

Adaptation Theory: A Literature Review

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When first delving into the subject of novels into film, it was with little clear knowledge of what I should look for. However, I did have several questions come to mind to help guide my research. What study, if any, surrounds the transition of novels to film? Who does this? What is it called? Do the authors of novels produce the screenplays of their work? And, who has come before, if anyone, to ask these same questions? The journey these questions started produced a generous amount of information and a striking consensus among the scholars involved in what I came to know as adaptation theory.

During a cold search in research databases, the topic of adaptation theory turned up an endless sea of comparison studies, weighing a film against the novel from which it was created. However, there were more promising pieces. Two of the first articles encountered were “Materializing Adaptation theory: the Adaptation Industry” by Simone Murray and “Twelve Fallacies in Contemporary Adaptation Theory” by Thomas Leitch. Murray’s article is a concise nugget of information on the subject. Both Murray and Leitch provide a name to the study, which helped to hone further searches for information and revealed that this subject of study does indeed exist and is researched on a scholarly level. Murray’s bibliography lists several good sources and within the first paragraph, she lists names of scholars working in the field, such as Robert Stam (Murray 4). Shortly after that, she reveals the founding critic, George Bluestone (4). This led to a great many other names, of which some are contained here. Leitch’s article provides an enumerated list of current issues facing adaptation theory.

So what is an adaptation? Put simply, it is when a text is interpreted from one media system to another, such as parody, format change (production of a text in another media, or updating, like in the case of Julie Taymor’s *Titus*), and remakes. Adaptation theory is the study of that process. Hutcheon helps us understand more clearly by listing what adaptation isn’t:

“short intertextual allusions, sampled music, live performances, revisions, editions, transcriptions, translation, spin-off expansions, [and] continuum” (170). Likewise, what is a screenplay? It isn’t a film, according to Howard Rodman (87). He writes that the industry refers to a screenplay as a “spec,” like a speculation (87). He suggests that this honest “way of looking at what the screenplay is—and, more important, what the screenplay isn’t—acknowledges the brutal instrumentality of the form” (88). “There is the film we see with our eyes closed. The screenplay is often a transcription of that film” (89). Rodman then illustrates a scene with a distracted writer who daydreams, does other tasks and somehow scribbles out a screenplay in the interplay (89). These insights are important for seeing the full dimensions of adaptations and how they are perceived. They are texts that are transferred between media forms, and those individual media forms are important to understanding the process of how the transfer occurs or even why.

However, despite Bluestone’s blueprint for the discipline in his work *Novels into Films*, the discipline has floundered. Robert B. Ray, in his contribution to *Film Adaptation*, places blame for so many comparison pieces on “professional requirements at the undergraduate level to publish frequently” (47). “*Literature/Film Quarterly* began in 1973” and “reserved most of its space for articles by graduate students, junior faculty, and teachers at small, relatively unprestigious colleges and universities—all obviously groups who needed to publish” (47). He also cites a rise in unemployment among Literary PhDs at the time film studies was coming into its own, and that the ranks were filled with people not necessarily qualified to be objective on the subject (47).

Murray’s article goes into other issues facing adaptation theory today and the history surrounding it (4-7), displaying a surprising consensus between herself and the other writers.

Among the problems facing adaptation theory is a sense of pointlessness as long as it remains steeped in fidelity comparisons, which have created far too many articles on the matter that “appear to lack serious critical reach” (4).¹ Linda Hutcheon’s backs this notion up in her work *A Theory of Adaptation*, by saying that “adaptation theory requires more than novels and films” to be understood (XI). Ray argues that the view of “fidelity to certain texts is just too simplistic and does not bare enough fruit” (Naremore 45). Stam begs the question, “Fidelity to what?” (57) He gives an example from the book and film pairing *The Grapes of Wrath*. Steinbeck wrote in his work “photographs” and John Ford had to choose what photographs when they shot the scene (55). He uses the example to argue that it is impossible to remain *faithful*(55). As George Bluestone writes, “Quantitative analyses have very little to do with qualitative changes. They tell us nothing about the mutational process, let alone how to judge it” (5).

Murray immediately points out the tension between literary studies and film studies, in that both sides wish to “valorize” their respective arts (4). Unlike Murray, Stam points out that adaptation studies is in the school of humanities where it is usually associated with literary studies. Film is still considered a new art and he states that “we are reminded, [it] is a form of writing that borrows from other forms of writing” (1-2). A strong view exists in this community that film besides being a borrower is a blatant thief and defiler of the written word (4-8). Richard Hulseberg calls this a “literary bias,” saying that some feel adaptation is “cultural cannibalism” (58). A great deal of negative language surrounds the discipline of adaptation. Stam calls it “lament[ing] the lost” (3). Fatima Naqvi explores the ideas of loss, describing the work of adapting “as an estranging act of translation” (292). Naqvi also frames her argument in cross language translations and how a loss of meaning arises between those languages which can be

¹ Fidelity is considered how closely a film resembles the book or other material it was adapted from.

uncomfortable for the reader (292-293). Instead of abandoning the negative language of loss and mourning, she uses it to show what is happening on a different level than other approaches. For instance, “film adaptation from literary texts, transposing the building blocks of language to those of film, becomes a melancholy labor of love that must necessarily lose the original to come into being.” This is to say that “the transfer from one medium to another is necessarily partial,” preferring certain aspects over others (309). Loss is then seen as both what is lost in the adaptation and the loss as in mourning of a passed loved one, and an effort to recover the past (306-308). She also believes that a director’s style equates to “insight into the technique of mournful film translation” (292). She points out that few scholars have taken up this perspective of adaptation as translation and cites Robert Stam’s work to change how adaptation is viewed and studied (294).

Stam lists out several other terms to describe what is going on: iconophobia (5), anti-corporeality (6), logophobia (6). In his contribution to *Film Adaptation*, Stam adds to this by saying that film is regarded as having a lack of “depth or dignity” and a “non-finalized set of practices” (Naremore 59). The author Graham Greene once said, the cinema “has the same purpose as the novel, just as the novel has the same purpose as the drama” (Skerrett 298). Yet, the issues remain steadfast.

The Economist featured a brief write up titled “I Loved It, Darling, Let’s Shoot.” The key points of this article that stuck out most to me were: “Many books and films become symbiotic companions that scratch each other’s backs. A good (or bad) book can produce a blockbuster film. Films have turned obscure, mid-list novels into bestsellers...book adaptations have become both a Hollywood ritual and the great unspoken hope of writers...to some authors, avoiding a hatchet job is more important than taking the money...to maintain control over content, more

novelists are opting to write the screenplay themselves.” So it seems a great deal of the negativity felt is heaped on the film industry. For example, an article by Tara Ison, “Confessions of a Former Screenwriter, Ison gives voice to this notion from the perspective of a screenwriter who has transitioned into novel writing. She talks about her transition from screen to novel writing and how she wanted to hide her history as a screenwriter until her publisher convinced her that it was a good selling point. People loved *Don’t Tell Mom the Babysitter’s Dead*. She was concerned she would not be taken seriously if word got out that she had written screenplays (Ison, 58). Yet, a great many fiction writers seek to work on film, just as *The Economist* article suggested, despite Alan Riding insisting “Novels are routinely adapted for the screen. What is rare is for a best-selling writer to direct the movie version of his own book” (Riding 1). He is backed up in this assertion by Terrence Rafferty who believes, “these days Hollywood—even *independent* Hollywood—doesn’t frequently come calling on novelists of any literary stature...it’s a short list. Producers care less about prestige than about marketable stories” (Rafferty 8). Yet, I was able to find a great many of them and with little overlap among the lists. Film Comment’s “Best Films Made by Novelists and Fiction Writers,” which can be found in their *Trivial Top 20* posting, reveals that a good number of them have been and are working in the film industry. However, there is no clear criterion given as to how the films are ranked. The list only proves that novelists and fiction writers also directed and adapt stories for cinema and continue to do so (July/Aug 2010).

David Sterritt, interviewed the author of *Cider House Rules*, John Irving, for *Christian Science Monitor* back in 2000. Irving experienced a “13 year effort to bring [his] story to the screen” (15). Irving chose to write the screenplay to protect his work and “approached his screenwriting task with mixed feelings about the movies,” as the “creative decisions were still up

to the director” (15). Irving found that “when you write a novel, the exactness of the detail is everything... There is no such thing as too much specificity,” but the same is not true of the script (15). Irving does expect to do more in the future, as it gives him “a temporary break from the solitude of a novelist’s life” (15).

Another author, Mark Jude Poirier, was interviewed by Terrence Rafferty to find out why or how he found himself writing screenplays. “I kind of applied out of desperation, not out of any passion to write screenplays,” was the answer he received. Poirier needed the money and was out of work (8). Poirier talks in greater detail about the differences between the media. “For [novelists] moving a character from not knowing that he’s unhappy to sort of acknowledging it qualifies as a pretty momentous event. And that may be why so few writers of fiction manage to succeed, or even to be minimally comfortable, in Hollywood.”

Graham Greene is probably one of the best known among these authors. Greene had a career as novelist, film critic and screenwriter. Joseph T. Skerrett, Jr. discusses Greene in these capacities, along with Quentin Falk and Gene D. Phillips. Greene is an author who has always lived around film (Skerrett 293). When sound was added to film, it “attracted the interest of writers in large numbers to [the] work,” including Greene (Skerrett 294). Uncannily, one of the first films he saw was an adaptation (Skerrett 293). Phillips describes his writings on film as the “wittiest and most perceptive film criticism ever written” (Phillips 176). His writing became more heavily influenced by film forms as his career lengthened (Skerrett 294, 296). Quentin Falk looks at the films of his novels in his work *Travels in Greenland*, “curiously it took four screenwriters, including the film’s producer-director...and pianist-comedian...to work on the material which Gene Phillips is right to point out was so essentially cinematic in the first place” (Falk 20). Phillips tells us that “after the war he took to writing screenplays, even though in one

of his last reviews for *The Spectator* he gave a very bad notice to *Twenty-One Days*, a film for which he had written one of his early scripts” (177). “As a writer for the films, he never quite lost a certain sense of disappointment in the medium and contempt for the industry. He learned to suffer the indignities of alterations to his stories in screen versions.” However, Greene is quoted as saying, “the smile in the long run will be on your face. For the book has the longer life” (Skerrett 301). Greene is not alone in his assessment of the industry. He both loved and hated it, and he recommended anyone who is offered should take the money (Phillips 14-15).

James R. Messenger interviewed 19 novelists on four questions about the film adaptations of their novels in his telling article “I Think I Liked the Book Better: Nineteen Novelists Look at the Film Version of Their Work.” The questions were as follows: 1-Do you feel changes made in translating your work to the screen ultimately violated the thesis of your book? 2-Do you agree or disagree with the characters and/or segments eliminated? Is there an example of a character or segment you feel important to the development of your story which is missing? 3-Do you feel filmmakers should be obliged to adhere strictly to a literary piece when adapting for the screen in view of the differences between the medium of the novel and the medium of the film? 4-Were you consulted during the adaptation process? The answers vary from okay with the process to disappointed and angered by the process. One author felt that “the same rules should apply as to a translation from a foreign language.” Then contradicts himself by adding, “Instead of a literal rendition, some approximation of the spirit of the work, some idiom indigenous to the screen that would correspond to the written word. A book is a book. A film is a film—and seldom the twain do meet” (129). Another writer replied, “I don’t believe there is any excuse for not being able to translate a literary work effectively to the screen. (Please note that I use the word *translate*. Making a movie from a book is in every way a *translation*. It’s

impossible to adhere strictly to the work when translating it to film” (129). A third says it the most clearly without contradiction to reveal their desire toward fidelity, “The medium of the printed word and film are quite different. The filmmaker is obliged to get the essence of a novel; there is no way for him to get the bulk” (129-130). Greene would agree with this assessment, having said, “A writer should not be employed by anyone but himself. If you are using words in one craft, it is impossible not to corrupt them in another medium under direction” (Skerrett 300). Hulseberg says that, “the film-maker’s improvement or desecration is seen as a modification and criticism of the “original” and that this may be the cause of so much contention from the authors or literary scholars (58). So you have this idea that film is incapable of not tampering with a work of fiction, but also that it is criticizing it in so doing.

As for the final question, some said they were consulted, but most answered they were not asked to be involved. Those consulted said that their advice was ignored and at least one found they were blamed for inaccuracies (132-133). Another responder suggested that Hollywood “hates writers anyway, be they novelists or screenwriters” (133). One of the interviewed authors explains the crux of the issue, “there’s a basic conflict of visions here...The author of the novel has seen in his mind’s eye...the faces, the gestures the mannerisms of his characters. Then on the screen appear total strangers displacing those images...The writer almost can’t help being outraged” (134). Additionally, “the variables of motion picture production are so great, and an author’s vision so precise, that a clash between the two is inevitable” (134). And, like Greene, there is an optimistic element to this seemingly painful translation from novel to film. Sales go up, fans of the book ignore it if it was a bad film, and a book lasts longer than a film (134). In *Literature Film Quarterly*’s review of a revised edition of *The Encyclopedia of Novels into Films*, a contributor who covered the film *Master and Commander* thought the film

“missed some of the depth and complexity” of the main character (LFQ 168). But as Greene and others mention, the book is still there, safe and sound, and the film has already begun to fade from memory. And, there are other authors, like Elmore Leonard, who appear to have no problem with the film industry adapting their work. Leonard was interviewed for “10 Questions with...” in the March 29, 2010 issue of *Time*. When asked “Of all the films based on your novels, which is your favorite?” Leonard replied, “Jackie Brown, which [Quentin] Tarantino did. He surprised me. I thought he might be all over the place, but he stayed very, very close to the plot and used quite a bit of the dialogue.” The key to that might be that Tarantino was a fan of Leonard since adolescence. He also says, “I’m always optimistic. I always think the movie they’re going to make is going to be good. Sometimes it is, and sometimes it isn’t” (2).

Other concerns about adaptation can come in legal troubles. Elizabeth Lesly Stevens speaks about the legal ramifications of adapting in her article, “A Big Hollywood Movie is Coming, and a Novelist Cries Foul.” In her example, the author optioned his book for screen rights, but one was never made, as far as he understood. However, his characters and plot appeared in a film and it was brought to his attention by a colleague who wanted to congratulate him. He has not had much luck with legal action against the film company. Stevens tells us that not many authors do. They don’t have the capital to keep up with studios and ideas cannot be copywritten (Stevens 21A). This would make any author leery of optioning their manuscript and casts a dark shadow on the entire process. In such cases, the film industry does become quite a specter.

Hutcheon’s points to both Stam and Bluestone reiterating their points that this negative language and understanding surrounding adaptations need to be altered by altering the perception of what adaptations are. “It is perception mixed with expectation that creates a hot bed of

controversy” (XI). The authors I listed above in greater detail all appeared to approach the idea of a film of their work with prescribed beliefs and resentments toward the media of cinema.

Bluestone adds to the conversation on where the negativity arises by suggesting that the rub against film from a literature standpoint may be how it has influenced modern writing. Today’s writing is done with the film option in mind and has made it very thin (46). Paul Arthur, in his contribution to Stam’s compilation, talks about the effect that film has had on writing. He cites E.L Doctorow and others like him who are concerned with how “many younger novelists have abandoned nineteenth-century realist traditions of dense description, intricate characterization, and multiple plot strands in favor of approaches that mirror techniques of screenwriting, thus making their books more accommodating to film producers and directors” (333-334). And, like many, he points to examples of this, such as Graham Greene’s novel *The End of the Affair* that was heavily influenced by the film noir genre (336).

Cinema is the “dominant *way of seeing* in the modern world and as a condition toward which most of the visual and literary arts aspire” (5). Both Naremore and Stam say that this vision is what drags big name writers in to do scripts and has influenced current writing aesthetics to more closely resemble cinema (5-6, 74). Sue Meredith Willis wrote a short piece, “Improve Your Fiction with Film Techniques,” which gives step by step suggestions for improving fiction writing with film devices or exercises inspired by film, such as imagining your narrative as a movie in your head. Other ideas are that you should write down every detail, to the point of overwriting, edit later to get back the conciseness. She also suggests the writer should picture their scenes as various movie shots, take from film how to make a smooth transition, “find the beat and raise the stakes” (look for a rhythm in the writing that inspires emotional

reactions). Above all, it suggests to “maximize the advantages fiction has over film” (Willis 26-28).

Jonathan Hunt brings up the questions of *Script Novels*. Are these a new genre? They are works of fiction that contain elements of plays or screenplays in “fairly large and frequent chunks” (53). Hunt sees it as “prevalent nowadays to use script as a flourish rather than a form, something to embellish a more traditional narrative” (53). In current times, there are more writers who have experience in writing scripts or plays, and their work is showing the influence of film. The fact that a possible new genre has arisen out of the relationship of film and novels, can be both exciting and unsettling to some.

Another source of anxiety could come from the reasoning behind making adaptations at all. Hutcheon, reveals that there are numerous “reasons behind adapting” such as “contested homage²,” business endeavors and critical or ideological exploration (5-7). There is also mimesis, out of love for the text being adapted (20, 169). This creates “multi-layered pleasures” of double experience and fulfills a copy desire (mimesis) and inventive desire (to change, add, and improve), while providing the comfort of familiarity (173). According to Naremore, adaptations may be undertaken for prestige or to gain notoriety, whether it is for the actor, director, producer or writer, or anyone else working on the film (11).

Regardless of the reason, in most cases “the story is the core of what is transposed across media genres” and Hutcheon points to the core as the theme of the working being adapted. Hutcheon’s theory may be derived from Bluestone’s notion that one may “often find that the film adapter has not even read the book, that he has depended instead on a paraphrase by his secretary

² *Contested Homage* – in my understanding of the use of the term here, it means to rival, dispute or compete with in recognition of another’s achievement. “Anything you can do, I can do better.” – Irving Berlin, *Annie Get Your Gun* (1946).

or his screen writer,” utilizing the novel as raw material (62-63). This is one reason why, as Naremore tells us, people don’t always recognize an adaptation (1-2).

Hutcheon attempts to define adaptation as translation, both more than paraphrasing or transcoding (16-19, 35-68), and this idea of translation was mentioned by the Nineteen Authors. Naqvi stresses contiguity over exactness (fidelity) (296) and suggests that translation/adaptation could be viewed more as an erotic or amatory relationship (293-295) and uses Freudian psychoanalysis as means of looking at translation (297). “The translation from one medium to another...is dependent on the desire for incorporation” (305). This seems to make adaptation look like the preying mantis, which mates with and then decapitates the body from which it takes the material it will create its new *work* with, and becomes an image of amorous murder and appropriation. It hardly fixes the negative perception surrounding adaptation.

In Bluestone’s words, novel writing is “packed with symbolic thinking which is peculiar to the imaginative rather than visual activity” (23). Writing in a novel and writing for a film are separate institutions with different “limits and possibilities” as well as “conflicting conventions” (45). Differences between literary and cinematic texts are rooted in essential properties of their respective media (Leitch 150). For instance, the literary device of metaphors doesn’t translate to film well (21-23). If you picture those posters with odd little illustrations out of which a viewer is supposed to interpret grouped objects to obtain a cultural meme or saying, you would have a sample of what a metaphor being translated into visual devices from a literary ones would look like. Metaphors become absurd when directly translated (Leitch 160).

The trouble with translation, turning novels into screenplays or films, is in the translation from one sign system to another (22). Having a sound described to you is different than hearing it, or having an object described is different from seeing it. It may be that the viewer misses these

translations, taking them for granted as the act of viewing and hearing is quite passive compared to reading words on a page (24-31, 59). In fact, cinema's visual specification has often been accused of usurping its audience's imagination (Leitch 159). The consciousness of the reader/viewer acts differently in each case regardless of the truth of that statement, and what is perceived as loss could merely be a failure in communication (45). To explain further, "Certain kinds of novels are seemingly more adaptable to film than others" (point of view, character development, the world inside the book). "Basic substance of the novel is more accessible" (Hulseberg 61). Bluestone attempts to alleviate controversy by saying that "the film becomes a different *thing* in the same sense that a historical painting becomes a different thing from the historical event which it illustrates" (5). He then explains that audience "discontent, it seems, is directly proportional to one's lack of training" (35). This means that an untrained viewer can miss the things translated from the language of the novel and be left feeling as though things were left out.

"Where the novel discourses the film must picture" (47). Hutcheon echoes this terming it as "stories tell, images show" (35). The format of film "mediates reality for us" (27). From camera angles to chosen scenes, every aspect of film is done with the purpose to immerse the viewer and guide them through the material presented (133). Film even causes a physical reaction where reading a book does not (130-132). As Leitch says, format features of the different media are what keep them 'different' (151). Perceptions of race, gender and/or ethnicity on the part of the translator also have an effect on how the translation turns out (147-148). What is happening is that the text is being represented in another sign system (Naremore 10). Sometimes that transfer breaks down, like how "film has difficulty approximating interiors," such as time, memory or thought (Hulseberg 62). "Between the percept of the visual image and

the concept of the mental image lies the root difference between the two media” (Bluestone 1). Leitch follows this vein by saying, Novels deal in concepts, film in percepts (156). “Novels are the medium that gravitates toward psychological analysis, so that the absence of such analysis becomes a highly marked, non-novelistic or cinematic device” (Leitch 152).

Another school of thought for the argument against film includes the idea that novels create more complex characters than movies because they offer more immediate and complete access to characters’ psychological states (158). Leitch agrees that “it is indeed hard for movies to compete with novels in this regard,” but he is puzzled as to why the brevity argument is not attributed to any form other than film (158). The usual argument says, when thought becomes voice over it is no longer thought. It is speech. Yet, “no one questions the ability of playwrights from Euripides to Chekhov to create complex characters” (Leitch 158). According to Leitch, there are no concrete reasons to say that novels are better than films at using any device (154-155). Arthur points out in defense of this that “as boundaries between previously distinct cultural modalities continue to erode, the hypocritical antagonism between literature and movies looms as unproductive as it is snobbish; *wordfest* is now *imagefest*” (335).

Fidelity discourse also fails to take into account the business aspect of turning novels into films. Both Bluestone and Hulseberg reminds us that film is largely seen and treated as a commodity (Bluestone 35-40; Hulseberg 59). Censorship, investors, audience consideration, marketing, history/current events (mood of the times), all of these promote ‘infidelity’ (38). Hulseberg adds to these considerations with the price of actors (58). “Movies are too expensive to permit the kind of variety which the novel allows” (Bluestone 41). Bluestone meant that no production can just go off and do as it pleases without supervision and defined parameters, such as budgets. So an adaptation can be limited by a number of constraints surrounding it (117-119).

Hutcheon calls it “commodification” (118). There is a positive aspect to commodification of intellectual property, according to her as well. Sales of the novel usually escalate and the range of audience increases for both film and book (117,120). Lee Clark Mitchell, counters that with “although a novel is not physically destroyed when it is adapted, it is possible that its reputation as a novel...may suffer” (Ayan 53), hence the worry of the author and a source for great contention. Hulseberg asks, who is to blame if the adaptation is not well received, the film is bad? Multiple hands worked on the film (59). The up side to this is that it poses yet another aspect that could be researched in the field, helping to update the paradigm of adaptation theory.

Murray enumerates the struggle of scholars to advance the study beyond simple comparisons and how the theory is moving beyond the original perceived paradigm. The idea of perceived paradigm is a point where the scholar needs to apply more than novels and movies. Several authors, in fact, use this term. A certain interdisciplinary exploration needs to ensue to engage the meaning behind it better. The best source on the subject is the man who coined the phrase “paradigm,” Thomas Kuhn. In his work *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, he explains that paradigms are structures within a discipline of accepted knowledge and application, how things are perceived, tested, esteemed and researched. It is recommended that anyone reviewing this material also review the post script section of Kuhn’s book (182-191).

Murray points out the problem of keeping with the accepted parameters of the field, and argues against sticking only with what is established. Naremore backs up this assertion, suggesting that theorists in the field should turn to sociology to gain “a broader definition of adaptation” (10), and, in the same collection, Robert B. Ray argues that New Criticism held adaptation theory back because it was too narrow (46). One of these movements that goes

beyond the tested paradigm is a more recent “importation of narratology from the traditions of Russian formalist literary theory” (6).

Other authors discussed adding in more theory based foundations despite any allegation that viewers of film do not watch film for “conceptual implications” (Leitch 156). For example, Stam argues in his conclusion that adaptation theory does not need to remain a “somewhat minor and peripheral field within cinematic theory and analysis” (45). Early in his introduction to *Literature and Film: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Film Adaptation*, Stam swiftly pushed aside concerns of fidelity to any particular work, utilizing cultural studies, structuralism and post-structuralism to question order or seniority (8-12). It’s the chicken or the egg argument. While he returns to this theme, he points out that “change is unavoidable” as adaptations usually take place across media formats and then become like language translations. They can only be simulated or approximated, but often meaning is never wholly transferred (38-41). At this point he points to formalism, noting that it too is limited, like the vocabulary surrounding adaptation and that semiotics could help to alleviate the gap (41-42). Hints at the use of semiotics crop up throughout Stam’s writing, from camera angles to props. *What is semiotics?* A webpage by Eugene Gorny attempts to answer that question. “Semiotics is a means of considering anything as signs and sign systems” (Gorny). It describes things as language or having language and explores the role of the symbolic apparatus in human activities, but “seems something very obscure, abstruse, overfill with special terms, schemes and formulas” (Gorny). It is difficult to explain exactly what it is, so Gorny attempts to illustrate its approaches. Everything regarded semiotically is a text, then “concentrates on its sign nature, and tries to explain it as a phenomenon of language” (Gorny). “Signs are nothing else as the universal medium between human minds and the world” and that they “are not private but socially shared, it is society that

establishes their meaning” (Gorny). As you can see, it is a rich theory base to work from, often confusing, even for those who are reputable scholars in the field like Gorny. I like to think of the saying: a picture is worth a thousand words.

Stam also introduces the idea of reception theory, which says that “text is an event, whose indeterminacies are completed and actualized in the reading” or spectating (10). Graham Greene felt that there was a mistake in ignoring communal emotions to concentrate on the personal (Skerrett 298). Films like this involve the audience in the film, as if they are making it as they watch (Skerrett 298). Reception theory provides a source for readings of film/literature team ups that could benefit multiple disciplines, including cultural studies and sociology and even history. The collection of writers in *Film Adaptation* cite just a few, adaptation theory as a historical barometer (35), the field of semiotics (32-34), cultural theory (35, 10).

One of the established ideals is “isolated author creation” (Murray 8), which fails to take into account a great many influences on the author during the creation of their text. Murray is speaking about intertextuality, an idea that contends the originating author is impossible to find, as each novel builds upon ideas and texts from infinite places (Chicken or the egg?) (8-10). Leitch supports her statement, citing the false beliefs that “adaptations are adapting exactly one text apiece” (164), “source texts are more original than adaptations (162) or that “adaptations are intertexts, their precursor texts simply texts (165). Stam also goes into detail about intertextuality, listing numerous incarnations: intertextuality, metatextuality, paratextuality, architextuality and hypertextuality (28-30). Metatextuality, probably the most familiar of these, is the “critical relation between one text and another” (28). This is similar to the plainly named Intertextuality, which does something similar but goes beyond to examine reader and authorial experience against the text, which can be cultural memes or personal knowledge (22-24).

Paratextuality, put simply, looks at the adaptation in terms of its surrounding connected works, such as posters, the title, prefaces, epigraphs, and so on (28). Architextuality is a bit more confusing. It represents the “generic [classifications] suggested or refused by the title or subtitles of a text” (30). Through this term, Stam is pointing at the possible criticism that can arise from taking the works by their names alone. Hypertextuality, the last of these, looks at the “the relation between one text to an anterior or hypotext which the former transforms, modifies, elaborates or extends” (31). These terms, he argues, would do away with the negative connotations of adapting a work of literature and drill into the culture in and around the book. Stam cites the statistics on the percentage of films that are made out of other texts (usually novels) and the cultural phenomena it poses (45). This statement echoes that of George Bluestone (Bluestone 2-3). I would also like to point back to the pieces mentioned earlier about authors and the films of their work, as well as the enormous body of work *The Encyclopedia of Novels into Film*, by John C. Tibbetts and James M. Welsh.

Hulseberg adds to the discussion by suggesting the actor as intertext. He weighs an actor against the character in the novel, asserting that actor baggage is not character baggage. A character exists only within its text, whereas an actor brings with him or her personal factors and previous roles (60-61).

These phenomena could be examined more closely and the study would inform numerous other fields in so doing. Hutcheon, however, utilizes the idea of the lonely author to contrast it against the creation of film by many (79-81) as a reason for unfaithful translations, but she does agree with the idea of intertextuality. She uses the term *palimpsest* to help us visualize adaptations. The author would just be one layer among many as it builds infinitely. I think a more appropriate image would be a bottle neck or traffic jam, instead of the lone writer.

Others would like to bring in more disciplines. For instance, Hulseberg states that “cross media investigations can be valuable when they attempt to establish general similarities in aesthetic or cultural concerns” (64), dragging cultural or aesthetic studies into the fray. For Murray, cultural theory would provide a deeper scope of examination in adaptations and would be made quite powerful if combined with the methodology of the history of the book, a relatively newer discipline that formed in the 1970s out of “French historical studies, sociology, literary studies, bibliography and the history of ideas” (11). Murray argues that both focuses would be inadequate alone, but combined would provide a rounder look at what is happening, such as “commercial exploitation” of the text (11).

For years, adaptation theory has been a marginal enterprise. (167). Stam, Hutcheon, Murray, and Naremore take Bluestone’s lead and lay out his or her hope for adaptation theory, which each believes could take the study out of what Murray calls the “intellectual dolours” (4, 10-14). The authors mentioned above appear to be in agreement that the discipline will rebound and the notion of it being a dead end become another fallacy. Murray lays out a model that would utilize existing knowledge to observe adaptations at a thoroughly deeper level (12-14). Her premise is to shift current methodologies to “political economy of media” (10), “cultural theory” (11), “history of the book” (11), “modeling the adaptation industry (12). Stam also dedicates a section of his work to “Proposals for Adaptation Studies” (31). Here he calls for the development of better more appropriate terminology, perhaps “grammatically based” ideas such as developing a new point of view for film (35). He then turns to critical theories that can be brought in to fill out the study. This brings adaptation theory far beyond simplistic fidelity comparisons and Murray finishes her article strong with reasons why this model would benefit the discipline. She states that this model would “benefit multiple constituencies” and would

“reconnect the field to cognate areas in cultural analysis” (14). If the advice is heeded, on the changes needed to enliven the field, “adaptation study will move from the margins to the center of contemporary media studies” (Naremore 15). In looking at this subject it is important to take perspective from very wise words from Michael Dunne: “a text’s unity lies not its origin but in its destination” (Dunne 310). So too, adaptation theory’s unity lies in its destination.

Adaptation theory Applied

To see the how adaptation theory currently exists, I have reviewed articles that range from the 1970s to present day to review how adaptation theory has been applied. A good portion of these were to be found in *Literature Film Quarterly* (LFQ). I think this is important because this publication was created with this topic in mind. It is of interest to see what direction they and others have taken over the years. Because of the varying range that the analysts cover, it is difficult to combine them in comparisons to each other, but I view this as a healthy sign that adaptation theory is evolving and is a serious discipline all its own.

Elsie Walker and Ian Olney approach adaptation theory in their introductions to a series of articles in respective issues of LFQ, some using the aforementioned approaches. Since LFQ “first began, its existence marked a new recognition and celebration of how literature is adapted to film. Since that time (over thirty years ago), the single-text-to-film analyses that dominated adaptation studies have given way to more permissive explorations of intertextuality” (Walker 246). Walker cites Roland Barthes and his distinction between *work* and *text* (246). Text “corresponds to intertextual analyses that open up possibilities rather than closing them down. A work is “that which has ultimately definable meaning...and as that which can be held in the hand

or seen in bookshops, in catalogues, in exam syllabuses” (Walker 246). Olney asks, “what ramifications does the postmodern condition have for adaptation? ... the postmodern world is one ruled by simulation...culture driven by the production and consumption of visual signs” (166). He sees that “adaptations today frequently seem to reflect their makers’ interest not in translating a literary text to the screen, mainly, but rather in using it as a springboard to generate spectacular computer-generated and manipulated imagery” (166). Olney notes that “a great many mainstream movies being made now are essentially ‘adaptations’ of other movies” while others are “nostalgia films” which “obsessively seek History by way of our own pop images and simulacra of that history, which itself remains forever out of reach” (167). “The postmodern condition (and others) have fundamentally changed the process of film adaptation” but also has altered “how postmodernity has encouraged scholars to look at adaptation in a different light (168). He also cites Barthes, but on the premise of how literature is not innately superior to film and adds to this with questioning the old adages surrounding fidelity (168-169). Olney suggests that innovations in theory have even caused a breakdown of high and low culture to allow for adaptations that combine various texts that might not have been considered previously (168). This helps to expand the study, invite new perspectives, utilize the growing vocabulary and even sometimes develop a new paradigm through “papers that suggest the new and exciting directions currently being taken by scholars working in the field of adaptation studies” (Olney 166).

Both Walker and Olney then give a brief description of each of the articles in the issue of LFQ, which illustrate where the study has gone: Kevin Alexander Boon explores what makes screenplays “amendable to literary critique” through connecting the development of writing for the screen with modern aesthetics and “illustrates parallels among cinematic writing, modern fiction, and imagist poetry” (Walker 247). “Though the two forms of art obviously differ in

terms of context and layout” there is “much that connects them: immediacy of visual, spatial, and temporal specificity, use of concrete images, emphasis on objects and everyday speech, stylistic compression and connotation/implication, and avoidance of vague generalities” (247). Fiona Handyside writes about the “history of more conservative approaches to adaptation that [were] built on binary oppositions such as *literature versus cinema; high art versus mass culture; original versus copy*”(247). She finds that “adaptation studies [are] potentially *as far reaching as you like* in terms of intertextual possibility” (247). Film adapts from itself and a number of other art forms, not limiting it to novel/film discourse (248). Along this vein, Stella Hockenull writes on painting and other visual art influence on film (248) and Dominique Russell discusses poetry and film (249). Olney’s team of writers approach the theory from aspects of Postmodernism, to uses of familiar technology, such as avatars, and another stab at the old fidelity issues (168-170).

The group of articles “bring together studies of fiction, poetry, film, painting, history and science as well as theories of adaptation in order to create a new kind of text” (Walker 249). In so doing, the contributors to these two particular issues of LFQ are also working to bring together a common ground where the various media or art forms can work together. Olney encourages others to continue where the collection he introduces leaves off by saying that the inquiry is hardly exhausted (170). These articles suggest that technology studies could be another addition to the field. Moreover, it is a cultural studies treasure trove, but requires what some refer to as *cultural capital* to fully understand (Lanier 104).

Cultural capital is for instance the ability to recognize a reference to a line in a film, a character in book or “appreciate a performance of *Macbeth*” (104). “Cultural capital preserves a system of social stratification based on cultural distinctions, without that system relying

primarily on economic status or traditional ideas of *class*” (104). It’s the glue that binds society together (Barker 65). Lanier discusses how adaptations of Shakespeare have appeared to slow in the Anglo-American market (105). Because Shakespeare is considered literature, though technically theater, I include it both here and a little later. Yet, in the 1990s, Shakespeare was brought “in line with late twentieth-century visual culture” and became “definitively post-textual” (106). “The visual literacy they assume of their target audiences, firmly resituate Shakespeare in the regime of the (moving) image, not of the word,” but they were, after all, meant to be theatrical spectacles. This was also the period when it was popular to put the work “in a new setting or time” (106) and to make it applicable to “the concerns and screen styles of youth culture, still the most lucrative market segment for film producers” (107). Lanier is indirectly suggesting here that the classroom is a guaranteed market for adaptations of classic works “even unfaithful”³ (108). The Shakespeare adaptations are also good examples of how literature is translated into a visual medium (108). He also speaks about the influence of previous adaptations on newer ones and how this has opened up the path to “relocalize [it] in a new cultural context without filmmakers needing to address the politics of adapting the master texts of a former master” (108). It is much easier to adapt posthumously, because no one can say with any certainty what the authors intentions were, as they can no longer be asked, and any attempt to do so is only theoretical.

Lanier then goes over the many incarnations of Shakespeare’s texts that have become possible, such as graphic novels and cartoons and the effects of this on culture as well as Shakespeare studies and the writing (109). It has opened it up to a greater audience than previously reached through “curious retextualizations of Shakespeare” (111). “The relationship

³ I will discuss this in the last section and how this may feed the ideas of fidelity in adapting books to film.

between the text and the image is variable across various series. In some cases, where long blocks of Shakespearean language threaten to overwhelm the visuals (as they do in the Comic Book Shakespeare series), the texts become an unintended allegory of the conflict between visual and textual Shakespeare” (111). Adaptations have also taken Shakespeare beyond Anglo-American markets to Japan and elsewhere (112-113).

Paul Petlweski is another scholar who focuses on intertextuality. “Complication of Narrative in the Genre Film,” avoids the complication of including the prose version and instead discusses their narratives only from the film aspect⁴. Petlewski also discusses cross-breeding of genres within individual films, in this case the western which may bring in elements of a love story, class struggles or even science fiction (19-20). He shows how this combination can be “potentially fruitful, particularly since it would provide a common meeting ground for both auteur and structural critics” (24). Petlewski also runs through how this clash of genres can force the direction of a story (21-23). He disregards that the idea of genre, and cross genre, evolved out of the literary.

However, genre is not the only thing that influences how a story is told on film, adapted or otherwise. John Paul Athanasourelis, looks at adaptations from a legal or policy standpoint in “Film Adaptation and the Hollywood Censors: 1940s Hollywood and Raymond Chandler.” Many “changes cannot be traced to a need for brevity” or out of literary bindings, but rather there appears quite another phenomena “ideological censorship, dictated by studio owners and managers” (325) and even government. It was referred to as “the Code” (326). “The happy

⁴ Some of the films covered are: *Terror in a Texas Town*, *Warlock*, *Valdez is Coming* and other films. *Terror in a Texas Town* takes some material from an obscure short story in the March 1937 publication of *Headquarters Detective*, *Death on the Hook* by John K. Butler. *Warlock* is adapted from the novel by Oakley Hall. *Valdez is Coming* was adapted from the novel by Elmore Leonard.

ending” audiences have come quite familiar with is one of the results of the Hollywood code (325). It also served to quell any “social criticism” at the behest of government (332). “The censors were concerned, not with narrative credibility or aesthetics, but solely with placing the white and black hats firmly on the appropriate heads” (333). This perspective combines a look at the Hollywood industry against the adaptation to explain the dissimilarities that arise. It reminds us that Hollywood is a big business who has customers to please and sometimes a heavy yoke of regulation around its neck. Athanasourelis sums it up best when he says, “an adaptation can highlight aspects of the written narrative that might otherwise be overlooked, and the concerns of the filmmakers answering as they do to producers and the producers’ conceptions of the taste of the mass audience, are most fully appreciated inasmuch as they contrast with the written narrative” (325). The House Un-American Activities Committee would be the grandest of examples of this influence.

These complications are still prevalent today, with or without any intended policy code. For example, Jessica Cox takes a more traditional bend, analyzing the text to the film of *Lady Audley's Secret* in a somewhat bland fidelity study (23-30), but she does touch on gender issues and the idea of madness in the Victorian Era. Cox does not get too deep into these sticky subjects, merely pointing out how the adapter came about decisions in what was translated to the screen and what was not through a historical perspective of the novel and perceived social limitations. The novel is not considered a feminist text and Cox seems to believe that the adapter had difficulty in keeping with the narrative of the novel despite wanting to be faithful to the story (30). The limitation in this case was not being able to deal with gender issues and madness as they are perceived in modern times because of a desire to copy the text as wholly as possible to a visual format, and perhaps somehow being blamed either way for not doing the right thing. Peer

limitation is an unspoken code that was only briefly and ambiguously touched upon in the conflict between literature and film in the previous section.

Limitations can also arise from the type of narrative that is being adapted. Such has been the case with a F. Scott Fitzgerald. “The novels of F. Scott Fitzgerald are classics, but no one says that about their film adaptations” (Setoodeh, 59). Fitzgerald took a short stint in Hollywood, “but after his 1938 war picture *Three Comrades* got rewritten, he left (59). His novels didn’t work on film, because “he was a master of internal monologue, abstract symbolism and minimalist dialogue. None of those tricks translate well onto the big screen” (59). Meryem Ayan and Feryal Cubukcu found the same true for the Henry James novels *The Portrait of a Lady* and *The Wings of the Dove* (52). They attempt to frame the comparison in how the novel “is not a closed, but an open structure to be reworked by a boundless context and viewed through the director’s ability to enable the viewer to visualize the scenes” (59). The film works as interpreter for the book. “The changes made in the written form of the literary text intend to express the director’s perception of the events adding to the text’s meaning” (51). They both regard fidelity as an issue much like the theorists mentioned in the previous section (52). However, they get bogged down in fidelity comparisons just the same, though “fidelity to the plot is likely to deconstruct the film” (52, 55). Though Ayan and Cubukcu explore how these changes help or hurt the film and affect the audience and critical reception of them, they are still essentially doing a fidelity comparison.

Michael T. Marsden uses an approach similar to Cox in his analysis of Louis L’Amour’s *Hondo*. *Hondo* was a screenplay based on L’Amour’s short story “The Gift of Cochise” which he then novelized post film as *Hondo* (16). Marsden’s study is still interesting because of what it suggests. The fact that L’Amour adapted the film into a novel stands out as one of the more

unique ways that film and novel collaborate. It is now quite common and could be cited as causation, and may be a good source for research. Marsden saves his critique by turning his focus toward the end of the article on how these three versions collaborated. “It demonstrates that popular storytelling is essentially a collaborative process and should be recognized as such by scholars. This should not be perceived as a weakness, but rather as a strength since it involves a communal process of focusing on larger concerns of the people” (20). *Hondo* survives as a classic Western story because several fine, creative minds...decided to help shape it through multiple telling” (20).

This idea of collaboration was taken up by Shannon Donaldson-McHugh and Don Moore as they reviewed Gus Van Sant’s *Psycho*. Immediately, just from the title of the article, the reader suspects that this goes further than fidelity. Hauntology immediately grabs the attention and draws interest, but is merely a term the authors appropriated to use in lieu of intertextual (232). For example, “the processes of adaptation are not so transparent or simple as they appear...co-authorships, we argue, are always subject to the hauntological character of their own eventness, which occurs not only between two or more co-authors at a particular originary historical place and time, but as a multiple and shifting constellation of archives and readers, times, and places, which all contribute toward such an attempted unification of authorial *meaning*” (232). However, they inform the reader that *hauntology* is a Jacques Derrida term. Donaldson-McHugh and Moore describe it as “the possibility of an ontological specter to materialize” (226). I still feel it means intertextuality.

Unfortunately, this article also leaves out the book for the most part, instead focusing on the remake aspect. And again, it ends up being a fidelity comparison between the two films. *Psycho* contains several sources: a real life story of serial killer Ed Gein, the Novel by Robert

Bloch, a film by Alfred Hitchcock and the newer film by Gus Van Sant. When they do mention the various texts of *Psycho*, they start down the road of psychoanalysis and even reception theory, but immediately return to comparing the two film prints (229). The redeeming quality of the article comes when they look at how Hitchcock's film peers from behind the remake like a ghost, or is always there without being quite seen, and so on with each source of the narrative.

Clara Escoda August looked at similar issues of intertextuality, psychoanalysis and gender in her review of Julie Taymor's *Titus* (1999). Escoda August gives a strong critical look at what was done with the text of *Titus Andronicus* and it is important to consider in the greater breadth of Adaptation theory. Much like the text of *Psycho*, Taymor's film is derived from several incarnations, including her own stage production and that of Jane Howell's 1985 BBC production (59). Another intertext is that she uses the "same actor as [Adrian] Noble did in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*...presenting the witness not as a singular, concrete individual, but as a dramatic entity that is universalized" (60). Taymor develops the figure of the witness, a young child and an external instance to the violence of events" (59). This use of actors as intertext could fill reams, but Escoda August is primarily focused on the theme of violence, gender and psychoanalysis.

The intention of the film production, was to be "more successful in achieving a deconstruction of the violence in" the text (57) against contemporary conceptions of violence. The film examines gender violence and fetishism of female beauty through Lavinia (64-66) and how "contemporary myths still perpetuate rigid distinctions between masculinity and femininity" (64). In "evoking an image from the realm of cinema propaganda instead of traumatic vision, Taymor denounces not the specific perpetrators' violence but the unnoticed violence of the discourses that construct disposable femaleness and an aggressive masculinity" (66). Violence

becomes “a tableau which remits, like a symptom, to cultural space where violence is justified, legitimated, and even dealt with apologetically” (59). “We can easily perceive the film becoming something else ? a video game. In this dislocation, or collapsing of the film narrative and the imposition of violence as spectacle, Taymor manifests her critique of the titillation of violence as it is repeatedly evoked in videogames: as a sign of self-control, glamour and status” (69). Here again, another source for research is touched upon: video games and technology as intertext. And, again, Escoda Agusti refocuses, leaving the subject for another time.

Taymor both questions and deconstructs the discourses of our contemporary society which legitimate, or contribute to perpetuate, violence, and she does so through cinematic means” (58). Taymor’s efforts also allow the critic to delve into analysis of production. “Scopophilia is a cinematic strategy, used particularly by mainstream Hollywood cinema, in its overt manipulation of visual pleasure, which elicits from specifically male audience a controlling and curious gaze, associated with taking other people as objects” (66). This article goes further than the rest in its scope of analysis. Instead of comparing other films or stage productions alongside it for what one has and the other doesn’t, it delves into the intertextuality that is used in copying pieces from other productions, other plays and even other media. Escoda Agusti does exactly what was proposed by the likes of Stam and Murray in attempting to revive adaptation studies, and she also provides spring boards for other scholars to leap from.

Paul Arthur and Michael Dunne accomplish a similar approach in their criticisms. It is no surprise that Arthur approaches the topic of adaptation theory in a successful manner. His piece “The Written Scene: Writers as Figures of Cinematic Redemption” was included in Stam’s compilation, so it already stands out as an example of where the field is headed or should be headed, according to those heading the field. The films he reviews were pieces produced “in a

period dominated by blood-soaked blockbusters and hi-tech computer effects,” where writers vie “for center stage with cops, space cowboys, and the usual roster of (male) screen heroes” (331). Each film had “similarities in production and marketing...independent productions made on relatively small budgets and marked for niche audiences” usually the “older, upscale viewer” (332). Arthur looks at not only the business aspect of how films come into being, but also the characterization of the main protagonists (332). The type of story he is examining is a perfect allegory for adaptations (333), portraying writers doing what they do. Each film acts as an intertext (“palimpsest”) for the others (333), “brief parodies of trashy Hollywood genres intermingle with subjectivized dreams and fantasies; even the writer’s subconscious has been colonized by mass culture” (334). Arthur asks, “Is a writer’s control over his material a matter of free will or is it, if not predestined, shaped by external forces?” (335) Dunne’s work focuses on one specific film of this type: *Barton Fink*. The title of Dunne’s work, “Barton Fink, Intertextuality, and the (Almost) Unbearable Richness of Viewing” is an intertext itself, playing on the title of Milan Kundera’s work *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* (1984). Dunne states that intertextuality frees the ‘reading’ of any text (303) and that things like critical articles on a work(s) or simply naming an author limit ‘readings’ (303). He then quotes Mikhail Bakhtin who said, “any text is the absorption and transformation of another” (304). “Viewing such a film [as *Barton Fink*] necessarily involves our recognition of the allusive, intertextual, self-referential dimensions of the present cinematic text. Investigating the means by which *Barton Fink* enters into intertextual dialogue with Hollywood and the American culture for which Hollywood functions metonymically can, therefore, help us think more productively about this film, its relations to the medium of film more generally, and our relations as viewers to all of these entities” (304). Dunne’s criticism is also another good analysis that goes further than the others.

This, like Escoda, is about film adapting film, real life, history and the character of the living writer. I include them, because of their *hauntological* stance toward novels.

Josh Lambert, author of “*Wait for the Next Pictures: Intertextuality and Cliffhanger Continuity in Early Cinema and Comic Strips*,” explores the melodrama of the 1910s and the *Desperate Desmond* strip from the same period (3). The reason I was drawn to this particular article is that it encompasses the wider range of what can be adapted and also explores the comic strip, a cultural art form similarly disrespected like film. I also was interested in Lambert’s quest to find if cliffhanger’s came from the strips or elsewhere. Lambert’s article looks at the early aspect of film, whereas most of my sources are focused on the more recent, and its interplay with other media, asking how various media influenced the creators of comics and films. Lambert writes that *Desperate Desmond* was adapted into film and stage (10), while it parodied film in its frames (15). He also discovered that cliffhanger came from novels, not comics, but this does show that comics borrowed from novels (18). “The melodrama parody strips and early film serials suggest that cliffhanger continuity is a special—and...commercially expedient—narrative technique enabled by serial publication” (19). It’s a business device. Lambert also found that “the filmmakers were not beholden to reproducing the comic strips’ plots precisely” (13). So historically, techniques were shared across media, and it seems to never have been expected that translation from one form to another precisely reproduce the source.

Sue Clayton looks at the history of adaptation as well, but from a filmmaker’s perspective. In her work, “Visual and Performative Elements in Screen Adaptation: A Filmmaker’s Perspective,” Clayton explains that the industry “takes the source-text simply as a starting point for further thematic exploration” (129). Using inspiration from other sources, whether they are aware or not, screenwriters “generate complex new systems of meaning. Yet,

neither screenwriting books nor many of the academic studies of film adaptation seem to fully acknowledge the diversity of materials and techniques used in adaptation” (129). She finds it “indisputable that strategies of adaptation (like all creative strategies) are profoundly influenced by the historical and material circumstances of their production” (130). Her film, *The Song of the Shirt* (1979), was an “experimental feature film...[that] began as a research project around a specific group of women workers in the nineteenth century” (130). The film took not only the history and adapted it but also “sentimental novels, song and drawings of the period” (130). All of these materials needed to be handled in different ways, so the filmmakers changed the way they adapted the works “over time according to particular historical production factors” (131). They wanted to see the film “opened up to interpretation and debate by excavating the pretext...to elucidate new readings and new positions” (132). *The Song of the Shirt* seeks to explore the idea of meaning as transaction (132) and to “examine in depth the implications of the changing industry climate on the broad culture of film-making” (135). For Clayton, “*art film* had been held in critical disapprobation, seeming to lead back to the orthodox canons of naturalism and individualism. Coupled with this was a suspicion of what might be called the *literariness* of art cinema—its intensely authored nature, reflected in its use of the first person and the voice-over and its tendency to use subjective thought and memory as an organizing narrative principle, and its propensity to operate in a matrix of cultural references and allusions with which it presumed its educated audience would be familiar---of literature, music, painting – and of course other films in its own canon” (135). (It is amusing to see that filmmakers could return the snobbish sentiment held by their literary counterparts.)

Returning to Quentin Falk and *Travels in Greenland: The Complete Guide to the Cinema of Graham Greene*, we can also view this book as a critical analysis of adaptation theory

from the perspective of a filmmaker, like Clayton. Falk gives the reader a sense of the author with historical snippets, while speaking about production issues and interests surrounding the films (10-13). Greene was a prolific writer during his life, adapting some of his novels himself (Phillips 19). His writing, as mentioned before, was heavily influenced by film, giving him what some have called “cinematic writing” (Falk 11-12, 20). Greene, also mentioned before, was a well-known film critic and fan of the cinema (24). Though the books stood on their own as published and palpable works, the films were shaped by their respective times. For instance, how the business of making a film affected the adaptation of *This Gun for Hire* (24-27). Also, *The End of The Affair* is considered an autobiographical piece, and therefore was kept a period piece in its latest incarnation⁵ (136-141).

Robert Wise also lends to this perspective in his forward to *The Encyclopedia of Novels into Film*. Wise says that he “believes in putting the spirit of each story first and [his] own approach second” (xiii). Because of this, he has been widely criticized for having no style (xiii). He admits, “The question of authorship can be a complicated issue in a literary adaptation. You always know who wrote the novel, but how do you determine just who is responsible for the movie version—the original author, the screenwriter, or a producer and/or director who also may collaborate on the screenplay?” (xiii-xiv) Tibbetts and Welsh chime in on this debate in their introduction to the encyclopedia. The novels to film relationship “functions to link opposing elements and mentalities—art and commerce, individual creativity and collaborative fabrication, culture and mass culture, the verbal and the visual” (xv). They then give a very brief history of the novel and its relation to film (xv). “To those convinced that novels and movies are mutually exclusive endeavors, each with its own incontestably unique properties and effects, it is useful to

⁵ *The End of The Affair* was made twice, 1954 and 1999 (Falk 136-141).

remember that the modern novel actually anticipated many effects and storytelling techniques, like temporal, casual, and spatial disjunctions, that we are all too accustomed—sometimes erroneously—to regard as essentially *cinematic*” (xvi). They then mention various films from novels and the techniques used to adapt them, like the voice-over to manage character thoughts and monologue (xix). The introduction also discusses Hollywood as a commodifier, banking on the popularity of a novel (xx). The encyclopedia examines each book against its film, making it evident they still believe fidelity is an important subject (xxi). However, they also state, “it is a matter of decentering the authorial presence and centering our own engagement with the text” (xxii).

Lastly, several writers collaborated to analyze the film version of *The Fellowship of the Ring* utilizing a semiotics approach. They discuss the book briefly under the heading of *Intertextuality*, but again, the novel is almost just an allusion via the title. They do quote Peter Jackson, director and member of the team of screenwriters for the film, as saying that “the actors brought the characters to life in ways I hadn’t imagined. So the vision of the film in my head was always changing” (26). This is an aspect that was barely touched upon by those calling for changes in adaptation theory. Though they mentioned the actor carries certain baggage with them, they never really got into detail of how their performance could alter the direction of the film.

I also included this analysis however, because it gives an example of semiotics, used to break down one of the final scenes in the film, and enumerate every symbol and sign as to what each means. It also discusses how the audience is directed around the narrative to get a certain *reading*, expecting the audience to be prepared with the cultural capital to do so (29-31). For instance, the accents were informing signs that added to authenticity of what was presented (27).

The setting, Hobbiton was built a year before filming to give it a lived in look, also served as a similar kind of sign (27). Likewise, lighting, framing shots, sound and music, were all used to immerse the audience and guide their viewing, informing and framing audience perspective (27). “The success of a movie in conveying the desired message depends on the carefully selected signs as opposed to other signs within the same paradigm, as well as the meaningful combination of those signs to build a comprehensive whole” (30). Dunne also mentioned this in his review of *Barton Fink*. The use of camera angles, lighting and black and white are signs which trigger “memories of similar scenes” (306). However, where *Fellowship* relies on the signs to inform the viewer, Dunne notes that *Barton Fink* used them to inform and then trick the audience, by using familiar forms and then turn them around and into unexpected outcomes (308).

In the popular online magazine *AV Club*, several authors collaborated on a two part review of the best and worst of adaptations. The reviewers go over 17 successful film adaptations, ranging from 1963-2011 and 15 unsuccessful film adaptations from 1967-2011. For the successful adaptations, the authors of the article believe that how each filmmaker approached the material determined how successful their film was. They viewed the filmmaker as creative and clever if they were able to overcome the problems of translating the difficult texts. The problems they listed were non-linear narratives, huge lengthy narratives, textual reflexivity, lack of action or perceivable growth, unpalatable subjects, first person perspectives, self help topics and manuals, hefty dialogue, and “psychological horrors” (Rizov, et al.) In the case of the unsuccessful films, the authors applied the same parameters and analyzed how they could have failed. Their answers predominantly hung around alterations to the text that made them unfaithful. They described the translations as dumping the best of a work and formulizing the material to fit a Hollywood standard, overemphasizing one aspect to the point of absurdity or

wholly over doing the idea to the point of absurdity, the over use of voice over, and/or cramming too much into one film and losing a lot more in the process. They also cited that some films had no particular focus, that filmmakers updated the material for the sake of updating without applying the topic cogently to the new temporal setting. They suggested that perhaps the filmmaker did not understand the material in its book form, or why it was successful as a book and that this leads to failure. Though they don't come out and say it, these articles are concerned with audience reception rather than just plain fidelity studies.

The articles presented in this section reveal that there is definitely a paradigm shift in process. The fidelity based ideology still has a strong hold on adaptation theory and will probably never fully fade into the background, but the greater critical questions are beginning to be asked. I say greater questions in considering the attitudes and perceptions of authors and filmmakers illustrated in the previous section. However, it appears that a healthy growth toward redefining adaptation theory and extending it beyond where it has languished is definitely underway. Theorists are taking up the torch Bluestone lit and that Stam is proposing they carry forward.

Film in Education and Why Fidelity is Still in the Vocabulary

In exploring the realm of adaptation theory, I often asked the question of why fidelity is such an issue. While researching the greater topic of this literature review, I came across several education and history related articles that seemed to answer that question, and also caused me to reflect on reading I had previously done. Perhaps the need or desire for an adaptation to remain

faithful to its source text lies in the mindset of those currently writing on the subject, and in a paradigm unrelated to adaptation theory on the surface.

In the book *Telling the Truth About History*, the three authors discuss why it is important to tell history at all and why presenting the material must be done with honesty. In the beginning of treating history as a discipline, the scholars of the subject used science as the model for attending to historical studies (15-90). “The master historian would teach students how to distinguish fact from legend by the rigorous examination of documents. History would henceforth depend on research in archives and original sources as tests of the facts” (56). Over time, a mindset grew that might have left historians feeling a bit sensitive toward the perceptions of their discipline and drove them to assert their standing with greater rigor. For example, “skeptics believed, they had revealed historians to be no more than specialized storytellers” essentially “evicting history from the category of knowledge...to lodge it along with poetry and novels in the expansive domain of literary constructions” (245). Against this mindset, historians insist History is something different, though it takes narrative form, it is an accounting of the past and hence important knowledge. History is knowledge and “knowledge is above all the accumulation of answers to questions that curious men and women have asked about the physical and social worlds they encounter” (259). In defense of their discipline historians explain what they do, “the task is to connect one text to another, to retrieve word by word, a forgotten, but never wholly lost moment in time” (252). Alongside of this, they promote the idea that “history fulfills a fundamental human need by reconstituting memory. Memory sustains consciousness of living in the stream of time, and the amour propre⁶ of human beings cries out for the knowledge

⁶ *Amour proper*, feelings of excessive pride, conceit, vanity.
http://www.audioenglish.net/dictionary/amour_propre.htm

of their place in that stream” (258). Margaret MacMillan agrees with this, saying “History helps to define and validate us” (53). This need spills over into other disciplines, such as the fine arts, literature and film and even into commerce. MacMillan points to the proof of this when she says, “proliferation of popular histories shows that publishers have a good idea of where profits are to be made” (4).

“Both the promise and the problems of history spring from its linkage to memory” (Appleby 270) because “curiosity about the past is inextricably bound up in the preoccupations of the present” and those preoccupations could be slanted (265). MacMillan echoes this sentiment saying similarly, “often present-day concerns affect what we remember as a group” (48). It could be said that this sentiment ignites a commerce of history (history for sale and exchange, so to speak) as well, affecting just how *history* is processed and shared. For example MacMillan warns that “Governments tend to assume that proper attention and care of the past will do the present good” and such attention usually develops a propagation of history that forms into what we come to label as nationalism (5). According to MacMillan, “the histories that fed and still feed into nationalism draw on what already exists rather than inventing new facts. They often contain much that is true, but they are slanted to confirm the existence of the nation through time, and to encourage the hope that it will continue,” but also to affirm the greatness of the nation and its people (84). In the face of this, “we must do our best to raise the public awareness of the past in all its richness and complexity. We must contest the one-sided, even false, histories that are out there in the public domain. If we do not, we allow our leaders and opinion makers to use history to bolster false claims and justify bad and foolish policies...historians must not abandon political history entirely for sociology or cultural studies...politics matters to our societies and to our lives,” as some critics have argued (37). One

of the largest problems facing history is how “any group of humans, even expert historians, do not fully agree on how to interpret today’s events” (66).

Some examples of displaying complex history are illustrated by Macmillan, “West Germany and Japan were both pushed to remember the recent past by the victors in World War II but also, to be fair, by their own citizens...Immediately after the war, the Germans...took refuge in forgetting and in silence...few ordinary Germans wanted to discuss Nazism or remind one another of their involvement with the regime...When the American television series *Holocaust* was shown on German television in 1979, over half the adult population watched it. Today, a reunited Germany stands out as a society that deals with its past, often in visible ways” (133). This use of documentary film and history helped a people to face an uncomfortable past, but it took changes in how experts and historians agreed to handle the material. Likewise, documentary and feature film have been used as propaganda throughout the existence of the film form. Macmillan writes, “We use [history] in a variety of ways: to mobilize ourselves to achieve goals in the future, to make claims—for land, for example—and, sadly, to attack and belittle others (53)...to label or diminish your opponents has always been a useful tool” (94) and “we spin the events of the past to show that we always tend to behave well and our opponents badly” (93).

Appleby, Hunt and Jacob hope that their work will create a greater awareness in others: “In exploring how memory affects the writing of history, we have drawn attention to the psychological need for comprehending experience which calls for accuracy, as well as the human drive for personal recognition that encourages myth-making” (261). The authors remind us that “telling the truth takes a collective effort” (309). Within the discipline itself, one can find “a variety of tools for effecting liberation from intrusive authority, outworn creeds, and counsels of

despair” which call into questions validity of the representations of reality made by freedom-seeking inquirers” (308). This would include filmmakers or authors who wish to take liberties with historical fact. With history being such a powerful tool that has been misused to benefit the owner, it is of little wonder that the discipline is cautious when film or fiction *adapts* subjects it calls historical. The historian would prefer that they do not take such liberties and undermine their efforts to uphold the standards of their discipline, or clearly state that the material is not to be taken as fact, though this is difficult to do and have understood across the broad spectrum of the audience. There are many reasons why this lapse in understanding takes place.

When historical film enters the arena of education, it becomes even more difficult to handle. Alan S. Marcus and Jeremy D. Stoddard, write “feature film as a teaching tool in the history classroom continues to gain prominence as the number of historically based films continues to grow and as teachers’ use of film expands” (317). In a separate article, Marcus questions in, “can any film, or any historical representation, be *as it was*?” (61). He also states that “films present one version of history” (66). In another work, Marcus did with Jeremy D. Stoddard, they ask, “does deviating from the historical record matter? What are the implications for teacher practices with [films] that present engaging historical narratives, but often with dramatic license?” (303). It should be noted that documentary film should not be ignored or given exception to these same questions. In his article “The Inconvenient Truth About Teaching History with Documentary Film: Strategies for Presenting Multiple Perspectives and Teaching Controversial Issues,” Stoddard explores the “power and possibilities of documentary film as a teaching tool” (279). But before exploring the implications, let us look at what the arguments are for or against using film in the classroom.

Through their research, Marcus and Stoddard analyze “ways in which Hollywood films [are] used [to] provide materials that supplement and/or diversify those available in high school textbooks, asking how their use either promotes narratives alternative to traditional United States history, or just reinforces traditional historical messages” (304). The arguments against the use of film in the classroom can be summarized in a statement like, studies have “found that students tended to refer to examples from Hollywood films as fact even when they recognized the inaccuracies that are commonplace in these films” (84) or “films become a common source of historical knowledge” (Marcus 62). Even more disconcerting was Stoddard’s discovery that teachers didn’t understand that “documentary films present value-laden perspectives; they, instead, viewed them as objective sources of information” (279). Despite this or because of it, “documentary film is being used extensively” (280). In one of his studies, Marcus found that “In general, the students considered their teachers, textbooks, documentary films and the majority of primary sources to be the most trustworthy sources of historical information...feature films and fellow students to be the least trustworthy” (63). This was backed up by his partner in similar studies, Jeremy Stoddard, who writes “students view documentaries as trustworthy sources of information as compared to their textbooks and other classroom readings” and though “documentary films are uniquely engaging because of their powerful audio visual format and their ability to reach a wide audience. They are also viewed fairly uncritically by secondary students who fail to recognize their subjectivities and location within a broader social political context” (280, 284). He believed “the most prevalent reason for accuracy and believability was the perceived motive, agenda or bias of the film” (63). In the progression of his study, he also discovered the use of films in class promoted believability, as his results implied “students moved from viewing film in general as a less trustworthy source of information to viewing

specific, in-class films as a legitimate source of information” (63). When “films play a role in how students learn and think about historical events, contributing to...collective memory,” the viewing can become dangerous (62). Leslie Kong found the same distinctions in her research (2047).

Certainly this is concerning, especially in light of knowing how history can be misused. It is also concerning when Trena Walker writes that her research revealed how film was being used: “according to the preservice teachers, focal attentiveness was the only skill development their mentor teachers focused on while using film” (30). Or that, “In a history classroom, documentaries and historical films are typically treated as statements of fact” (34). Walker seems to be warning the reader when she writes, “media culture rather than the classroom has become a students’ first curriculum,” and then follows up with “the skill to read the message through the medium is as essential as the message” (31). As a “real historical understanding of a historical period, person, place or event requires historical literacy,” teachers have to gage this skill in their students to be able to “read between the lines” and “students have to realize that viewing films is an active learning activity, not a passive one” (31). In Marcus’s study, he saw that “students did not question the use of a film or the film’s content at any point during the unit, nor did they compare the film to other sources. They simply used the film as a text from which to gather *facts* passively” (63). He warns that “the power of film to develop historical understanding is lost unless teachers cultivate students’ ability to interpret film” (62).

Marcus states that “denying the creative leaps necessary to tell any historical narrative in which documentation is sketchy” and that “Hollywood films based in history are inevitably a blend of historical record, fiction and a filmmaker’s perspective” (61). Leslie Kong writes, “many of the criticisms of cinematic history are unrealistic, since film is a popular medium, and

filmmakers inevitably must make compromises for the purposes of narrative flow and continuity” (2047). Despite all of this, Kong points to “a growing literature [that] has developed that supports the use of popular films, as well as documentaries, in college and university curricula” (2047). So there are still those who “highlight how effective the use of film can be in engaging students in authentic intellectual work with important content and issues” (Marcus, 83). For example, Alan Marcus and Jeremy D. Stoddard point out the controversy surrounding *Huckleberry Finn* as a teaching moment. The teacher in his example showed his class *The Jazz Singer* (1927), *Norbit* (2007) and *Soul Man* (1987). “Despite obstacles, this teacher thoughtfully and effectively used film to challenge his students to face a critical and important historical and contemporary issue in his social studies classroom” (83-84). This also shows that the use of film is not limited to history alone, but adapted literature can also provide an opportunity for learning. Leslie Kong goes further, saying her “objective is to demonstrate the numerous ways that popular films can support a range of subject disciplines” (2047).

However, according to Marcus and Stoddard, it should be kept in mind that film “can be used effectively in the classroom as a way to challenge students’ views of the past through the questions or issues they raise and not necessarily the history they *show*” (85). And they also suggest to use “film in this way to engage students in larger questions about history and especially questions related to justice and power” (85-86). The mindset behind using film in classrooms is in line with what MacMillan and Appleby, et al, were asking for, “whether documentaries or popular movies, [teachers] usually responded that students in the class viewed the films to learn or to increase their knowledge of facts about a particular person, place or event” (Walker 30). When approaching the subject, Walker believes we should also view films as “cultural artifacts” and “films that were not regarded as historical when they were made have

since become important historical documents” (31). However, according to the studies of these scholars, teachers are not following through, to be sure that their students understand what liberty was taken with the history or literature and that the film is an interpretation, translation or adaptation of those events into a visual cultural artifact or media showcase.

What of the arguments for the use of film in the classroom? As stated before, film can be a powerful tool. Walker reminds us, “using films to teach historical time periods, people or events is not new” (31). Marcus and Stoddard write that “one of the strongest arguments for using film in the classroom is that film and similar media serve a larger role as historical sources for the public at large” (84). Walker backs up their assertion in regards to skill development (such as reading film, interpreting cultural phenomena), saying “students need a variety of opportunities to develop those skills...films provide a more relevant exercise” (31). Referring to their research on the matter, Marcus and Stoddard saw that “film served as an influential source of historical information and perspective across family generations and was often at the center of family discussions about the past” (84). In the classroom, “films are often being used to raise larger issues from the past or contemporary society that did not surface in textbooks and/or are difficult to broach” (86). However, when presenting films, Marcus and Stoddard remind their readers that “it is important to equip students with the ability to view historical representation critically” (89). Walker builds upon this, saying, “the use of film as a primary source can provide students with opportunities to develop their own ideas rather than memorize facts” (34). Film, in this way, would be useful in strengthening a student’s critical skills or opening up classroom discussion for necessary but difficult topics. On his own, Stoddard points out “history classes are a natural place to include lessons on controversial issues, and documentary films are often excellent tools through which to introduce and examine those issues” (283).

So what is required to accomplish the use of film in this responsible manner? Marcus argues that films can be used to “promote, rather than diminish, historical understanding” (61). There are a series of simple steps that teachers and professors can use to properly make use of media. First, Kong says “films must be fully vetted, analyzed, and accepted for what they are” (2047). She then gives a number of sources to help teachers use film in their classrooms, and kindly breaks her article into titled sections to make the listing of resources easier to navigate by subject (2047-2055).

Another example would be in “selecting films specifically because they are dated, and they want their students to identify the norms and values of the time when a film was made, thus using film as a primary source” (Marcus and Stoddard 86). Teachers should also take into account “how effective the use of film can be in engaging students in authentic intellectual work with important content and issues, instead of as a reward or as a way to buy time to grade papers in the back of the classroom” (89). They should also be aware that “the advances in technology have not led to a similar evolution in the ideas of what historical films are and how they might be effectively used in a classroom” (Walker 30). Not only can “films serve as evidence of the past...and become documents that students analyze and interpret,” but “the power of films’ visual medium coupled with their narrative core open the door for students, with guidance, to cultivate a mature sense of historical empathy.” (Marcus 62). Historical empathy is the ability to feel compassion for the subject matter or persons involved in past events. If students compare films on the same subjects to gain multiple perspectives and points of view, then “the entertainment value of film allows students to relate to the content, form bonds with characters, and *feel* history” while expanding their view of the event (65). For example, “students usually have limited personal experience with the horror of participating in battle. Films have the

potential to re-create with varying degrees of accuracy, those emotionally powerful experiences” (65). This aligns with another work by Marcus and Stoddard, in which they found “many teachers specified the visual impact of film as fundamental to how they use film—the film’s ability to bring a time period to life” (311). The film *Tora!Tora!Tora!* was used as an example, showcasing the filmmakers display of both the Japanese and American forces, and that they were each human with differing viewpoints. In this way, film can aid in the development of empathy for “perspective recognition...and caring” about “the oppression and struggles of marginalized groups,” because “film invites students to care about the historical characters” and to view how “various perspectives could each seem reasonable to people at the time and how they created conflict” (Marcus and Stoddard 314). The reason being, “the struggles of these groups are not at the core of the textbooks the way they are at the heart of these films” (316). “Films potentially challenge typical coverage in United States History classrooms” and confront “controversial and un-proud moments in United States history” (316-317), which is something MacMillan highly encourages in the treatment of history to draw humanity away from the vanity abuses it has provided previously.

Alan Marcus outlines several other strategies. He suggests that teachers use film in such a way that it “invokes the image of a lake. At times, a lake is calm and reflects a more accurate, though slightly distorted, picture of the past.” At other times it can be turbid or moving “creating ripples in the water, further warping the image reflected” or obscuring what is underneath (64). Or, they could use “film as a tool to develop and explore issues of historical empathy, perspective and significance,” a teacher could “research the film’s target audience, the director’s viewpoints or aims, the actors’ views, what was happening in society at the time the film was created and released, other historical and cultural contexts, and the aesthetic aspects of the film”

It would be effective to also “use film in conjunction with other sources, such as photos, textbooks, and primary source documents” (64). Also, Marcus and Stoddard state that “Relying on films to include portrayals of underrepresented groups and to develop empathy is encouraging, but this strategy must be combined with teaching students to examine the extent to which films are reliable evidence of the past. Examining films as primary sources means asking, for example, about the time and the society in which they were produced” (318). Marcus reminds teachers that they “have an obligation to contemplate the influence of Hollywood film on students’ historical understanding and to consider the use of film in their teaching practices” (66).

Stoddard makes his own suggestions for using film for “promoting reasoned judgment, promoting an expanded view of humanity and deliberating over the common good” (281). “Documentary films shown in secondary classrooms can significantly contribute to the goals of history education, particularly the overarching objective of preparing citizens for life in a democracy...promoting reasoned judgment” (281). But, he warns teachers that documentaries are “films of edifications” meant to “persuade the viewing audience” and that they are “*perspective-laden narratives* that can expose students to a variety of issues, events, and people that they might not encounter in their textbooks” (281). He advises teachers “to help students recognize and understand the perspectives in the film, teachers can ask students to examine [it] through having them chart or record the various perspectives in a table while they are viewing the film” (282).

It is useful to return to the first section of this review and remember that many critics for an extended period at the beginning of adaptation theory were teachers of literature and history.

The ideologies behind telling truth in history or the affinity for a work of literature may be the driving force behind why fidelity is still a main focus in adaptation theory.

Conclusion

Perhaps looking at something Graham Greene said would give greater clarity to how the cinema and fiction can finally come together peacefully: The cinema “has the same purpose as the novel, just as the novel has the same purpose as the drama” (Skerrett 298). As the old paradigms falter, the old issues of languishing in a field of fidelity studies are changing. Adaptation theory has already turned a corner and proved its worth to remain among the disciplines. As it continues, it will attempt to answer the questions posed by Robert Stam and Thomas Leitch: “What principle guides the processes? What is the ‘drift’ of these changes? What principles orient the choices?” (Stam 34) What is adapted? Why has the novel and not some other genre become the standard for adaptation?” (Leitch, 150)

The implications of this growth in the field have a greater reach than can at first be assumed. First and foremost, adaptation theory practiced according to the parameters outlined by those of the same mindset as Robert Stam would gain greater respect for the practice. It would reveal that adaptations are not simply copies or thefts of intellectual material, but complex social activities, participated in by a network of people. They could even be considered in the frame of rituals.

Adaptation theory rests on the edge of a new period that will bring about the realization that disciplines are actually interrelated. It holds the promise of viewing old practices in new directions. Adaptation theory has the ability to extend deeper understandings into the cultural

studies, the aesthetics and the business practices of film and fiction. This ability to increase knowledge can be extended to other areas such as sociology, history and teaching. Furthering such relationships between the disciplines can only provide ground for greater discoveries.

While adaptation theory would help films of the type gain new respect, it would also gain greater respect for film as a whole. Analyzing the critical view provided by intertextuality would successfully quell the negative language based wholly on a sense of theft or copying. No work of fiction or film can possibly be wholly original and therefore neither is more sacred than the other.

Adaptation theory also has implications that may be viewed as negative. While adaptation theory frees up the novelist and screenwriter from the shackles of fidelity, it puts a greater burden on the historian and teacher. Historians and teachers will find they have a greater responsibility to inform and prepare future generations (even current generations) to properly view and apply film. Equipping students with critical skills will help them to analyze adaptation of fiction or history, and allow them to understand that they are products of their time, sources of ideas and beliefs that may no longer be supportable. Film appropriately applied will help teachers begin discussions on difficult topics through familiar accepted narratives, teach critical inquiry and better prepare their students as effective citizens.

Positive or negative, the implications that adaptation theory suggests are intriguing. In themselves, they would provide still more room for study and discussion on the topic. Adaptation theory is far from deceased. It is merely maturing and growing in strength.

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