Bhopal (2023) further demonstrates that this normalization is self-reinforcing: because white casting is the historical default for major literary adaptations, it is perceived as the neutral, unmarked choice, requiring no justification, while racially accurate casting is perceived as a deliberate, marked departure requiring critical defense. The reception history of the two adaptations examined in this study confirms this dynamic precisely: Arnold's 2011 casting of James Howson was extensively discussed and debated in critical reviews as a significant artistic and political choice (Abraham, 2024), while the whiteness of every preceding Heathcliff was received as unremarkable.

Aldahoul et al. (2024) provide empirical support for this structural interpretation, demonstrating that despite growing institutional rhetoric about diversity and inclusion in media, the proportion of racially inclusive content in mainstream film and television remains disproportionately low. The 2026 *Wuthering Heights* adaptation sits within this broader pattern of structural inertia: produced in a cultural moment when the discourse of representation is more prominent than at any previous point in the adaptation history of the novel, it nevertheless reproduces the same whitewashed casting choice that has characterized all but one of its predecessors. This is precisely what CRT predicts: that structural racism persists not through ignorance of racial inequality but through the institutional normalization of practices that reproduce it, even in contexts where individual actors within those institutions may nominally endorse racial equity.

4.3 Visual Construction of Racial Identity: VDA Findings (RQ3)

4.3.1 The 2011 Arnold Adaptation: Racial Visibility as Deliberate Visual Strategy

The visual discourse analysis of the 2011 Arnold adaptation reveals a systematic and coherent visual strategy for foregrounding Heathcliff's racial identity throughout the film. The following four scenes were selected for analysis in accordance with the criteria established in Section 3.4.

Scene 1: Heathcliff's arrival at Wuthering Heights. Mr. Earnshaw presents Heathcliff to his family in the kitchen of Wuthering Heights. Arnold frames the scene so that Howson's

face, and specifically the contrast between his dark skin and the pale faces of the Earnshaw children, is immediately legible. The scene is shot in available interior light, with no artificial softening or equalization of skin tones, allowing Howson's physical difference to register visually without mediation. The reaction shots of Hindley and Catherine are held long enough to establish that difference as a source of tension rather than curiosity, directly translating the novel's account of the Earnshaw family's ambivalence about the foundling child.

Scene 2: Hindley's degradation of Heathcliff. Following Mr. Earnshaw's death, Hindley forces Heathcliff to work alongside the farmhands. Arnold's camera follows Howson in a sustained long take through the farmyard, emphasizing his physical labor in juxtaposition with the domestic interior occupied by Hindley. The cinematography here is starkly observational; the camera maintains a consistent distance, refusing the romantic close-up conventions associated with the heritage film genre. Applied to Rose's (2014) site of the image, the compositional modality here is documentary-realist: the visual grammar refuses to aestheticize Heathcliff's degradation, insisting instead on its social material reality.

Scene 3: Heathcliff and Catherine on the moors. Arnold's treatment of the moor sequences is the most formally innovative aspect of the film's racial visual strategy. Rather than framing Heathcliff and Catherine as a unified romantic dyad against a picturesque landscape, the conventional heritage film approach, Arnold consistently positions them as physically proximate but visually differentiated: the camera returns repeatedly to the contrast between Howson's dark skin and Hunter's pale complexion, framed against the grey-green moorland. This visual insistence on difference within intimacy translates the novel's central paradox, Heathcliff is both Catherine's most intimate companion and the most socially excluded figure in the novel's world, into cinematic language.

Scene 4: Heathcliff's return as a wealthy gentleman. Upon Heathcliff's return to Wuthering Heights, Arnold frames him in close-up with dramatically improved material surroundings, better clothing, erect posture, but the same visual foregrounding of his racial difference that was established in the film's opening sequences. The continuity of visual racial marking across Heathcliff's social transformation is significant: it insists that his accumulation of wealth and power does not overwrite his racial identity but is produced in direct response to the exclusion it caused. This is the COUNTER-NARRATIVE coding category in cinematic form.

4.3.2 The 2026 Fennell Adaptation: Racial Erasure through Aestheticization

The 2026 Fennell adaptation presents a significantly different visual construction of Heathcliff, one in which the racial markers central to Arnold's approach are systematically absent. The following four scenes from the Fennell adaptation were selected for comparative VDA.

Scene 1: Heathcliff's arrival at Wuthering Heights. Fennell's staging of the equivalent arrival scene frames Elordi within a visual register immediately legible as prestige literary adaptation: warm, soft-focus interior lighting, careful period costuming, and a camera style that presents Heathcliff from the outset as romantically compelling rather than socially disruptive. The absence of any visual device marking his physical difference from the Earnshaw family, which would be impossible to achieve with a racially different actor and which is therefore not attempted, removes the foundational visual tension that drives Arnold's equivalent scene, and that corresponds to the SOCIAL EXCLUSION function of the arrival passage in the novel (Ch. IV).

Scene 2: Heathcliff's abuse by Mr. Earnshaw. In the Fennell adaptation, the scenes of Hindley's systematic exclusion of Heathcliff were instead done by Mr. Earnshaw. The cinematographic treatment makes no visual distinction between Elordi and the actors playing the Earnshaw family and the Linton household: all are framed within the same warm-toned, aestheticized visual grammar. The racial dimension of Mr. Earnshaw's cruelty, the use of Heathcliff's racial otherness as the justification for his abuse, is therefore visually illegible. The SOCIAL EXCLUSION passages from the novel that are nominally adapted in these scenes lose their racial specificity entirely in the visual rendering.

Scene 3: Heathcliff and Catherine on the moors. The moor sequences in the Fennell adaptation exemplify what Dowie-Chin (2020) identifies as the aesthetic strategy of racial erasure through romantic idealization: Heathcliff and Catherine are presented as a visually unified romantic dyad, framed in conventional two-shots against a romanticized moorland landscape, photographed in high-production-value widescreen. The visual grammar here belongs squarely to the heritage film tradition, the tradition Arnold's 2011 film explicitly rejected. It produces a Heathcliff who is, in Bhopal's (2023) terms, "racially neutral": a figure whose identity is organized entirely around romantic suffering rather than racial exclusion, and who therefore cannot carry the structural counter-narrative that the novel embeds in his character.

Scene 4: Heathcliff's return as a wealthy gentleman. In Fennell's adaptation, Heathcliff's return is staged as a moment of romantic re-entry: the visual emphasis is on Elordi's physical attractiveness and the emotional reunion with Catherine, with no visual coding of the social and racial inversion that the return represents in the novel. Where Arnold's equivalent scene insists on the continuity of racial marking across social transformation, Fennell's removes racial marking from the equation entirely, transforming what the novel codes as COUNTER-NARRATIVE (the colonial outsider returning with power) into a straightforwardly romantic narrative of separation and longing.

4.3.3 Comparative Summary: What the VDA Reveals

Table 3.

Comparative VDA findings: Arnold (2011) and Fennell (2026) adaptations across six visual elements.

Visual element	Arnold 2011	Fennell 2026	Correspondence to Novel
Casting / physical appearance	Black British actor; racial difference visually foregrounded throughout	White Australian actor; no visual racial differentiation from other characters	Novel: explicit non-white racial markers (Ch. I, VI)
Cinematography and lighting	Available light, low saturation, observational documentary realism	Warm, soft-focus, aestheticized prestige-film lighting	Novel: social realist registers as racial exclusion is material, not romantic

Visual element	Arnold 2011	Fennell 2026	Correspondence to Novel
Framing of Heathcliff	Racial difference marked in close-up; contrast with other characters maintained	Conventionally attractive romantic hero framing; no visual contrast	Novel: Heathcliff as an outsider, not a romantic lead, in the social order of the Earnshaws
Treatment of SOCIAL EXCLUSION scenes	Racial dimension of exclusion visually legible; documentary-realist framing	Exclusion re-coded as personal animus; racial dimension visually absent	Novel: racial otherness directly weaponized as justification for degradation
Treatment of COUNTER-NARRATIVE scenes	Racial marking continues across social transformation; return coded as colonial reversal	Return coded as romantic re-entry; no colonial reversal legible	Novel: Heathcliff's acquisition of property is structurally inseparable from his racial history
Deleted racial dialogue	Racial epithets from the novel are adapted into visual language rather than spoken	Racial epithets absent; screenplay does not engage the racial language of the source	Novel: "dark-skinned gipsy," "little Lascar," "American or Spanish castaway" (Ch. I, VI)

Table 3 demonstrates that the difference between the two adaptations is not merely a matter of casting but of a comprehensively different visual strategy. Arnold's 2011 film translates the novel's racial politics into cinematic language through every available visual element: casting, cinematography, lighting, framing, and the treatment of racially charged scenes. Fennell's 2026 adaptation deploys an equally comprehensive but opposite visual strategy: every element of the film's visual grammar works to produce a Heathcliff who is romantically idealized, racially unmarked, and therefore structurally incompatible with the counter-narrative that the novel assigns him.

The significance of this comparison extends beyond a finding about the two specific films. It establishes against any argument that whitewashing in *Wuthering Heights* adaptations reflects commercial or creative necessity that a racially accurate and cinematically sophisticated visual representation of Heathcliff is entirely achievable within the resources of contemporary British film production. The decision to return to whitewashed casting in the 2026 Fennell adaptation, in a cultural moment more alert to racial representation in media than any preceding moment in the novel's adaptation history, is therefore not a passive default but, in Bhopal's (2023) terms, an active reproduction of structural whiteness normalization, a choice whose racial implications are all the more visible precisely because the alternative was demonstrated fourteen years earlier.

4.4 Discussion: Racial Erasure, Structural Racism, and the Cultural Life of the Novel

The findings across the three analytical subsections above converge on a single, coherent argument: the whitewashing of Heathcliff in film adaptations of *Wuthering Heights* is a structurally produced form of racial erasure whose consequences extend beyond misrepresentation in cinema into the cultural interpretation of the novel itself. This discussion integrates the findings from Sections 4.1 through 4.3 to address the interpretive and theoretical implications of that argument.

The first and most fundamental implication concerns the relationship between racial identity and narrative logic. The close reading findings establish that Heathcliff's racial otherness is not a decorative feature of the novel's characterization but a structural driver of its plot: his exclusion is racially motivated, his revenge is a colonial counter-narrative, and the novel's resolution in which the racial outsider acquires the property of those who excluded him is legible as social critique only through that racial lens. A whitewashed adaptation does not merely omit a physical detail; it removes the interpretive framework through which the novel's central argument can be read. As the VDA findings demonstrate, the Fennell adaptation's re-coding of Heathcliff's exclusion as personal rivalry and his return as romantic re-entry produces a structurally different narrative, one organized around individual emotional suffering rather than structural racial injustice. The film retains the events of the novel while evacuating their social meaning.

The second implication concerns cultural memory. Thalken (2024) demonstrates that film adaptations frequently become the primary cultural referent for a literary text, superseding the source novel in popular cultural memory. When the dominant screen version of a character suppresses their racial identity, it does not merely misrepresent the novel; it gradually displaces it, producing an audience whose understanding of Heathcliff is organized around the whitewashed image. Sere et al. (2020) argue that media representation actively constructs cultural identity rather than passively reflecting it: the whitewashed Heathcliff does not merely reflect the racial assumptions of the film industry, but participates in normalizing a version of Victorian England in which racial difference and colonial anxiety are invisible. This normalization has material consequences for how the novel is taught, discussed, and understood.

The third implication concerns the limits of individual-level accounts of whitewashing. The consistent casting pattern across Table 2, six of seven major adaptations, spanning more than a century and multiple production contexts, is not explicable through individual directorial bias or ignorance. As Brown and Zuo (2025) demonstrate, the mechanisms of racial normalization in casting are structural: they operate through commercial risk assessment, through the genre conventions of the heritage film, through the aesthetic expectations of prestige literary adaptation, and through the critical reception culture that naturalizes white casting while marking racial casting as exceptional. Addressing racial erasure in film adaptation, therefore, requires structural intervention in casting policy, in critical practice, and in the academic teaching of adaptation not merely individual commitment to racial accuracy.

A final implication concerns the methodological contribution of this study to the interdisciplinary field it occupies. The integration of close reading, VDA, and CRT demonstrated here produces analytical results that none of the three methods could achieve alone. Close reading establishes the textual baseline without which the VDA findings would lack evidential grounding. VDA reveals the precise visual mechanisms through which racial identity is constructed or suppressed in ways that textual description cannot capture. And

CRT provides the structural explanatory framework without which both sets of findings would remain at the level of description rather than reaching the level of structural analysis. This methodological integration is itself a contribution to adaptation studies and to literary cultural studies more broadly, offering a transferable model for analyzing racial representation across the literary-to-cinematic adaptation process.

Wuthering Heights has undergone numerous film adaptations since 1920, yet the casting of Heathcliff has consistently deviated from Brontë's textual characterization. A close reading of the novel reveals that Heathcliff is described using racially marked language throughout the text. He is repeatedly referred to as "Dark-Skinned gipsy" in chapter one, "a little Lascar" in chapter six, and also "an American or Spanish castaway" in the same chapter, language that anchors his identity as a racial outsider in Victorian England. These descriptions are not incidental; they are structurally linked to his social exclusion, the humiliation he endures within the Earnshaw household, and ultimately his motivation for revenge.

The significance of these textual markers extends beyond mere descriptive detail. Within the social context of Victorian England, terms such as "gipsy" and "Lascar" carried specific cultural and political weight, functioning as markers of racial and social inferiority. Brontë's deployment of this language serves a deliberate narrative purpose: it situates Heathcliff within a recognizable framework of racial otherness that a Victorian readership would have immediately understood. His foreignness is not an incidental attribute but a foundational aspect of his identity, shaping every dimension of his experience within the Earnshaw household and beyond. To read Heathcliff without attending to this racial dimension is to fundamentally misread the novel's central conflict.

Furthermore, scholars of Victorian literature have noted that Brontë's portrayal of Heathcliff resonates with the broader anxieties of nineteenth-century British imperialism. His ambiguous origins, possibly Irish, Romani, South Asian, or Caribbean, reflect the instability of racial categories within a colonial society that simultaneously depended upon and feared racial mixing. Heathcliff's darkness, both literal and figurative, positions him as the embodiment of what was excluded from normative English identity. His desire for social ascension and revenge can thus be read not merely as personal grievance but as a colonial counter-narrative embedded within the domestic realist genre. Any adaptation that strips this racial complexity from his characterization necessarily impoverishes the novel's thematic scope

Despite this textual evidence, the majority of film adaptations have cast white actors in the role of Heathcliff. A review of adaptation history shows that across adaptations released between 1920 and 2026, only Andrea Arnold's 2011 film cast a Black actor, James Howson, in all the roles. All other major productions, including the 2026 adaptation directed by Emerald Fennell featuring Jacob Elordi, cast light-skinned actors, effectively erasing the racial conflict embedded in the source text.

The pattern of casting is consistent with what Abraham identifies as the tendency of film adaptations to reframe literary narratives to suit contemporary industrial and aesthetic preferences (Abraham, 2024). In the case of *Wuthering Heights*, this reframing has systematically removed Heathcliff's racial otherness from the visual text. The consequences, as Dowie-Chin argues in their analysis of whitewashing in Hollywood adaptations, are that the racial dimension of the original narrative is not simply minimized but actively replaced by a racially neutral or white-coded identity that does not carry the same cultural or historical weight (Dowie-Chin et al., 2020)

The 2026 adaptation is particularly notable in this regard. Casting Elordi, a conventionally attractive white Australian actor, in a role defined by racial marginalization not only departs from the novel's characterization but also removes the social conflict that drives the narrative. Heathcliff's transformation from an excluded child to a vengeful adult is inseparable from his racial identity; without it, the film's narrative logic is fundamentally altered.

5. Conclusion

This study has demonstrated that the whitewashing of Heathcliff in film adaptations of *Wuthering Heights* constitutes a significant form of structural racial erasure that reshapes the ideological meaning of Emily Brontë's novel. Through the integration of close textual reading, Visual Discourse Analysis (VDA), and Critical Race Theory (CRT), the findings reveal that Heathcliff's racial identity is not a peripheral characteristic but a foundational element of the narrative. The novel explicitly constructs Heathcliff as a racially marked outsider whose experiences of exclusion, humiliation, and social marginalization are inseparable from the broader racial and colonial dynamics embedded within the text. Moreover, his eventual acquisition of both *Wuthering Heights* and *Thrushcross Grange* can be interpreted as a symbolic reversal of racial dispossession, positioning the novel as a subtle challenge to dominant racial hierarchies. When adaptations replace this racialized figure with a white actor, they do more than alter a character's appearance; they erase a crucial dimension of the novel's social, historical, and political significance.

The historical review of major English-language adaptations further indicates that such erasure is neither incidental nor isolated. Across six of the seven adaptations examined between 1920 and 2026, Heathcliff has been portrayed by white actors, revealing a persistent pattern of racial exclusion that reflects broader institutional practices within the Anglo-American film industry. This continuity suggests that whitewashing should be understood as a structural phenomenon rather than a series of individual creative choices. The comparative analysis of Andrea Arnold's 2011 adaptation and Emerald Fennell's 2026 adaptation reinforces this conclusion by illustrating how racial representation is produced not only through casting decisions but also through visual discourse. Arnold's adaptation employs cinematography, framing, lighting, and representations of social exclusion to foreground Heathcliff's racial difference and translate the novel's racial politics into cinematic language. By contrast, Fennell's adaptation adopts a prestige-film aesthetic that reimagines Heathcliff as a racially unmarked romantic protagonist, thereby limiting the visual and interpretive conditions necessary for understanding the character through a racial lens. The existence of Arnold's critically acclaimed adaptation demonstrates that racially accurate representation is both artistically viable and commercially achievable, making the continued return to whitewashed portrayals a deliberate structural choice rather than a practical necessity.

The study contributes to Victorian literary studies, adaptation studies, and CRT-informed media scholarship by showing how racial meanings embedded within literary texts can be systematically diluted or erased through adaptation. It also highlights the methodological value of combining close reading, VDA, and CRT to investigate how racial ideologies operate across different media forms. At the same time, several limitations should be acknowledged. The visual analysis focused on four carefully selected scenes from each adaptation, chosen to provide maximum analytical coverage of the study's coding categories; however, a larger corpus of scenes would allow for a more comprehensive

examination of visual strategies throughout each film. Likewise, while earlier adaptations were incorporated into the historical analysis, they were not subjected to the same level of systematic visual discourse analysis, and future studies could strengthen the structural argument by undertaking a fuller visual examination of the adaptation record. The present research also concentrates primarily on textual and production-level evidence and therefore does not address how audiences interpret and respond to the racial representation of Heathcliff across different adaptations. Audience reception studies involving surveys, focus groups, or analyses of viewer commentary would provide valuable complementary perspectives. Furthermore, as Indonesian scholars examining a British Victorian text and contemporary Anglo-American film productions, the researchers' interpretations are inevitably mediated through available scholarly accounts of those cultural contexts, creating both analytical opportunities and limitations.

Despite these constraints, the findings provide compelling evidence that the persistence of whitewashing across more than a century of *Wuthering Heights* adaptations reflects the continuing influence of structural racism within cultural production. The repeated transformation of Heathcliff from a racially marked outsider into a white romantic hero demonstrates how adaptation can function as a mechanism through which dominant racial narratives are preserved and normalized. Recognizing this pattern is essential not only for a fuller understanding of *Wuthering Heights* and its adaptation history but also for broader efforts to challenge institutional practices that continue to privilege whiteness in film casting and representation. In this sense, the study underscores the importance of adaptation as a site of ideological struggle, where questions of race, power, and cultural memory remain actively contested.

References

- Abraham, D. (2024). From page to screen: How media adaptations reframe classic literature for contemporary audiences. *A Multidisciplinary Journal* 3(1), 83–96. <https://doi.org/10.22034/mic.2024.486421.1026>.
- AlDahoul, N., Ibrahim, H., Park, M., Rahwan, T., & Zaki, Y. (2024). Inclusive content reduces racial and gender biases, yet non-inclusive content dominates popular culture. *arXivLabs* 1–2, 1–86. <https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2405.06404>.
- Bhopal, K. (2023). critical race theory: Confronting, challenging, and rethinking white privilege. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 49(1), 111–128. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-soc-031021-123710>.
- Brown, W., & Zuo, M. (2025). Introduction: Critical race theory and film-philosophy. *Film-Philosophy*, 29(2), 301–311. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.3366/film.2025.0306>.
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2017). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. SAGE Publications. <https://books.google.co.id/books?id=Pz5RvgAACAAJ>.
- Culler, J. D. (2007). *The literary in theory*. Stanford University Press. <https://books.google.co.id/books?id=wmxwT746DucC>
- Delgado, R., Stefancic, J., & Harris, A. (2017). *Critical race theory (Third Edition): An introduction*. NYU Press. https://books.google.co.id/books?id=FH_bdQAAQBAJ
- Diko, M., & Saule, N. (2024). *Adapting a novel for television: A systemic critique*. *International Journal of African Renaissance Studies - Multi-, Inter- and Transdisciplinarity*, 19(1), 27–43. <https://doi.org/10.1080/18186874.2024.2389274>.

- Dowie-Chin, T., Cowley, M. P. S., & Worlds, M. (2020). Whitewashing through film: How educators can use critical race media literacy to analyze hollywood's adaptation of Angie Thomas' the hate u give. *International Journal of Multicultural Education*, 22(2), 129–144. <https://doi.org/10.18251/ijme.v22i2.2457>.
- Hutcheon, L., & O'Flynn, S. (2013). *A theory of adaptation*. Routledge. <https://books.google.co.id/books?id=PRPRReTQ2cYgC>.
- Lawrence, S., & Hylton, K. (2022). *Critical race theory, methodology, and semiotics: The analytical utility of a "race" conscious approach for visual qualitative research*. *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies*, 22(3), 255–265. <https://doi.org/10.1177/15327086221081829>.
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. SAGE Publications. <https://books.google.co.id/books?id=2oA9aWINEooC>.
- Meyer, S. (1996). *Imperialism at home: Race and Victorian women's fiction*. Cornell University Press. <https://books.google.co.id/books?id=etTVpbQagHwC>.
- Michie, E. B. (1993). *Outside the pale: Cultural exclusion, gender difference, and the victorian woman writer*. Cornell University Press. <https://books.google.co.id/books?id=1CXuAAAAMAAJ>.
- Ohrvik, A. (2024). *What is close reading? An exploration of a methodology*. *Rethinking History*, 28(2), 238–260. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13642529.2024.2345001>.
- Rose, G. (2014). *Visual culture, photography and the urban: An interpretive framework*. *Space and Culture, India*, 2(3), 4–13. <https://doi.org/10.20896/saci.v2i3.92>.
- Schmitt, C. (1997). *Alien nation: Nineteenth-century gothic fictions and English nationality*. University of Pennsylvania Press. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctv4s7gvk>.
- Sere, Shinta Andriani, Muarifudin, Amalia, Fina, & Shinta Sere; Muarifuddin Muarifuddin; Fina Amalia Masri. (2020). *The Representation of African cultural identity in black panther film by ryan coogler (the application of stuart hall's theory)*. *ELITE: Journal of English Language and Literature*, 5(1), Page 1-13. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.33772/elite.v3i1.876>.
- Stam, R. (2004). *Literature through film: Realism, magic, and the art of adaptation*. Wiley. <https://books.google.co.id/books?id=NUC2EAAAQBAJ>.
- Thalken, R., Mimno, D., & Wilkens, M. (2024). It matters to the viewer: social reviews of books adapted for film. *Digital Studies / Le Champ Numérique*, 13(3). <https://doi.org/10.16995/dscn.9671>.