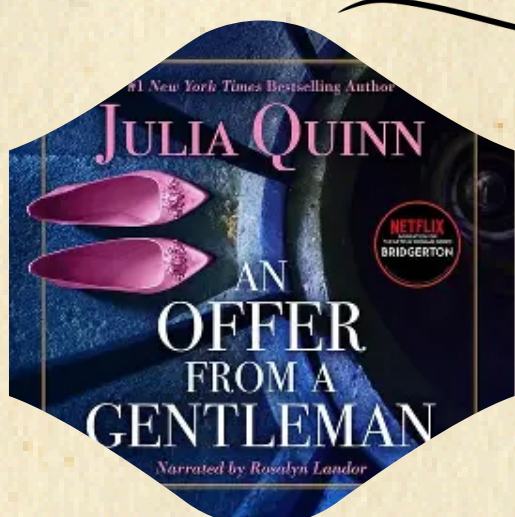


# Adaptation of Benedict Bridgerton

## A Modern Influence in Regency Romance Television

A book and Netflix series on the eight aristocratic Bridgerton siblings



- Netflix's *Bridgerton* (2020) adapts Julia Quinn's novels into seasons
- Book 3 and Season 4 focuses on Benedict Bridgerton and love interest, Sophie Beckett (Baek)
- Cinderella-inspired storyline

- Modern audiences connect more with Benedict in adaptation: Why?
- Considers differing power dynamics, behavioral traits and benefits of multimodal rhetoric
- Examines arrival at Bridgerton House in Chapter 13 and S4E4

### Novel

#### Power Dynamics

- He forces maid Sophie Beckett into his mother's employment
- Uses blackmail, coercion and intimidation tactics

#### Behavior Traits

- Volatile Temperament
- Cruel, angry and possessive
- Dominating body-language
- Heteronormative



### Netflix

#### Power Dynamics

- He helps Sophie Baek find employment, values female agency and uses softer, genteel rhetoric
- Netflix removes blackmail plotline

#### Behavior Traits

- Kind and Compassionate
- Sensitive and consent-driven
- Submissive body-language
- Queer-coded (Tekobbe & Sparby)

## Benefits of Multimodal Rhetoric



- Adaptation benefits from audio-visual storytelling
- Joyful birdsong in background incites positive association
- Expression, inflection and tone emphasizes compassion and a submissive rhetorical strategy
- Aids emotional connection with Netflix's Benedict

## Discussion And Outcome

### Grizzard and Eden (2022)

- "Viewers will empathize with characters acting in line with a viewer's own morality...not characters who act outside the bounds of the viewer's moral sanction," (10).
- Immoral portrayal results in a lesser connection with Julia Quinn's Benedict

- Actor Luke Thompson's portrayal suits popular culture as a feminist and LGBTQ+ character (Iriwn 218)
- Sophie's agency and assertiveness in adaptation intentionally targets popular culture in 2026 ("BenedictandSophie")

### Marghitu and Smythe (2024)

- "...the inclusion of women, people of color, and from LGBTQ+ communities...are also linked to the resurgence of feminism in popular culture" (419).
- Showrunners Shonda Rimes and Jess Brownell modernize *Bridgerton* (2020)

## Rhetorical Effect

A modern audience emotionally connects with Netflix's Benedict in *Bridgerton* over his book-counterpart due to empathy with morality and the character changes amid popular feminist culture