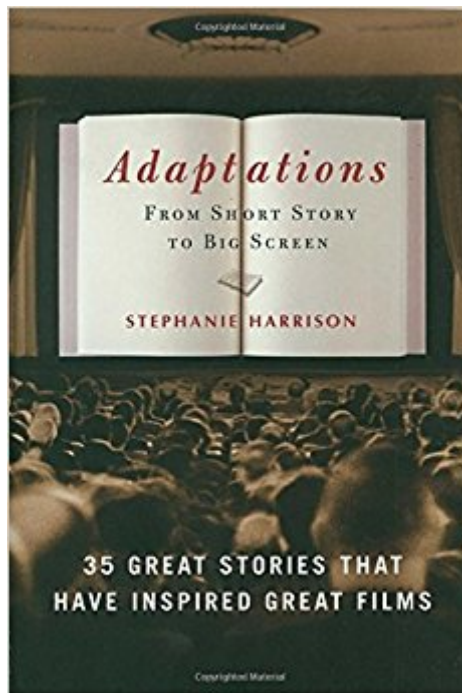




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Adaptations: From Short Story To Big Screen: 35 Great Stories That Have Inspired Great Films



Synopsis

An Eclectic Collection of Fiction That Inspired Film Memento, All About Eve, Rear Window, Rashomon, and 2001: A Space Odyssey are all well-known and much-loved movies, but what is perhaps a lesser-known fact is that all of them began their lives as short stories. Adaptations gathers together 35 pieces that have been the basis for films, many from giants of American literature (Hemingway, Fitzgerald) and many that have not been in print for decades (the stories that inspired Bringing Up Baby, Meet John Doe, and All About Eve). Categorized by genre, and featuring movies by master directors such as Steven Spielberg, Stanley Kubrick, Robert Altman, Frank Capra, and John Ford, as well as relative newcomers such as Chris Eyre and Christopher Nolan, Adaptations offers insight into the process of turning a short story into a screenplay, one that, when successful, doesn't take drastic liberties with the text upon which it is based, but doesn't mirror its source material too closely either. The stories and movies featured in Adaptations include: Philip K. Dick's "The Minority Report," which became the 2002 blockbuster directed by Steven Spielberg and starring Tom Cruise; "The Harvey Pekar Name Story" by reclusive graphic artist Harvey Pekar, whose life was the inspiration for American Splendor, winner of the 2003 Sundance Grand Jury Prize; "Bringing Up Baby," the basis of the classic film Bringing Up Baby, anthologized here for the first time ever; "The Swimmer" by John Cheever, an example of a highly regarded story that many feared might prove unadaptable; "The predecessor to the beloved holiday classic A Christmas Story," "Red Ryder Nails the Hammond Kid" by Jean Shepherd. Whether you're a fiction reader or a film buff, Adaptations is your behind-the-scenes look at the sometimes difficult, sometimes brilliantly successful process from the printed page to the big screen.

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Customer Reviews

Starred Review Avid readers and movie buffs alike will relish Harrison's thought-provoking opus about the process of adapting short stories into screenplays. From science fiction to social satire, this captivating collection of 35 tales embraces literary greats like Chekhov and Cheever and memorable writings long out of print (such as Frank Rooney's "Cyclists' Raid," which became the 1953 Brando classic *The Wild One*). Harrison evotes a chapter to every imaginable genre, prefacing each with quotes and anecdotes from writers, directors, and actors associated with the creative endeavors selected. Native American author Sherman Alexie, whose short stories inspired the 1998 cult hit, *Smoke Signals*, speaks of wrestling with the old stereotypes of "the noble and the ignoble savage." Stanley Kubrick's cohorts compare collaborations with the director to "being swallowed up by a cold and intelligent creature with many tentacles." Actor Vincent Price's daughter recalls how her father and Herbert Marshall "laughed until they cried" while filming the "Help me!" scene in 1958's *The Fly*. Steven Spielberg, Frank Capra, Alfred Hitchcock, and John Ford are among the cast of cinematic personalities in this tribute to the inspiration and perspiration required to turn fiction into film. Allison BlockCopyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved

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While the meat of this book is the collection of logically categorized short stories, the introductions to each section are where "Adaptations" really shines. Stephanie Harrison provides the reader with an excellent understanding of the circumstances and timeframe in which each story found its way to the next medium. Her attention to the relationships between the authors and directors and their cooperation (or lack thereof) goes a long way in illustrating the difficulty of creating a successful film, and I came away with a new appreciation for the craftsmanship involved in reimagining a story. The stories themselves are well selected and well organized. Harrison assembled a neat cross-section of the industry, with stories ranging from science fiction to "much to my surprise" comics. Particularly clever was the decision to open the book with a section entitled "The Directors: Translators, Magicians, Collaborators, and Thieves." By beginning with several stories of wildly varying style, Harrison introduces the reader to a range of directorial and authorial methods, giving them a broader context with which to evaluate the rest of the book than would otherwise have been available if she had simply jumped straight into stories-by-genre. All things considered, "Adaptations" is a well-polished book, rich with valuable original content to compliment the stories the reader came for.

Used this for my entire class for essays. It was great and the stories are really entertaining to read. Also got it cheaper than the campus bookstore.

Awesome

Really good short stories based on films!

Three years since I've used it for a literature class, and it's still on my shelf, a compact volume of some great stories.

Nice book of stories that were turned into movies

Good condition

Met expectations for my film class...interesting to see the differences between the short stories within and the film/screenplay based on those stories.

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