Films in the Media: A Brief Analysis of Paratextual Resources Around Baz Luhrmann's New Biopic *Elvis*

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Watch *Elvis* Movie Intro

"In literary interpretation, paratext is material that surrounds a published main text supplied by the authors, editors, printers, and publishers. These added elements form a frame for the main text, and can change the reception of a text or its interpretation by the public."

Paratext - Wikipedia

And what about other peculiarities within the production of films?
Dialects are a particular form of language which are peculiar to two distinct kinds of linguist phenomenon: Usually interpreted geographically, these isolects (language varieties) also own some application in relation to a speaker's social background or occupation.

This work is made publicly available on Canvas. Contact gross008@odu.edu for any inquiry.

In this curation it is my responsibility to intrigue the reader's attention not only with paratextuality around Baz Luhrmann's new biopic *Elvis* worth over $285 million worldwide but also with actor Austin Butler's voice in the text discussed.

Let us start with a brief summary about the legend's biography.
Born in 1935, the real Elvis Presley, "The King", grew up in the mostly black neighborhood of Tupelo, Mississippi in which relationships shaped who he became, the "white singer who sounds black", that "Elvis the Pelvis" who could not have existed without Rhythm and Blues.
Surrounded by the African-American community of the mid 1930s, Elvis could not do anything else but only be transported by this rich culture and sound of music initiating, consequently, an innovative type of perspective concerning race within a society brainwashed by segregation.

As a result of contextuality within human's individual development, Elvis' language accent was a peculiar mixture of Tupelo southern accent and African-American English.

> "When you live with something for […] years, and you do nothing else, you can't help that; it become a fiber of your being."

Austin Butler's voice before & after *Elvis*

The complexity of human communication is emphasized by the critical role of context and exposure within a person's development, in which people, resources, and time are fundamental.

The following recordings are demonstrations of voices from Mississippi.
These want to serve as references to learn the difference in accent as consequence of context (To discover more about biographical information relevant to these two recorded voices, visit Dialects of Mississippi | IDEA: International Dialects of English Archive (dialectsarchive.com)).

"Mississippi 11 male, 83, 1933, Caucasian, Tupelo"

Through a meticulous research, I have discovered that the internet is packed with videos from a myriad of platform, such as mainly YouTube and Vevo, showcasing the fact that Elvis Presley's language changed across his life and how American actor Austin Butler had to deal with it to meticulously replicate "The King".

As Butler states in multiple paratexts, in order for him to achieve the goal, he had to be a sponge for years, "obsessing", putting enormous hours of work and studying everything about the star, to include his legendary vocals, his surroundings and how his voice changed over the course of his career.
Let us dive into distribution and promotions with some paratextual examples.

Interviews, Promotional Appearances

In the first production, Austin shares his "how he did it", and in the second we discover his voice before *Elvis*.

This second group includes a first video reproducing the original "That's Alright" by Arthur Crudup, well-known as "Big Boy", to proof the influence of the Afro-American language and culture; whereas the rest is a comparison between Elvis' voice and actor Austin Butler's, and how this changed across the lifespan for the first one and throughout rehearsals and the movie for the second one.
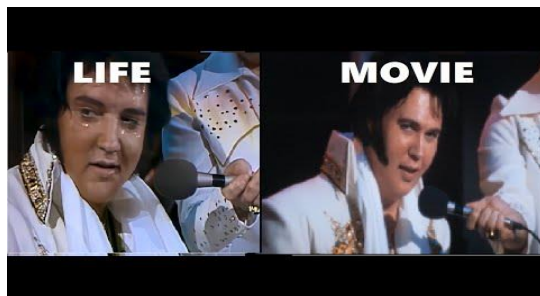
As proof of contextuality and its reality of outcomes in communication development, it may be confirmed that *Elvis* does contain multilingualism. Afterall, dialects are a form of language. It is also interesting to mention that because I am not used to Mississippi accent, I miss some words while listening to this eponymous movie; however, the more I watch it and pay attention to them the more I capture their intrinsic meaning and slangs within.


Elvis: Real Life vs The Movie - YouTube

Trailers, Commercial, and Posters

The first official trailers capture the audience's attention through the summary and best scenes of the biopic along with Elvis's most famous songs, sensuality, multiculturalism, Austin's pleasant presence, and a conclusive image showcasing Elvis' daughter brainwashing thoughts about this production.

This second trailer, instead, wants to be more of a discussion around segregation, Elvis Presley' "suspicious mind", his innovative performance and musicality, or better "way of singing" and, most importantly, his consequent keen rebellion due to the received accusations of being illicit and against the American politics of the moment. It is the story of an artist who carried forward political thoughts which were against the contemporary politics, the production of texts which were outside of the box according to the culture of the moment.
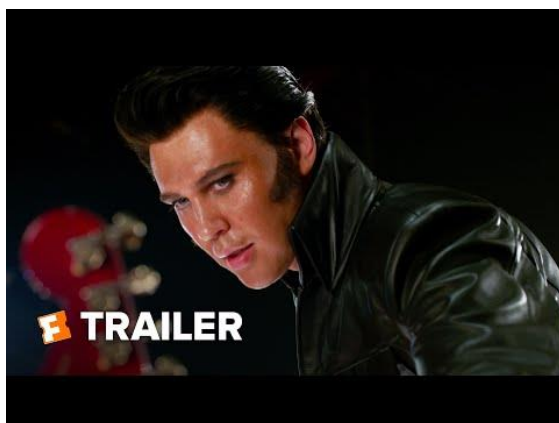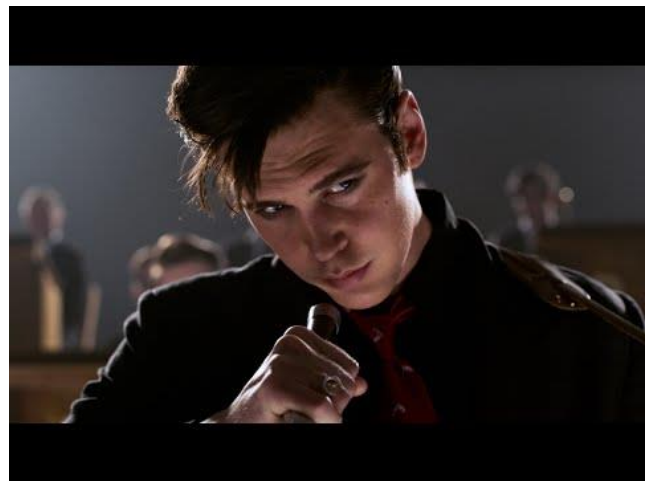
The final trailer wants to emphasize, between the lines, more Austin's "A genuine star-is-born performance" as opposed to merely the real Elvis Presley, almost to incite an incoming new Oscar winner.

Elvis first arrives in cinemas on June 24 with a black, gold, and red poster referencing Elvis' iconic belt buckles, followed by others featuring his audience fanatic and passionate love.

Three main posters, also Blu-Ray and DVD covers, feature Butler as Elvis Presley at various stages of his legendary career, from teenage to right before his declining health and consequent passing.

Official Social Media Accounts

Following are screenshots of official social media accounts of both "The King" and Baz' production, which show amount of posts, and the abnormous numbers of subscribers while hyperlinking to other webpages which, at first impression, seem not to to contain anything relevant to merchandise.

Furthermore, it is worth noticing the amount of people who like and follow the real Elvis Presley official facebook page.

- 12,565,764 people like this
- 11,240,940 people follow this

ELVIS PRESLEY ✔
@elvis · Musician/band

🔷 Use app
↗ itunes.apple.com

Home   About   Photos   Events   More ▾   ⋯

About   See all

ⓘ https://www.shopelvis.com/store
http://twitter.com/elvispresley
http://www.youtube.com/elvis
http://

👍 12,565,788 people like this

☑ 11,240,959 people follow this

ELVIS PRESLEY ✔
10h · 🌐

What Elvis documentary won a Golden Globe Award in 1973?
#ElvisPresley #GoldenGlobe #Award #Documentary

Instagram   🔍 elvis   Log In   Sign Up

elvismovie ✔   Message   Follow   ⋯

281 posts   151K followers   54 following

ELVIS
@BazLuhrmann's #ElvisMovie. Starring @AustinButler and #TomHanks. Own now on Digital, 4K Ultra HD or stream on HBOMax⚡
elvis.warnerbros.com

🎸⚡   Tokyo ⚡   Toronto ⚡   Graceland ...   Melbourne...   Sydney ✨   Gold Coast

Here is the official movie website, hyperlinked in the official Instagram page, followed by the BBC page, and Austin's Instagram.
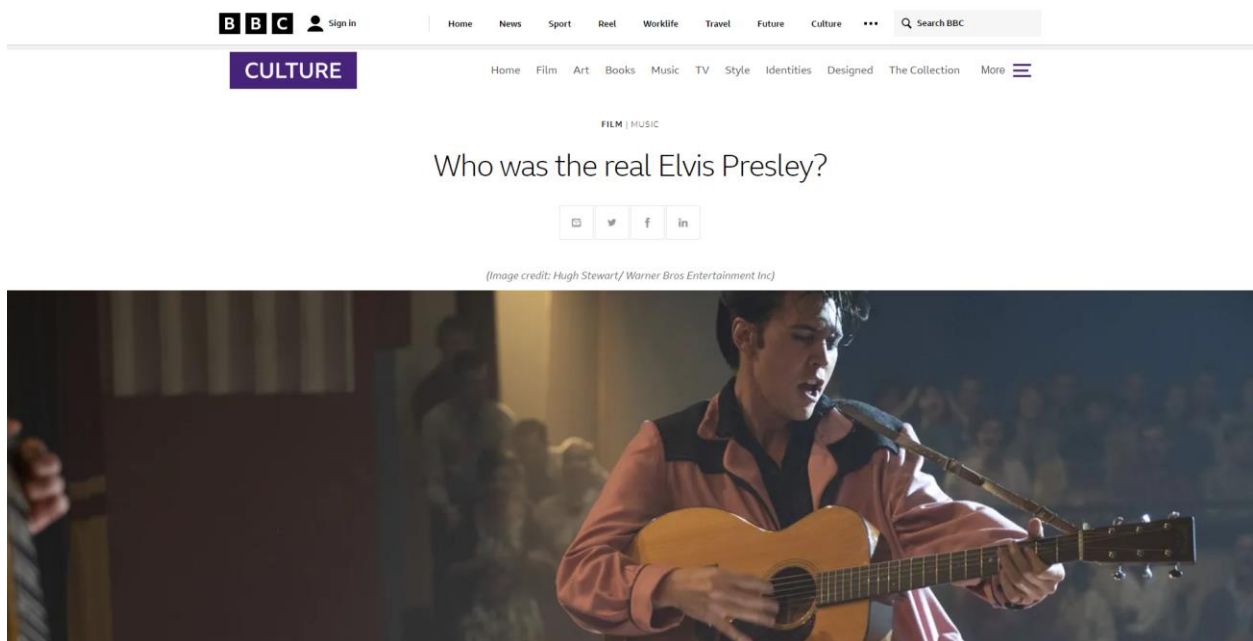
Although Austin Butler is not a big fan of social media and, therefore, barely posts anything, he reached over 3.3 million followers against his 33 posts, the first one of which features him sensually biting his lower lips.
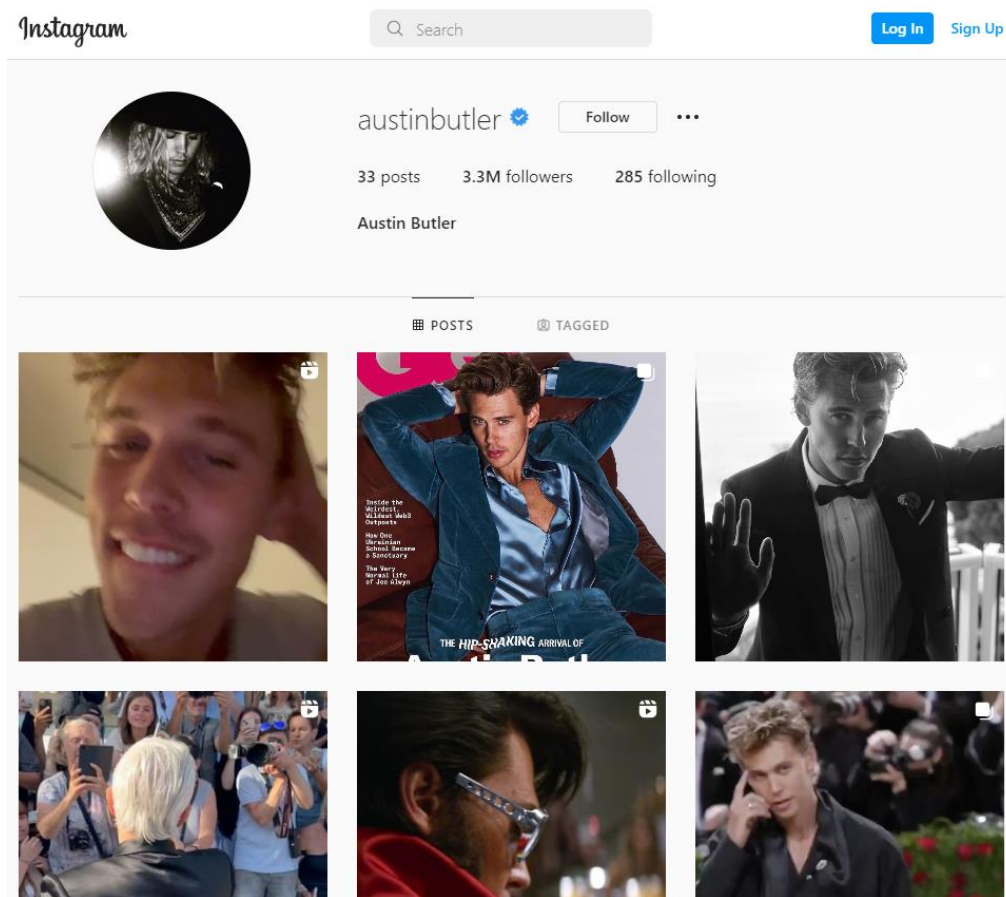
Like the real Elvis with "His on-screen swagger and performance style, consisting of over stated gyrations and other body movements stressing the beat" ([How Elvis permanently changed American pop culture (theconversation.com)](#), introvert Austin Butler has been able to thrill and surprise his teenage audience, *and not only*, via the representation of a true story, nurturing their imagination, and making them laugh while triggering their senses.
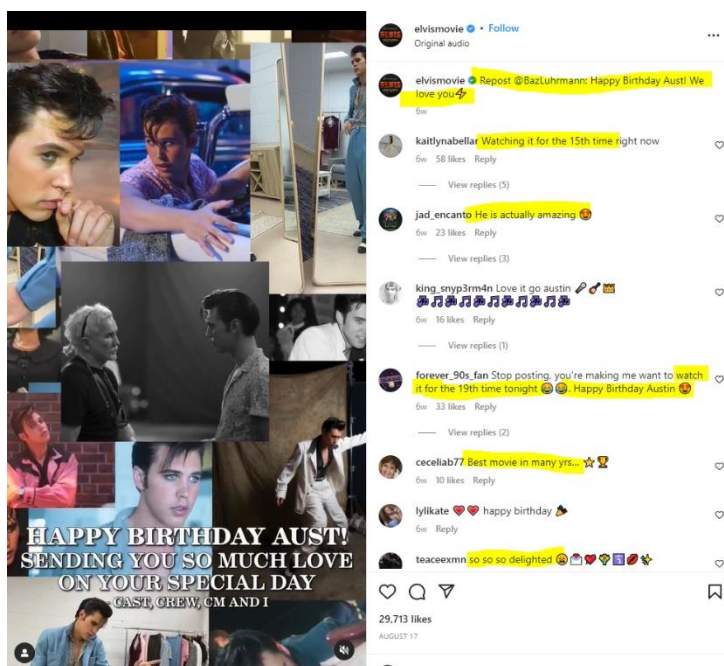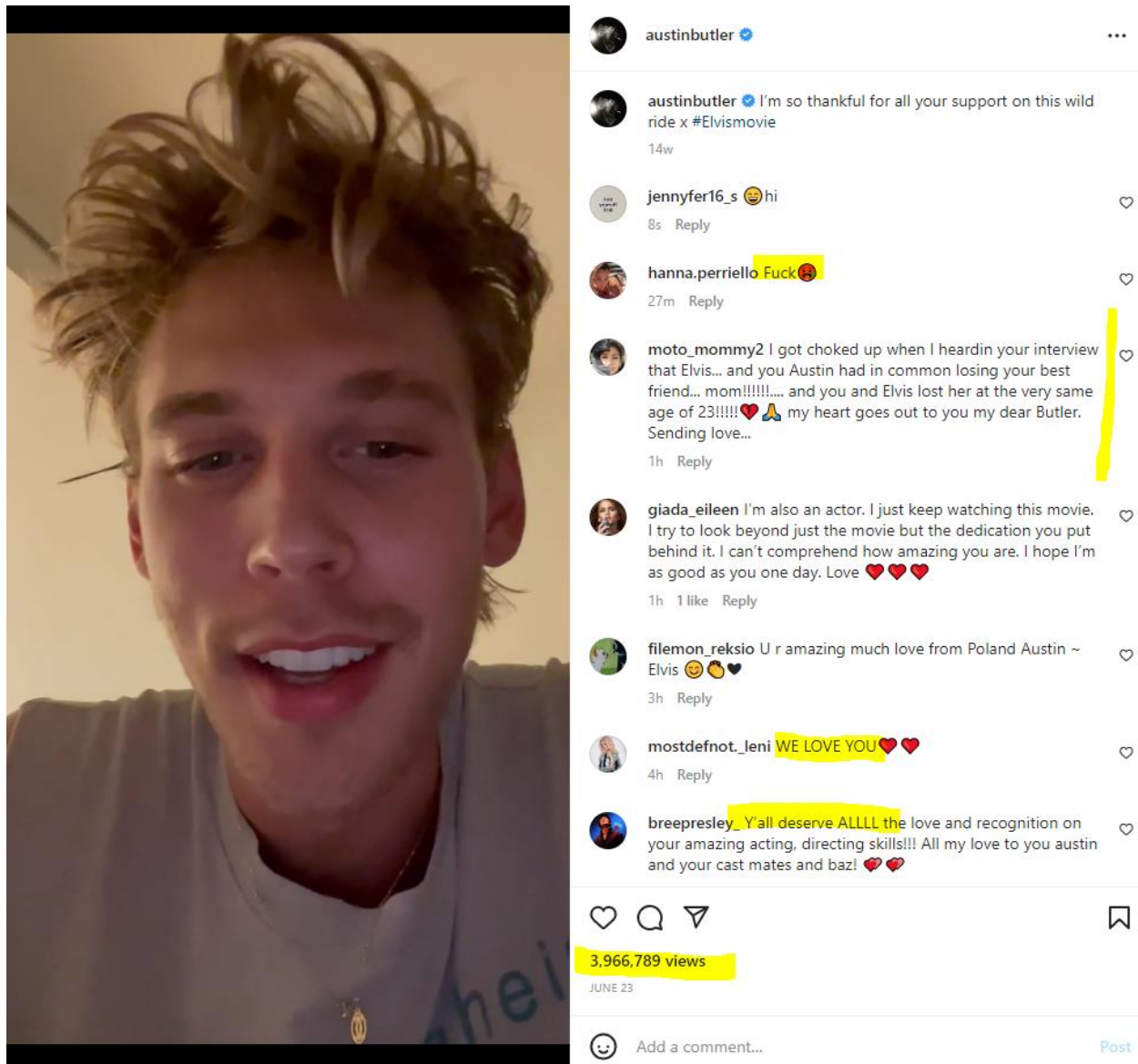
Public Sentiments of *Elvis* Around the Globe

The second most popular music biography behind *Bohemian Rhapsody*, *Elvis* has achieved over $285 million mark worldwide, even after weeks from its release at the theatre, and grossing approximately $136.5 million only in the United States and Canada.

Although watchable, from Tuesday, September 13, 2022, on HBO Max and Prime Video, *Elvis* DVDs and Blu-Rays sold out on that same morning, making many feeling hurt for not being able to enjoy this work once again and right away, and others, including famous stars around the world, wanting to visit Graceland and singing Elvis' songs.

elvismovie and **warnerbrosentertainment**
Original audio

elvismovie ✓ Elvis became an icon and the stars aligned for Austin to play him. Today is the day to own Elvis on 4K Ultra HD! #ElvisMovie
2w

elvis ✓ 🙌 🙌 🙌
2w 45 likes Reply

britt.juarez The friend was Vanessa Hudgens 😭
2w 57 likes Reply

outofstardust.v This is sooooo cute 😳♥
2w 4 likes Reply

jad_encanto Buy the movie today
2w 4 likes Reply

jenna_wellborn If he doesn't get an Oscar for his performance I'm never watching the Oscars again.
2w 16 likes Reply
— View replies (1)

crocheteando_a_lo_loco I love it ❤ ❤ ❤ ❤
2w Reply

stephanie_pba The friend was Vanessa Hudgens 😭 😭 ❤
2w 9 likes Reply

xbutlers_heavenx The friend is Vanessa Hudgens by the way 💋 💋
2w 10 likes Reply

♡ ○ ◁   🔖
12,679 likes
SEPTEMBER 13

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elvismovie ✓ • Follow

elvismovie ✓ "It's just remarkable how this one man can make such a mark on the world." Own Elvis on Digital now and on 4K Ultra HD 9/13 | Stream on HBOMax
4w

elvis ✓ 🙌 🙌 🙌
4w 100 likes Reply
— View replies (3)

gunzandrosas ✓ Best movie 🔥 🔥 🔥
4w 14 likes Reply
— View replies (1)

onegabystyles My favorite movie ♡
4w 14 likes Reply
— View replies (1)

omidkhanian_824 Best movie of 2022
4w 43 likes Reply
— View replies (3)

nicole_marcellino My entire family and I loveeeeee this movie. My five-year-old is obsessed. This production deserves every award out there!
4w 21 likes Reply

jad_encanto I just finished Elvis on HBO Max so much fun and I can't wait to grab it on Blu-ray ❤
4w 10 likes Reply

♡ ○ ◁   🔖
108,531 views
SEPTEMBER 2

[Watch Italian Band Maneskin Singing Elvis' "If I can Dream"](#)

References

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- [Elvis Presley in Every Language (graceland.com)](#)
- https://youtu.be/wBDLRvjHVOY
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- [Elvis Star Austin Butler On Imposter Syndrome and Playing An Icon | Explain This | Esquire - YouTube](#)
- [Elvis Presley in Every Language (graceland.com)](#)
- [Elvis Brought Sex to the Minds of Teenage Girls (elvis-history-blog.com)](#)
- https://youtu.be/XVbl0mQACSM
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- [Final 'Elvis' Trailer Gives New Look At His Musicality & Rebellion – Billboard](#)
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- https://www.youtube.com/embed/2E52kIgSnuE?feature=oembed
- [First Elvis Movie Poster References the King of Rock's Iconic Belt Buckles (collider.com)](#)
- [Austin Butler is the King of Rock and Roll on Elvis posters (flickeringmyth.com)](#)
- [Elvis Presley (@elvis) • Instagram photos and videos](#)
- [Elvis Presley (@ElvisPresley) / Twitter](#)
- [ELVIS PRESLEY - Home | Facebook](#)
- [ELVIS (@elvismovie) • Instagram photos and videos](#)
- [ELVIS | Official Movie Site (warnerbros.com)](#)
- [Austin Butler (@austinbutler) • Instagram photos and videos](#)
- [How Elvis permanently changed American pop culture (theconversation.com)](#)
- [What Does the World Think of the New Elvis Movie? - The Clinton Courier](#)