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Adaptation

Adaptation of books to movies is a process that happens often in the film industry, notably in box office hits such as *Harry Potter*, *The Maze Runner*, or *The Fault in Our Stars*, which were all originally books before becoming hits on the silver screen. Directors in collaboration with the authors of these books create these films for multitudes of reasons, but mainly for both the story and the fans. Although there is potential for many parts of the adaption process to go wrong I think many authors should consider adapting their films if they are given the opportunity.

The heart of any film or books is the story, without characters or a plot there would be nothing. So early examples of adaption of books to films could be found in our childhood, we all remember reading storybooks such as *Cinderella* or *Beauty and the Beast* as children and then watching the Disney cartoons. Depending on the version of the story tale, it was most likely pretty similar to the cartoon, this is considered a Hollywood adaptation, because the characters and story are close to the original but adapted to appeal to a larger audiences. No wonder why Walt Disney didn't include Cinderella's step sisters cutting off their toes from the original brothers Grimm's version of Cinderella. Another example and reason why directors cut certain parts from their

films that is included in the book is seen in *Forrest Gump*, which was originally a book written in 1986 by Winston Groom, and like in the 1994 film adaptation, *Forrest* tells of his crazy adventures. But multiple scenes were cut from the 1994 film, one for example when Forrest takes on a mission from NASA and flies a rocket into space, or when he is captured by cannibals for four years. Those scenes would have added multiple challenges to the film and story thus were cut from the final film to make it more logical. But besides cutting scenes from movies some directors add scenes to stories to either help the story or help character development. One example is in *Wolf of Wall Street*, where in the final scene of the movie Jordan Belfort, the main antagonist, slides a note to his partner, Donnie Azoff, telling Donnie not to incriminate himself since he was wearing a wire and being monitored by the FBI. Either adding or removing scenes from a movie greatly affects the outcome and feel of a movie, and can either make or break a movie both in the theater and most importantly in eyes of the fans.

Fans are the ultimate driving force of any film, without devoted fans of a book there would be no interest in seeing it adapted into a film. As director Wes Ball once said "It's all for the fans." Ball who directing both *The Maze Runner*, and *Maze Runner: The Scorch Trials* (and plans to finish the trilogy in 2017) worked closely with writer James Dashner when directing the films. Turning books to films is a difficult process filled with compromises, changes, and sacrifices to the story, either adding, removing or changing scenes from the original story can affect view expectations. Devoted book fans maybe upset when their favorite scene might be missing from the final film, and deter other fan from watching the movie. To try and prevent fans from being upset

directors try to stay true to major event in the story, or work with the author to form a middle ground on the story. Mike Mignola author of the comic book *HellBoy*, spent a month on the film set with director Guillermo Del Toro, and hours discussing the screenplay, converting his book into a feature film. Another example of a successful adaption is *The Dresden Files*, author Jim Butcher, besides helping the director adapt the story into a successful TV series. He also served as an extra in one of the episodes, a little easter egg for hard core book fans.

Forrest Gump, *Wolf of Wall street* , and *The Maze Runner*, all great examples of movies that were successfully adapted from books; however, there are some adaptations that are nothing like the books they are based off, ruining the fan base and the author's reputation. Having a book adapted is a great opportunity for the author and production companies, when executed correctly the film could benefit both author and producer, financially and in popularity. However there are adaptations that don't do well, were poor casting choices, or a complete lack of understanding of the original book. All movie fans know the feeling of miss cast in a lead role of a film, having an actor not suited to the film or genre can ruin a film and actor's career, also make people not take a film seriously. Same as adaptations, author's usually spend a great deal of writing and time defining a character, both how they look and act, usually serving as guidelines for directors. Good directors follow guidelines given by the original author, however there are directors who care more about making money and change the original story to appeal to a greater audience. This, however, often backfires and the film does poorly in the box office, even though it was the director's decision the film bares the book's title,

and more importantly the author's name. For this reason many authors and fans are wary of film adaptations of the books they love.

Although there is a potential and real risk, there are many things both authors can gain from having their film adapted. Authors would first off gain thousands of dollars off lending the rights to their book, and free advertisement both for themselves and their book, and not to mention the royalties from products from the film. Fans who risk having their favorite books ruined, could also rejoice together when they see characters or scenes that they love on the silver screen.

Harry Potter, The Maze Runner, Fault in Our Stars, all amazing books that were all made into amazing movies. Directors who followed the original book and author's input, resulted in films that stayed true to a story and were hits with fans on the silver screen. However they would have never been possible without the creative minds and literary skills of authors, who agreed to have their films adapted in the first place. For these reason when authors are presented with the opportunity to have their book adapted into a film they should take it. Although it has the potential to do poorly, it also has the potential to be a successful, satisfy fans and make a book into a best seller.

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