Re:Search

Yer A Franchise, Harry:
Transmediality in *Harry Potter* and *A Song of Ice and Fire*

Laura Murphy, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

ABSTRACT

Harry Potter and *A Song of Ice and Fire* are two series currently at the forefront of our culture. Their popularity is partly due to their successful film adaptations that have increased the membership of their fan bases and allowed the story to expand itself into different mediums. While many scholars conduct literary analysis or film analysis of these texts, viewing them as separate and independent entities, I wish to examine how each series is connected to its adaptation, and how they influence each other, creating a cyclical adaptation process. I argue that the adaptations play an integral part in our readings of these texts, affecting us with their reinterpretations of events, embodiment of characters and visualization. These fundamental changes not only alter our definition of "canon," but also alter our understandings of authorship.

KEYWORDS

Today, individual books can be expanded into a movie, a trilogy of movies, an interactive website, an eBook, a graphic novel, a play, and a video game. Critics of adaptation theory have typically analyzed this progression in terms of linear adaptation, for example, from book to film. We are at a cultural moment, however, when the idea of linear adaptation has become practically irrelevant, since adaptation encompasses so many mediums, creating a transmedia story. Linda Hutcheon compares literary adaptation to Darwinism: "stories also evolve by adaptation and are not immutable over time. Sometimes, like biological adaptation, cultural adaptation involves migration to favorable conditions: stories travel to different cultures and different media" (31). It is true that adaptation is something we are accustomed to seeing in our society. We tend to ask not *if* a bestselling book will be adapted, but *when*. I believe that this expansion changes our perception of the original literature, and in doing so, expands our sense of the "canon" itself. In this essay, I will explore how multimedia adaptations of literary works transform and affect the original literature, for both the authors and the fans. I will focus primarily on two popular fantasy series: J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter a*nd George R. R. Martin's *A Song of Ice and Fire (ASOIAF)*. To explore this idea, I will first define the stakes of this project as well as some key terms, examine the differences between reading and watching, and discuss the matter of authorship. Finally, I will explore these issues through two case studies, one for each of the works. This will be an in-depth analysis of specific adaptation issues, the first examining the character of Hermione and how film adaptation has changed our perceptions of her, and the second examining how the Red Wedding translates from page to screen. Both cases will focus on studies in her essay on transmedia:

> For most of its relatively short history, the study of adaptation has been locked in something of a stalemate. Caught between literary, film, and cultural studies, the discipline seems to regard its liminal positioning as a hazard, desperately dealing in absolutes in the hope of establishing solid ground. Discussions of adaptation continue to revolve around the traditional binaries long dismantled in other disciplines—original versus copy, literature versus filthe issue of embodiment and how it significantly shapes interpretation, especially when it involves female characters.

Why *Harry Potter* and *ASOIAF*? Very few would consider these texts to be highbrow art. Some would include them in the British and American canons, respectively, but others would push against this classification. Popularity does not necessarily equal quality. In fact, the

category of popular art and quality art rarely intersect. These two literary series are also very different. *Harry Potter* is a British children's series. The last book was published in 2007. The intended readership is ages eight to twelve. It is known for its whimsical nature, bildungsroman plotline, and magical world. *ASOIAF*, conversely, is an American series written for adults. The story is still in progress; as I write, fans are waiting anxiously for the sixth installment to complement the latest season. *ASOIAF* is infamous for its violence, developed through the extreme number of character deaths, its complexity, and its compelling portrayal of humanity. These series share many elements of fantasy literature, but are fundamentally different in how they portray them. In spite of these differences, I have selected these two texts because of what they have in common—enormous followings. Millions of people have seen or read these stories, giving them an important effect on the future of literature. You would be hard-pressed to find a writer under thirty who had not read the *Potter* books in their childhood, or hasn't at least heard of *ASOIAF*. The decisions that the writers, directors, producers, etc. make for these series will impact literature for the rest of time.

Perhaps the most important question before going forward is this: what is an adaptation? Adaptation scholars have argued over the definition since the dawn of the field. The limitations of adaptation are difficult to pin down. Zoë Shacklock summarizes the current state of adaptation m, author versus consumer, and so on. These frames of reference form the core of the everyday definition of adaptation—a screen version of a literary work, best discussed in terms of its faithfulness to that single, original source. (263)

In her book, *Theory of Adaptation*, Hutcheon broadly defines adaptation as, "an acknowledged transposition of a recognizable other work or works; a creative *and* an interpretive act of appropriation/salvaging; an extended intertextual engagement with the adapted work" (8). This definition coincides with our inherent understanding of the book-to-movie adaptation. The movie "transposes" the story to the film medium in a "creative and an interpretive act" and this creates "intertextual engagement." However, this definition only goes in one direction—original to adaptation. I argue that film adaptation is a much more cyclical process. When we read the book and then see the film, the reinterpretation affects our original perceptions of the literature in terms of visuals, character understanding, and plot. If, as they say, reading is rereading, then each adaptation is a new interpretation, a rereading of the original text.

Furthermore, the proliferation of adaptations in our society elicits the question: why do we create adaptations? What satisfaction are we deriving from them? John Bryant states that "adaptation is not only inevitable; it is a form of retelling that is so inherently irresistible to human beings that it is an inalienable right. It is a remix; it is a mash-up" (55). Hutcheon agrees, suggesting that the pleasure of adaptation comes from "the comfort of ritual combined with the piquancy of surprise" (4). Essentially, we love to hear the same story told again and again. It isn't any different than rereading a favorite novel. A film adaptation allows us to relive the tale in a way that is both familiar and fresh.

There are several terms that I will be using throughout this essay in regards to adaptation studies. First is the word "canon." Canon can be a broad term, referring to the entire British canon, or the literary canon in general. My concern in this essay is the canon in a much smaller sense. I am interested in the *Harry Potter* canon and the *ASOIAF* canon as their own subgroups of literature. The *Harry Potter* canon is anything that is produced by J. K. Rowling, whether it be the original seven books, the new material on Pottermore, or *Quidditch Through the Ages*. All of these are explicitly stamped as wizard world canon by the author herself. For *ASOIAF*, the official canon consists of the five existing books and the anthologies George R. R. Martin has written on Westeros history and culture.

This still leaves the question of whether or not the films are part of the official canon. Christopher Bell outlines several definitions of canon in his introduction to *From Here to Hogwarts*, stating that the films are "alternative canon" because they do not perfectly parallel the story line. Fan-made productions like *A Very Potter Musical* are paracanon, since they are "decidedly noncanonical, although they do inform our interpretations of the canonical texts" (3). The comments and expansions J. K. Rowling has made in interviews and social media are referred to as "metacanon—in the original Greek sense of the term 'meta' as meaning 'after,' 'beyond' or 'adding to'" (3). As Bell directly states, these definitions are open for debate, but I will use them as they are defined here.

The second term is transmediality. The definition of this is fairly straightforward—trans meaning across, so across multiple forms of media. Henry Jenkins defines transmedia storytelling as "[unfolding] across multiple media platforms, with each new text making a

distinctive and valuable contribution to the whole" (97-98). Jenkins states that transmediality is not a new phenomenon:

> Take, for example, the story of Jesus as told in the Middle Ages. Unless you were literate, Jesus was not rooted in a book but was something you encountered at multiple levels in your culture. Each representation (a stained-glass window, a tapestry, a psalm, a sermon, a live performance) assumed that you already knew the character and his story from someplace else. (121-22)

Obviously, new technological platforms have made transmedia stories available across mediums such as online content, video games, movies, and books. *Harry Potter* has content across many different mediums as well. The content on Pottermore or released on J. K. Rowling's Twitter page changes and adds to the story constantly, developing the metacanon. Many wouldn't consider you a true fan unless you had read all of the online content, and thus had consumed the whole story. There are countless online quizzes assessing whether you are an adequately dedicated fan, testing fans on incredibly obscure information, from both the books and the films. There is even a WikiHow article that outlines a fourteen-step process for "How to Become A Harry Potter Fan." It states that you must read all the books, watch all the films, write fan fiction, buy the merchandise, and visit the *Wizarding World* in Orlando, among other things. This article has eighty-eight contributors, so this guide is not just one fan's opinion. It is the general consensus of the co-authors that a true fan would have consumed the story in all of its different media platforms, including the alternate canon, paracanon and metacanon. With *ASOIAF*, the majority of fans only consume one medium or the other—the HBO show or the novels. Discussing the story with someone who watches the show can be confusing if you've only read the books, since the show often delves into new plot lines. There are separate chat threads on forum websites to divide the show watchers from the book readers, in order to avoid spoilers. In reality, there are two complete stories, and you need knowledge of both of them to be abreast of the whole fandom.

What is the effect of watching versus reading? Different mediums of art have different things to offer the spectator. We have all heard the mantra: the book is always better than the movie. Most would agree that this is the case, at least for the majority of film adaptations. However, watching a film and reading a book are very different experiences. For example, "a novel's description of action, setting or character can be long or short, detailed or vague, and . . .

the reader judges significance from the time spent on it by the narrator. In the film people appear within a setting in action all at once" (Hutcheon 64). The stereotype that films cannot deliver these same aspects is not necessarily true. A movie can spend longer shots on something important, and a camera can zoom in and out, essentially recreating the effects described by Hutcheon, but a camera certainly cannot be vague. Specifically with setting, a camera can show us a room in more detail than an author could ever give. In *Harry Potter*, seeing the image of the Hogwarts castle finally gives us the image of each individual tower and window. It would have been tedious for Rowling to go into so much detail on Gothic architecture, but a film can accomplish this level of visual detail with ease. J. K. Rowling admits that she was jealous of the filmmakers because "in thirty seconds of well-written script, you could say what it took [her] three pages to tell the reader" (Misshef). So goes the old saying: a picture is worth a thousand words.

The portrayal and effects of time is another major difference between films and novels. Novels take much longer to read than films take to watch, and when seeing a film in theaters, you have to sit all the way through it (Hutcheon 133). This has changed with online streaming services, but the aesthetic of watching is still the same. We typically feel compelled to make a two-hour commitment. Films also have the audible advantage of soundtrack. Music in movies "enhance[s] and direct[s] audience response to characters and action" (Hutcheon 41). The music from both adaptations is popular and well-known. The adaptation advantage with sound can also be seen with written song lyrics in books. When we read *ASOIAF*, we can learn the words to "The Bear and the Maiden Fair" but we'll never know the tune. The show can bring us this multisensory experience. The adaptation does not just offer a tune, but solidifies one. Before seeing the show, we could all guess how the song was supposed to go. We could imagine what key and time signature it was in. The writers of the show get the privilege of deciding once and for all. This shows us that regardless of the quality of an original work or an adaptation, the medium has a distinct effect on the story, and thus our reaction to it.

Perhaps an obvious point is that film adaptations greatly affect how spectators visualize a written text. This is especially true when it comes to actors embodying print characters. Most readers who have seen the *Harry Potter* movies have a hard time reading the books without seeing Daniel Radcliffe's face as the protagonist in their heads. Shacklock examines this kind of

thinking through her study of meme culture. In the *ASOIAF* fandom, there are a number of memes that circulate online, prompting reexaminations of characters and bringing them into modernity. The memes use "images of the television program and the content of the novels" (Shacklock 274). Even if you created a meme that referred to content in the books, you'd have to use the face of an actor to portray your meaning. The actor's faces have come to represent the character visually, even when we aren't discussing the adaptation and are focusing on specific aspects of the original literature. The portrayal and the character are intricately linked in our minds.

The creation of adaptations prompts questions about authorship and authorial control. We all agree that J. K. Rowling wrote the *Potter* books, but who made the movies? A book typically has one credited author. Even so, a book is edited, copyedited, and digitized by a collection of people. The quantity of authors and influencers varies for each manuscript. Some are self-published and some go through rigorous editing in big publishing companies. Ultimately, it is the author who gets the credit, approves all changes, and is known as the creator of the work, even if a team of people worked to finesse and influence the final product. The nature of film is entirely different in its ownership. No one person creates the film, or gets all of the credit for authorship. Usually, the director gets to be considered the chief contributor, but many others—the producer, the screenwriter, the lead actor—could throw their name in for consideration as "author." James Russell talks about the many contributors to the *Harry Potter* movies in his essay on authorship:

> David Heyman has acted as supervising producer on every release . . . Steve Kloves has written seven out of the eight scripts for the movies, and his work has increasingly taken on a focus of its own, as the novels got longer and the need for significant trimming became apparent. Stuart Craig (and many members of his team) has acted as production designer on every film – a vital role, bearing in mind the centrality of art direction and design to the look, and promotional viability, of the films. Other contributors have changed more frequently. The Potter films have had four directors as well as six cinematographers and four composers. (396)

This is an extensive list of players for the overall product, and it doesn't even include the dozens of actors that physically brought the characters to life. Daniel Radcliffe has just as much a place on the list of creators since he was the face of the franchise. *Game of Thrones* would have an even more extensive list of collaborators since individual episodes have different directors and the writers have taken much more creative freedom, inventing major characters that didn't exist

in the novels and redirecting the subplots. George R. R. Martin said in an interview that "David Benioff and Dan Weiss, who are the showrunners, they're killing characters who are still alive in the books, so as bloody as I am, David and Dan are always turning things up to eleven" (Team Coco). In a film adaptation, the original author no longer has a solitary ownership of the work. They have to trust it to hundreds more authors in order to bring their original vision from page to screen.

Many authors take a hands-on role in film adaptations of their work. George R. R. Martin, for example, writes one episode per season and stays connected to the show through this involvement (Team Coco). J. K. Rowling also had a lot of influence. During the production of the films, she corresponded with Steve Kloves, the screenwriter. He often emailed her and asked her questions about the books. He said, "It was very easy to email [her] . . . I once asked, I think, about Ron's uncle . . . and I got back like five pages" (Misshef). In addition to having direct influence, Rowling was thrilled with the work that Alfonso Cuarón did on the third Potter film, changes and all. Russell states that in an interview with Rowling, Kloves, and Cuarón, "she occasionally even seemed to imply that the film realized her intentions more completely than her own novel, when she noted that the filmmakers had inadvertently included scenes which anticipate events in the later, then unpublished, books" (392). It is interesting to think that the author approves these changes so wholeheartedly that she herself suggests the new version is an improved one. That certainly goes against our mantra of "the book is always better," and it certainly contradicts the notion that the author is the owner of her own world if Cuarón can write it better. Granted, Rowling still did most of the world-building legwork. We can't say that ownership has been taken away from her completely, especially since she worked hands-on with the filmmakers.

The problem of authorship is proliferated by the invention of new plotlines and the subtraction of old ones in film adaptations. John Bryant states that "the anxiety over the fidelity of an original is absurd because it is a phantom that exists not in the original but only after the original is adapted" (55). His opinion is that examining a film's faithfulness to the original material is not productive; we are studying something that exists between the book and the film, some kind of third element (what he refers to as a phantom) that doesn't really exist. Indeed, there is nothing to compare a book to if there isn't a movie, but I disagree with the notion that

fidelity is a phantom. Books have a tone, a logic, themes, motifs and character development that can be discussed regardless of comparable material. When it is adapted, the movie either keeps these literary devices, or it alters them. This altering is not a phantom. It is something we can point to rather directly and examine. We are examining a very real space between the books and the movies, a third story that has been developed by the adaptation.

Book to movie stories are infamous for cutting down the material, from extraneous characters to entire subplots. In the *Potter* books, for example, characters such as Peeves, Professor Binns, and Ludo Bagman never made it into the movies. Arguably, these characters never had that much impact on the plot. Their contributions were easily moved to other characters that made the cut. The movie of *Order of the Phoenix* cut the entire romance subplot between Lupin and Tonks. This plotline didn't interfere with the overall story arc, but it is important to the themes of the series. Their death leaves behind an orphan son, paralleling Harry's own existence. Through the subtraction of this plotline, they eliminated the resolution of Harry getting to be the loving Godfather he never had. What does this do to our overall perceptions of the literature? It makes this plotline between Lupin and Tonks seem unimportant, a story that didn't need to be added. When fans discuss it, it is referred to as a plot that was only in the books and was lost in translation. It retains a certain imaginative quality, unaltered by visualization in the mind of the reader.

In *Game of Thrones*, Loras' two older brothers didn't make it into the show. Loras is a minor character in the show, who is best known for his connections to the powerful Tyrell family and his intimate relationship with Renly, one of the many candidates for the throne. The elimination of his older brothers doesn't change the overall plot arc of the story, but it drastically changes Loras' role as a character. He is now the heir to Highgarden and the decisions he makes have more weight. In addition to minor changes, there are often complete rewrites. In the *Deathly Hallows* movie, there is an added scene in which Harry and Hermione dance together. Many have interpreted this as romantic. A potential subplot is being created that we can reflect back onto the books. In *Game of Thrones*, we have entirely new characters such as Talisa and Ros. This prompts us to reinterpret existing characters. For example, Robb's marriage to Talisa makes him a more three-dimensional character than in the books when he married Jeyne Westerling. This reflects badly on his book-version self, who seems rather shallow in comparison. The film

interpretations of these series prompt us to reexamine characters, motifs, and plotlines that we otherwise wouldn't have reexamined. In short, it prompts us to view the story in a different way.

Essentially, the directors of the films are writing fan fiction, taking someone else's characters and running with them. However, it is fan fiction that millions of people have seen. It cannot be dismissed because it has authority through sheer volume. Warner Bros. has rather large platforms to promote its interpretation, and it has more authorial support than the average story posted on *fanfiction.net*. Their adaptations, extensions, and new ideas matter because they affect the interpretations of every fan that watches the movies. Even if they aren't writing canon content, they are affecting our interpretations with their decisions, since the visual adaptations have such permanence and prestige.

Authorial control also comes into question because of the overlapping timelines of writing the novels and watching the movies. Traditionally, as we envision the book-to-movie adaptation, the book is a finished product that is then followed by a film. With *Harry Potter* and *ASOIAF*, this is not the case. In 2001, when the movie of *Sorcerer's Stone* was released, only four of the books had been published. J. K. Rowling then wrote the remaining volumes knowing that they would soon be made into films. When asked if that influenced her writing at all, she denied it. However, she does admit that she often thought of the films during the writing process, saying that when she wrote Luna Lovegood, she imagined Ivanka Lynch's voice in her mind (Misshef). This would suggest that even in the mind of the author, the film adaptations have influence on the text because the embodiment of Luna by the actress affected Rowling's perceptions of the character. With *ASOIAF*, a similar situation is taking place. The HBO show has surpassed the books, producing a sixth season before the sixth book is released. Season seven has already been filmed as well, prompting many fans to ask, will there ever be more books? Martin has given sparse updates on the progress of *book six*, saying it might be finished by the end of 2017. Regardless of when it is released, many of the fans will have viewed the film adaptation first, at which point, it is not a film adaptation at all—it is the original. Martin is writing a book from an existing show. This completely erases the lines between author and adaptor. The collaboration between the two has been very close and the showrunners are currently producing content before the book's author. Since this is a situation that has yet to be resolved, it is unclear how literary history will look back on it, but presently, it appears to many

fans that Martin has completely sacrificed his authorial control to Benioff and Weiss, allowing them to be the authors once and for all.

For the first case study, we return to the most obvious effect of film adaptation: actor portrayal and physical embodiment. Fans often become enraged if they feel that the wrong actor has been cast for their favorite character. There are a number of threads on *Potterforum.com* dedicated to condemning Daniel Radcliffe's performance as Harry Potter. This isn't necessarily his fault, since he can't possibly compete with the Harry that they had conjured up in their own head. Regardless, fans take a lot of stock in actor portrayals, because the portrayal becomes intricately linked with the character. Marvin Carlson talks about this issue in the realm of theater, referring to this phenomenon as ghosting: "the recycled body of an actor, already a complex bearer of semiotic messages, will almost inevitably in a new role evoke the ghost or ghosts of previous roles" (8). The actors in the *Potter* films carry with them all of the roles they held before. Perhaps we are primed to believe in Snape as a villain because we previously knew him as Hans Gruber. With the actors playing Harry, Ron and Hermione, it is difficult to apply this theory, because their acting careers had been very limited prior to their roles in the *Potter* films. Very few would have seen them before. However, this ghosting effect can also involve the "audience's knowledge of or assumptions about the actor's life outside the theatre" (Carlson 85). We know this to be true from the casting of the *Fantastic Beasts* movie. Fans were furious that Johnny Depp was cast for the film because of his recent domestic abuse allegations (Simpson). They felt that the ghost of this abuse would be present on the film.

I want to focus here on the character/casting of Hermione Granger. Hermione is a fan favorite. She plays an essential role in the *Potter* books, serving as an endless encyclopedia of magical knowledge. She helps Harry fulfill the prophecy, sticking with him through thick and thin, to the very end. When we first meet Hermione, she is described as having "a bossy sort of voice, lots of bushy brown hair, and rather large front teeth" (Rowling 105). This is a fairly simple description, that, if anything, makes her sound unattractive, both to the eyes and the ears. During book four, Hermione has Madame Pomfrey shrink her teeth to a smaller size, and soon after, she attends the Yule Ball with quidditch star Victor Krum. From these events, we can assume that Hermione has become more attractive. In spite of this, Harry never notices. Since he is our point-of-view character, we don't get to see her another way.

In the movies, she is often viewed differently because of her casting as Emma Watson, as well as certain screenwriting choices. Movie Hermione is explicitly attractive, and we can assess it for ourselves instead of having to view her through Harry. In addition to her physical person, her actions are often different in the films, making her a slightly different version of the character. The result of the casting choice, as well as the decisions of the screenwriters, is that there are two different Hermiones operating in the *Potter* universe. The character development aspect of this is discussed at length in a PotterCast episode, in which the speakers analyze her character in both mediums:

> A trio is a balancing act, right? They're equalizers of each other. Harry's like the action, Hermione's the brains, Ron's the heart. Hermione has been assassinated in these movies, and I mean that genuinely—by giving her every single positive character trait that Ron has, they have assassinated her character in the movies. She's been harmed by being made to be less human, because everything good Ron has, she's been given. So, for instance: "If you want to kill Harry, you're going to have to kill me too"—Ron, leg is broken, he's in pain, gets up and stands in front of Harry and says this. Who gets that line in the movie? Hermione . . . So, Hermione—all her flaws were shaved away in the films. And that sounds like you're making a kick-ass, amazing character, and what you're doing is dehumanizing her. (Anelli)

Anelli's viewpoint is that the film version of Hermione does not have flaws, and that makes her less human. She has become a superwoman, a standard no one can achieve. I agree with this assessment. To say that a character is feminist is not to say that they are perfect. It is to say that they are whole, complete with weaknesses that they strive to overcome. Hermione Granger in the books is whole, a woman who can bring a unique skill set to the table, succeeds with the help of a team, and overcomes her fears. Hermione Granger in the movies is a little too whole, to the point of overflowing. She has no flaws that she needs to overcome; the flaws in her life are Ron and Harry, slowing her down. Movie Hermione could have defeated Voldemort by herself since she didn't need Ron and Harry to balance her.

When examining discussions of Hermione on fan forums, it is often obvious whether the writer is talking about book or movie Hermione. Some references to her character involve examples that were not in the films, and furthermore, film discussions often include comments about her physical appearance that are not otherwise relevant. Taken from the thread "How Intelligent is Hermione Granger?" the following discussion plays out:

LibrarianInTraining: It depends on the view of intelligence. Hermione is very book smart, but not so much on street smart. She can learn from books and take something from it yes. She does not seem street smart such as knowing about wizarding culture and what not.

Grrarrggh: Hermione's intellect is very rigid. She thinks in black and white and has a very hard time deviating from that or thinking out of the box.

GellertGPhoenix: To be fair, she's very capable of figuring out solutions, and in some cases, thinking outside the box, or deviating from the norm; Knitting hats for house elves, for instance. Still, thinking outside the box isn't her usual style of doing things. Simply put, she works with what she has . . . Not to mention that, through and through, she has a rather annoying habit of believing that she is always right. (LibrarianInTraining; Grrarrggh; GellertGPhoenix)

These fans discuss her advantages and disadvantages relatively equally, presenting her attributes and faults. We know that they have the books in mind because an example is cited—hats for house elves—that wasn't included in the movies. Taken from the same thread, in these comments, it is rather obvious that this fan had Emma Watson in mind: "DanPot: Hermione is the mostest, bestest, amazingestest, and fantabulousestest, smartestestest girl, witch, and person in the whole wide worldest!!! She's kinda cute too" (DanPot). From the quotations we have about Hermione's appearance in the novels, we never get the impression that she is "cute." The paradox of saying a literary character is attractive is obvious: we are attributing visual qualities of attractiveness to a character that we can not see. In spite of this, the theme of Hermione's attractiveness is reoccurring on fan forums. In a thread about favorite characters started by user CalvinE, they answer their own question with the following: "my favorite character is hermione because shes hawt." This fan is stating that Hermione's best quality as a character is her physical appearance. Gone are the praises about her intelligence, her political activism, or her academic prowess. From some fans' viewpoints, her physique is more important than her bravery or her accomplishments. They only see her as a female body, a subject of the male gaze. The film adaptation has opened up a new realm of anti-feminist interpretation for her character—one in which her appearance is her most important feature.

Hermione and feminism are two ideas that are attached at the hip. Carlson's theory of ghosting can explain this close connection: the actor's private life merges with the character's. Emma Watson has an Ivy League education. She is a UN Goodwill Ambassador who has advocated for gender equality all over the globe (Selby). Many have remarked that Watson is

similar to her character because of her intelligence and activism. Following her career is like watching Hermione's life continue past the *Potter* books. There is a Buzzfeed article that jokingly chronicles an account of *Harry Potter* as if Hermione were the main character, fighting the dark forces of the patriarchy. It ends with references to Emma Watson's actual feminist accomplishments "in the muggle world" (Dalton). This article is doing exactly what Carlson discussed. It ghosts Emma Watson's life onto Hermione Granger, the fictional character. We perceive Hermione as a feminist character partly because of the actress' dedication to the cause. At the same time, we ghost Hermione onto Emma Watson, imagining her to be the living embodiment of the character.

As Shacklock demonstrated with memes and Carlson demonstrated with the stage, our impressions of a character are married to the actor's image. The actor becomes the visual representation of the character, bringing along associations about the actor's appearance and outside life to the realm of character development. Fans have now developed an association between Hermione and Emma Watson so strong that they are willing to state Hermione, the character, is attractive like Emma Watson. Because of the film adaptation, we now have not two Hermiones, but three. The first is book Hermione, who is intelligent, but often loses her composure under pressure. The second is movie Hermione, who is beautiful, fierce, and flawless. The third is Emma Watson, whose life is ever connected to the wizarding world through her embodiment of the character. This brings us back to the concept of authorship and ownership. Who wrote the new Hermione? It certainly wasn't J. K. Rowling. As stated, Emma Watson had quite the effect on the character, and she single-handedly gave Hermione the dimension of physicality for fans to discuss, even if this was not her intention. The more likely author of her new character is the screenwriter of the films. Steve Kloves admits that Hermione was his favorite character when he read the novels (Misshef). It seems inevitable that he should be biased when creating his own interpretations of characters in a new medium. It is possible for other biases and opinions to come through as well in the scripts. In a discussion with J.K. Rowling, Kloves says that he never liked Dobby and didn't want to include him in *Goblet of Fire*. One man's opinion changed the arc of the story, so that Dobby's roles in the fourth book had to be distributed to other characters or eliminated entirely. The changed version of Hermione reflects Kloves' love of the character. It is only natural that when given the opportunity to retell the story,

we remake the characters in our own image, molding them into what we always wanted to see. Hermione is a fan favorite, and Kloves is a fan. Thus, she becomes tougher, stronger, and braver in the films.

For a case study of *ASOIAF*, I'd like to examine the Red Wedding as it translates from page to screen in order to discuss questions attached to the representation of violence in film and television. The Red Wedding is infamous in the series, as it serves as a major turning point in the plot and is one of the bloodiest events of the series. At this point in *A Storm of Swords*, a wedding feast turns into a bloodbath when the Frey family unexpectedly turns on the Stark family. They have sided with the opposing force in the series, the Lannisters, and wish to end the war quickly by killing Robb Stark, the leader of the resistance. The scene in the book starts to shift when Catelyn Stark, Robb's mother, notices that something is wrong. It then quickly escalates when Robb is unexpectedly hit with an arrow: "Robb gave Edwyn an angry look and moved to block his way…and staggered suddenly as a quarrel sprouted from his side, just beneath his shoulder" (Martin 701). This is the first act of violence we see, and it comes out of nowhere. In the next few minutes, Catelyn watches the horror unfold:

> Ser Wendel Manderly rose ponderously to his feet, holding his leg of lamb. A quarrel went in his open mouth and came out the back of his neck . . . The Smalljon bludgeoned Ser Raymond Frey across the face with a leg of mutton. But when he reached for his sword belt a crossbow bolt drove him to his knees . . . Ser Ryman buried the head of his axe in Dacey's stomach. (702)

The author tends to use very artful descriptions of the violence, using words like "buried" to smooth out the horror of the act. There are not a lot of graphic descriptions of blood. Perhaps the most graphic moment is when Catelyn kills Aegon Frey after a failed attempt to bargain for Robb's life: "She tugged hard on Aegon's hair and sawed at his neck until the blade grated on bone. Blood ran hot over her fingers" (704). This is extremely vivid, but it plays on touch instead of on sight. We feel the heat of the blood instead of seeing it pour. The quantity is left to the imagination.

The show performed the scene faithfully, with a few character changes. Talisa, Robb's wife in the show, attends the wedding and is the first to die in this scene, along with her unborn child. The other major alteration is that Catelyn Stark murders Walder Frey's wife instead of his disabled son. The changes made the scene shocking to book-readers as well as show-watchers.

The comments below are taken from a thread that was ongoing throughout the airing of the episode on HBO:

> Thelastactionhero: I'm literally at a loss for words. I seriously was almost unaffected when I read it the first time. Something about seeing it visually f****** really ate at me. The belly stabbing at Talisa was f****** awful.
> Mappy: The Red Wedding was very intense in the book but seeing it on screen had a much bigger impact for me. My heart was pounding as soon as the song started and when the stabbing on Talisa started I did gasp.
> Nymphetamine: I thought that having read it and knowing it was coming would make it easier to watch...I was wrong. That was by far the craziest s*** to ever happen on tv and It was amazingly well done. I can't even imagine how I would feel if I hadn't read the books.
> DragonsHungry: Reading that in the book was disturbing, but seeing it on TV, the real faces, the real tragedy of the moment, just way more powerful. Reading about a terrible traffic accident in a newspaper is never as powerful and horrible as having to witness it. (Thelastactionhero; Mappy; Nymphetamine; DragonsHungry)

All of these fans knew what was about to happen, but admit that the show was horrifying to watch nonetheless. Some even state that the visualization of the violence was worse than when they read it in the books. Unlike in the novels, you can see the blood pour and spurt when it is on screen. The violence can't hide behind Martin's language. The scene was made extra horrifying by the added death of Talisa. This addition makes the TV version of the Red Wedding bloodier and more brutal than the book version. They specifically added a plot line that involved harming an unarmed, pregnant woman. This is a go-to way to tug on an audience's heartstrings, since we perceive women to be more vulnerable and frequently in need of saving. Sarah Hagelin discusses this at length in her work on the female body in film:

> Our culture, politics, and academic criticism remain troublingly invested in a story of female fragility, a story based on a few key assumptions: women, children, and non-masculine men are the victims of male violence, female injury demands society's retribution, and pain renders the victim of violence helpless . . . This traditional model asks us as viewers to reserve our greatest sympathy for the suffering female body. (3)

This idea of traditional vulnerability is used during the Red Wedding scene. They intentionally increased the shock factor with an act of violence against a young, beautiful woman. We feel that Talisa is more fragile than Robb because of her femininity as well as her pregnant state. This dynamic is used with Walder Frey's wife as well. The murder of a young woman instead of a

grown man is more shocking, more horrifying. Both deaths strike an emotional chord that the book never attempted to hit. When we return to the book's account, it almost seems docile. We don't have to literally watch the blood pour out of anyone's neck when we read the book. More importantly, we don't have to watch Talisa die, since she doesn't exist in the literary version. Talisa's death becomes the most memorable and impactful moment of the scene. It gets more discussion than Robb's murder, which, from a plot perspective, was significantly and undoubtedly more important. He represented the North and his death causes the collapse of an army, but it is Talisa that we cry for, despite the fact that she isn't any more or less dead than Robb. Through this reinterpretation of the scene, we now have a new version of events that eclipses the old. We can't return to *A Storm of Swords* without thinking about these changes, making comparisons, seeing the actor's terrified faces and bloody hands.

Who is the author of the Red Wedding scene? The episode, "The Rains of Castamere," was directed by David Nutter. Actors Richard Madden and Michelle Fairley were both praised for their performances as Robb and Catelyn. It was written by co-creators David Benioff and D.B. Weiss. They stated in an interview that the Red Wedding was one of the primary reasons they wanted to make the show. They were determined to make the scene as painful as it was in the novel. D.B Weiss said "It doesn't end quickly. It's not all over in a hail of crossbow quarrels. It actually lingers. What we hoped for is an uncomfortably long period of time . . . you're kind of hoping for a cut to black. You just want it to be over" (GameofThrones). It's unclear why they decided to substitute Walder Frey's son for his wife in the final moments. It is likely the same issue that we saw with Kloves' writing of Hermione's character. The fans write what they want to see. In the case of the Red Wedding, they wanted to see absolute horror, and the writers executed this in the easiest way possible—violence against women.

In both of these case studies, we see the transfer of a character or event to a different medium. Both present certain changes. One alters a character slightly and the other alters small plot points in a scene. The original authors have created the content of the characters and plots, and they then endorsed the film adaptations, keeping close contact with the adaptors. Through the existence of the adaptation, certain authorial claims have been surrendered. The movie and show of these texts bring in new interpretations, new plots, and character changes that were not from the minds of the authors, as well as adding visualization and embodiment that didn't exist

in the novels. These changes, regardless of endorsement or influence from Rowling and Martin, have greatly influenced our perceptions of their novels. Without meaning to, we will always picture Emma Watson as Hermione, blurring the lines between actress and character, reality and fiction. We will always think of Talisa's terrible end when we reread *A Storm of Swords,* eclipsing the rest of the event with its intended shock value. The adaptors have had a permanent effect on the series, making them, in some sense, authors themselves. For this reason, the films are not only an alternate canon, but part of the metacanon as well. They add to the existing text, overlapping and merging with it to create one combined story.

WORKS CITED

Anelli, Marissa. "PotterCast Filch." Audio blog post. *PotterCast*. iTunes, 26

February 2014. Web. 6 April 2017.

Bell, Christopher E., ed. *From Here to Hogwarts: Essays on Harry Potter*

Fandom and Fiction. Jefferson: McFarland, 2016. Print.

Bryant, John. "Textual Identity and Adaptive Revision: Editing Adaptation as a

Fluid Text." *Adaptation Studies: New Challenges, New Directions*. Ed.

Jorgen Bruhn, Anne Gjelsvik, and Eirik Frisvold Hanssen. London:

Bloomsbury, 2013. 47-68. Print.

CalvinE. "Re: Favorite Harry Potter Character?" *Potterforums.com*. phpBB, 17

February 2017. Web. 6 April 2017.

<https://www.potterforums.com/viewtopic.php?f=21&t=1586>.

Carlson, Marvin. *The Haunted Stage: The Theatre as Memory Machine*. Ann

Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001. Print.

Dalton, Dan. "'If Hermione Were The Main Character In "Harry Potter."'

Buzzfeed. Buzzfeed, 16 January 2015. Web. 6 April 2017.

DanPot. "Re: How Intelligent is Hermione Granger?" *Potterforums.com*. phpBB,

30 November 2016. Web. 6 April 2017.

<https://www.potterforums.com/viewtopic.php?f=21&t=58668>.

DragonsHungry. "Re: [Book Spoilers] EP309 Discussion." *Asoiaf.westeros.org*.

Invision Power Services, 3 June 2013. Web. 6 April 2017.

<http://asoiaf.westeros.org/index.php?/topic/89096-book-spoilers-

ep309discussion/&pag e=14>.

GameofThrones. "Game of Thrones: Season 3 - Inside the Red Wedding (HBO)."

Online video clip. *Youtube*. Youtube, 4 June 2013. Web. 6 April 2017.

GellertGPhoenix. "Re: How Intelligent is Hermione Granger?" *Potterforums.com*.

phpBB, 11 January 2017. Web. 6 April 2017.

<https://www.potterforums.com/viewtopic.php?f=21&t=58668>. Grrarrggh. "Re:

How Intelligent is Hermione Granger?" *Potterforums.com*. phpBB, 11 January 2017.

Web. 6 April 2017.

<https://www.potterforums.com/viewtopic.php?f=21&t=58668>.

Hagelin, Sarah. *Reel Vulnerability: Power, Pain, And Gender In Contemporary*

American Film And Television. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press,

2013. Print.

Hutcheon, Linda and Siobhan O'Flynn. *A Theory of Adaptation*. New York:

Routledge, 2013. Print.

Jenkins, Henry. *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*. New

York: New York University Press, 2006. Print.

LibrarianInTraining. "Re: How Intelligent is Hermione Granger?"

Potterforums.com. phpBB, 18 September 2016. Web. 6 April 2017.

<https://www.potterforums.com/viewtopic.php?f=21&t=58668>.

Mappy. "Re: [Book Spoilers] EP309 Discussion." *Asoiaf.westeros.org*. Invision

Power Services, 3 June 2013. Web. 6 April 2017.

<http://asoiaf.westeros.org/index.php?/topic/89096-book-spoilers-

ep309discussion/&page=13>.

Martin, George. *A Storm of Swords*. New York: Bantam Books, 2000. Print.

Misshef. "Conversation Between J. K. Rowling and Steve Kloves (2011)." Online

video clip. *Youtube*. Youtube, 15 November 2016. Web. 4 April 2017.

Nymphetamine. "Re: [Book Spoilers] EP309 Discussion." *Asoiaf.westeros.org*.

Invision Power Services, 3 June 2013. Web. 6 April 2017.

<http://asoiaf.westeros.org/index.php?/topic/89096-book-spoilers-

ep309discussion/&page=13>.

Rowling, J. K. *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*. New York: Scholastic, 1997. Print.

Russell, James. "Authorship. Commerce. And Harry Potter." *A Companion to

Literature, Film, and Adaptation*. Ed. Deborah Cartmell. West

Sussex, UK: WileyBlackwell, 2012. 391-407. Print.

Selby, Jean. "Emma Watson named as UN Women Goodwill Ambassador."

Independent. Independent, 8 July 2014. Web. 6 April 2017.

Simpson, George. "Harry Potter fans FURIOUS at Johnny Depp Fantastic Beasts

2 casting." *Express*. Express, 2 November 2016. Web. 6 April 2016.

Shacklock, Zoë. "'A reader lives a thousand lives before he dies': Transmedia

Textuality and the Flows of Adaptation." *Mastering the Game of Thrones:

Essays on George R. R. Martin's A Song of Ice and Fire*. Ed. Jes Battis

and Susan Johnston. Jefferson: McFarland, 2015. Print.

Team Coco. "George R. R. Martin: The 'Game Of Thrones' Showrunners Are

More Bloodthirsty Than Me." Online video clip. *Youtube*. Youtube,

14 May 2014. Web. 6 April 2017.

Thelastactionhero. "Re: [Book Spoilers] EP309 Discussion." *Asoiaf.westeros.org*.

Invision Power Services, 3 June 2013. Web. 6 April 2017.

<http://asoiaf.westeros.org/index.php?/topic/89096-book-spoilers-

ep309discussion/&page=13>.