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From Novel to Film: Claude Chabrol's adaptations of Ruth Rendell's A Judgement in Stone (La Ceremonie) And The Bridesmaid (La Demoiselle d'Honneur)

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Abstract

This study aims to define technicalities of filmic adaptations through two specific examples. Ruth Rendell's *A Judgement in Stone* and *The Bridesmaid* were both adapted by French director Claude Chabrol. Based on film theory by Keith Reader and Phil Powrie, Anne Goliot-LetÃ© and Francis Vanoye, and Laurent Jullier, and on more specific adaptation theory by Robert Stam, this study focuses on the main issues that arise when a director decides to work with a literary text as a basis for a film-script.

From a literary angle of study, the questions of focalisation and organisation of the diegesis will be dealt with by using Genette's criteria. Narrative tools will be compared to filmic ones and the study will evidence differences in the range of devices each artist might use, and their different effects. The study of these two cases will lead to wider conclusions on the narrative side of the adaptation process.

The second focus of this dissertation will be the concept of film genres, as theorised by Rick Altman. The films in our corpus will be analysed through the lenses of the three film genres they belong to. This part of the study will further evidence that Chabrol based his works on Rendell's novels but he also added elements to them, which resulted in a dense generic textile that goes even further than Rendell's original literary generification.

Lastly, the dissertation will try to define the two authors' styles and lead a comparative analysis of their values and works. As that they did not produce their works at the same time and have never been working together, questions arise on the relevance of one's themes to the other. Works by Susan Rowland about Rendell and Guy Austin and Joel Magny about Chabrol will help define and compare the two artists' values, and show their numerous similarities.

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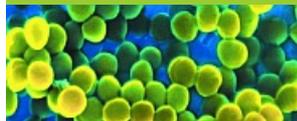
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Ruth Barbara Rendell, Baroness Rendell of Babergh, CBE (née Grasemann; 17 February 1930 – 2 May 2015), was an English author of thrillers and psychological murder mysteries.[1]. Rendell's best-known creation, Chief Inspector Wexford, was the hero of many popular police stories, some of them successfully adapted for TV. She said that Chabrol's 1995 version of *A Judgement in Stone*, *La Cérémonie* with Sandrine Bonnaire, was one of the few film adaptations of her work that she was happy with. The novel was also filmed in 1986 with Rita Tushingham.[19] Chabrol made *La Demoiselle d'honneur* in 2004, based on *The Bridesmaid*. Ruth Rendell's novel "The Bridesmaid" is the basis for this French film directed by Claude Chabrol. The director had a huge success adapting another Rendell's book, "A Judgment in Stone" that became the hit "La Cérémonie". Ms. Rendell stories always have a central flawed character, as is the case with Senta, a strange young woman. The story begins as Sophie and her sister Patricia are watching a news program on television, a sensational crime is in the headlines. Their single mother, Christine, works as a hairdresser from her modest, but comfortable home