



ADAPTATIONS

What Do They Lose?

Your friend recommended a new book to you, and you found some time during your morning commute to start reading. What started as merely a curiosity soon devours all your time, and after two late nights and three extra cups of morning coffee, you have discovered your new favorite book of all time. The first thing you do is thank your friend for the recommendation; the second thing you do is talk non-stop about the book until everyone around you is convinced to hop on the wagon and read it too. And during this whole process, one nagging thought keeps re-entering your head:

This would make a fantastic movie!

But be careful what you wish for. Many book readers find they are dissatisfied with movie adaptations of their favorite books. Why? What tends to get lost in the transition from page to screen?

Generally, the missing pieces fall into three categories:

Length: Translating a 600-page novel into a 120-page screenplay automatically means that scenes will need to be cut. Some readers watch a movie adaptation only to find that their favorite scene is completely missing from the screen.

Theme: One of the benefits of reading is that it leaves itself open to many interpretations. Some readers walk away from a book with a profound message of life that they feel the movie just didn't convey because its interpretation was too strict.

Perspective: A book medium allows us into a character's head in a way a movie just can't. For that reason, watching a movie adaptation may leave us feeling hollow on some of the character perspectives.

So should books be adapted into movies at all? We still think it's worth a shot. Check out our next article on what advantages a movie has over a book. ■

What Do They Gain?

We've already talked about what we lose from books when we turn them into movies, and yet people continue to do it—why? Is it all a money-making conspiracy? A continuous stream of failed wishes?

We don't think so.

Here are just two benefits a movie adaptation can give a story over the book version.

Visual Splendor: Let's face it—who doesn't long to see a beloved book scene live and in color as a visual spectacle? One of my favorite book-to-movie adaptations is *Bridge to Terabithia*. I'm sure I wasn't alone in longing to see the magical, imagined land of Terabithia come to life, and the movie didn't disappoint.

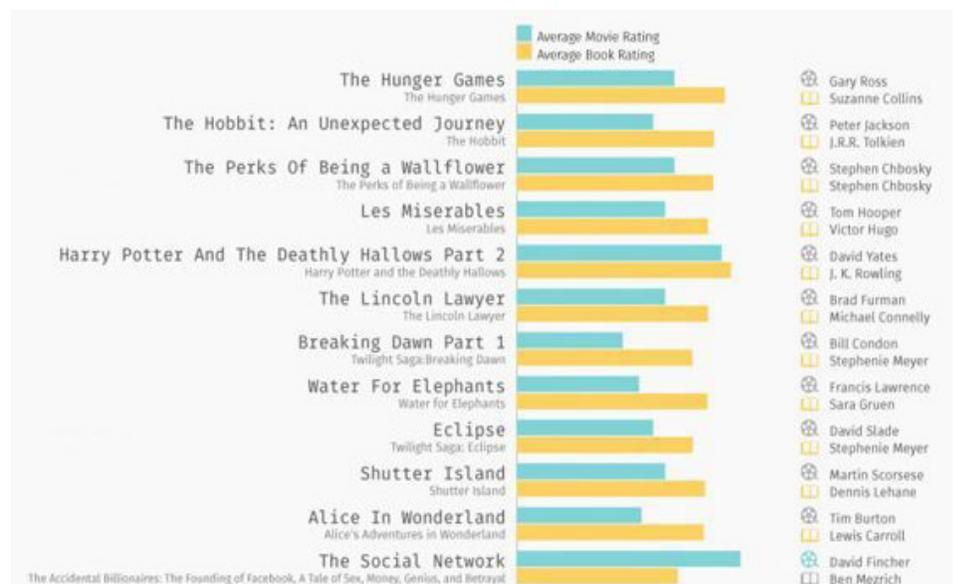
"...his vision allowed me to expand mine."

So are movie adaptations a bad idea? In our opinion, absolutely not; they can actually offer

stories certain things that books can't, just as books give an experience that is unlike a movie. Basically, the opinion here at Three Kids in a Closet is that movie adaptations offer one more beautiful way to experience a favorite story.

In our last newsletter article this month, we'll look at a case study to see this in action. ■

Adaptations: Book vs Movie Ratings



CASE STUDY: THE HUNGER GAMES

As long as we're talking about book-to-movie adaptations, it helps to pinpoint a specific example to look at. In this case study, we'll look at a book series that has already been made into successful movie adaptations and work backwards to see what makes them so successful.

According to Forbes, author Suzanne Collins made an estimated \$20 million from her three-book series *The Hunger Games*, and the four subsequent movies grossed over \$4.3 billion worldwide.

At a glance, we think it's safe to call this a successful book series that became an even more successful movie adaptation—so it's a good series to do a case study on to see what made the adaptations so good.

Here are the top two things we think the movies brought to life from the books:

"It's one thing to talk about children killing children—it's another to see it happening."

The setting: Suzanne Collins kickstarted a dystopian movement in young adult literature with her captivating-but-awful look into an imagined future of America. Describing the post-apocalyptic wasteland is one thing, but to see it live and in color on the big screen makes it seem like it truly is real. From the glitz and glamor of a Capitol party to the life-stealing mist swallow-

ing one of the Hunger Games's arenas, the movies breathe life into the setting of this series.

The horror: It's one thing to talk about children killing children—it's another to see it happening before your eyes. The movie adaptations of *The Hunger Games* series fully captured the horror of their tit-

ular "game," to the point that some people even complained it was too violent for the intended young-adult audience. The violence happened in the books, but it's close and uncomfortable on the screen—which made the movies all the more capable of eliciting an emotional response from the audience about the story's topic.

These are just two examples out of many that could have been responsible for the success of *The Hunger Games*. But if you're writing a book you hope to see adapted into a movie and you're wondering if it will go well (or if you're writing an adaptation from a book and you don't know what will help it succeed), we hope we've given you some things to think about. ■

Note: The below infographic contains information that was current only after the release of the first two movies in The Hunger Games series.

THE HUNGER GAMES



FOR EVERY HUNGER GAMES BOOK SOLD, **\$40** WAS SPENT ON THE MOVIES AT THE BOX OFFICE

HIGHEST GROSSING ACTION FILMS WITH A FEMALE LEAD

1. THE HUNGER GAMES: CATCHING FIRE
2. THE HUNGER GAMES

MOCKINGJAY IS THE FIRST OF THE SERIES TO BE SHOT **DIGITALLY**

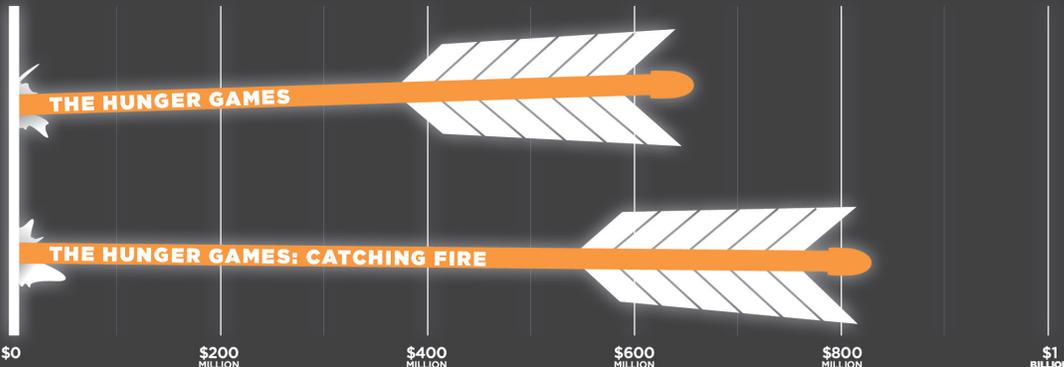
THE HUNGER GAMES FILMS ARE 2 OF ONLY 17 TO HAVE PASSED THE **\$400 MILLION MARK***

THE HUNGER GAMES

HIGHEST OPENING WEEKENDS WORLDWIDE:

1. U.S. & CANADA \$152+ MILLION
2. AUSTRALIA \$9+ MILLION
3. CHINA \$7+ MILLION

WORLDWIDE BOX OFFICE GROSS FOR THE HUNGER GAMES MOVIES



THE HUNGER GAMES: **CATCHING FIRE**

7TH ALL-TIME HIGHEST SINGLE DAY BOX OFFICE GROSS*

10TH HIGHEST GROSSING FILM IN NORTH AMERICA

50% OF ITS REVENUE MADE INTERNATIONALLY