Assignment 1

The most astounding difference for me, but perhaps not the most obvious at first, is that Ulster/RTE in their production of “Lisheen Races, Second Hand” did not actually make “Lisheen Races, Second Hand.” The knee-jerk response to my assertion might be to say, “Well of course they did! They made an entire series based on the collection of stories within Some Experiences of an Irish R.M. written by Somerville and Ross.” My argument is not they did not make a production based on “Lisheen Races, Second Hand”—of course they did, but these races were not experienced second hand. The Major Yeates in the production experienced first hand the races, where as the Major Yeates in the story experienced the races second hand, hence the title. The reasoning for this is uncomplicated, and must be the cause for Ulster/RTE to make such changes.

Deciding to change the name from “Lisheen Races, Second Hand” to “Lisheen Races,” and all that such a change entails, was probably a smart move. In the second hand version, Major Yeates learns of events through Slipper as he recounts them in a public house. This interaction would not be very exciting to recreate, and even less so for the viewers. Instead, Ulster/RTE decided to call upon their creative licenses and reimagine what the Lisheen races might have been like had Major Yeates and company arrived. By making the Lisheen Races experience first hand instead of second, a great number of opportunities presented themselves. Now, we have the drama with Sally Knox and Bobbie and the humor provided by Peter and his gambling along with other
more exciting events. These combined are vastly more entertaining than simply
listening to a Slipper character recount what occurred.

The simple principal is that it is usually more exciting to experience the fun first
hand then just hearing it being told. Ulter/RTE acknowledged this and transformed the
story of the Lisheen Races into something more exciting and more their own, yet not
departing entirely from the original story.