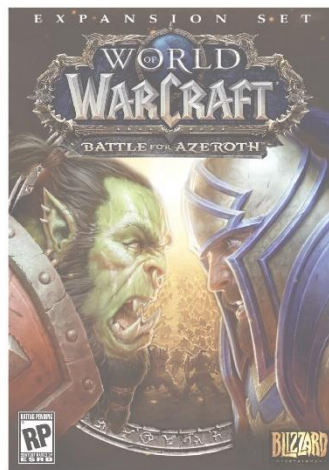
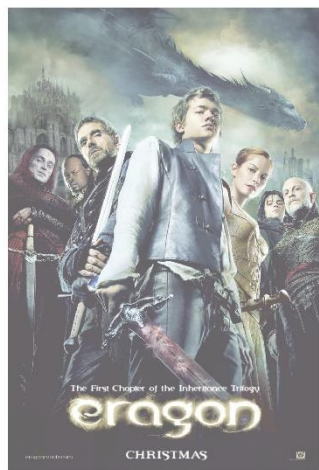
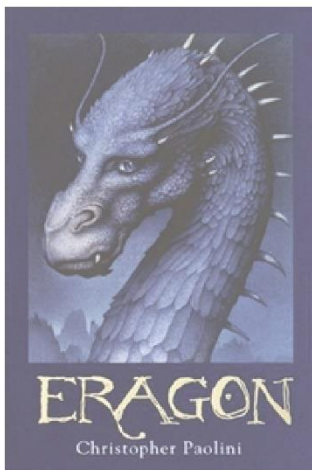
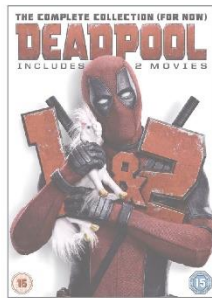
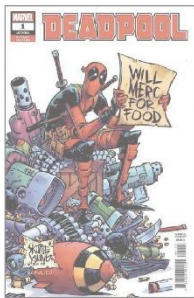
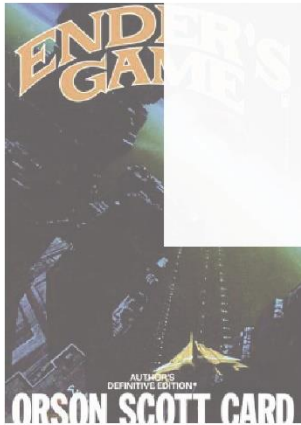


Aalborg University - English Master's Thesis

SUCCESSFUL ADAPTATIONS

A Study of an Adaptations' Success in the context of its Reception

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Abstract

The objective of this master's thesis is to analyse the variations of Stephen King's *The Mist* to uncover a method for evaluating an adaptation based on its reception and applying the conclusions of such an evaluation to reflect on other adaptations' success. The study met this objective through an analysis of the constitutional changes to the narrative's storytelling elements in the adaptation process. These changes were in turn compared to the other variations of *The Mist* to locate the abeyant elements, that affected the reception of the individual works. Consequently, the analysis found that *The Mist* novella and the film adaptation of *The Mist* were successful, while the television series was unsuccessful.

In attempting to analyse *The Mist*, it was relevant to draw on adaptation studies. A discourse on fidelity has dominated the field of adaptation studies for a long time, in which the original work is superior to the adaptations. This study attempts to challenge the notion of fidelity, which is an approach that other influential theorists within the field of adaptation studies share.

Linda Hutcheon has provided the theoretical framework of the analysis in her striking book, "A Theory of Adaptation". The analysis found that changes to a narrative's elements can have an impact on an adaptations' reception, both in positive and negative ways. Furthermore, these changes were found to be generalisable to other adaptations, to locate which potential changes to storytelling elements have affected the reception of those adaptations. In the discussion, the findings of the analysis were used to discuss the reception of other examples of adaptations based on their inherent changes to the narrative, and how those changes coincided with the changes to the different variations of *The Mist*.

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Introduction

In recent years, audiences of cinema and television have experienced an abundance of brand-new adaptations, based on famous novels written in the 20th century. Stephen King, a notorious horror writer, is just one among the many authors, who have had their unique narratives adapted to other mediums. A considerable number of King's most renowned novels have been adapted to the film medium, such as *The Dark Tower* (2017), *Stand by Me* (1986), *Shawshank Redemption* (1994), *The Green Mile* (1999), *The Shining* (1980), *The Mist* (2007, 2017) and *It* (1990, 2017).

The list seemingly continues of the favourably received adaptations. Similar examples of adaptations, based on famous novels, can be found in the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy from J. R. R. Tolkien, which was equally popular among audiences. Both *Lord of the Rings* and *Shawshank Redemption* received an overwhelmingly positive reception, and to this date, remain some of the most renowned and respected adaptations of literary works. Despite these two examples of hugely successful adaptations, there exists an abundance of similar adaptations of famous literary works, that have been unsuccessful in their reception. These unsuccessful adaptations have inevitably smitten the image of adaptations, which the field of adaptation studies even reflect, where the general discourse represents adaptations as derogatory, inferior works, to the original.

One of the most recent adaptations of Stephen King's novels is *The Mist* television series, which publicly announces itself as a "re-imagining of the original" (Appendix 1). Despite the allure of watching *The Mist* in a serial format, the adaptation was remarkably unsuccessful, to the point that it became cancelled after one season (McLennan, 2017). As a result, this study has chosen to use the variations of *The Mist* as examples of financially successful or unsuccessful adaptations. Before it is possible to discuss the success of a given narrative, such as *The Mist*, it is relevant to establish a term, that may be used to reference a relationship between a collection of texts, based on its shared unique idea and narrative. This study argues that a collection of these texts is an 'adaptation series', which includes the source material and its subsequent adaptations. This term is meant to include each work related to the specific narrative, which can, in turn, assist in proposing how individual narratives through achieving success can either survive or perish in contemporary society and culture.

Problem formulation

How might we evaluate the adaptation series of *The Mist* and to what extent are conclusions we might draw from that adaptation series generalisable?

Literature Review

For the last fifty years, fidelity discourse has dominated the field of adaptation studies. This derogatory discourse has operated as a method of assessing an adaptation's success, strictly in terms of its dedication to the original work, thus declaring the adaptation itself an inferior work to the original. Due to its prominence, the fidelity discourse is deeply rooted in adaptation studies and has limited the opportunities of what adaptation studies might uncover significantly.

In "*Beyond Fidelity*", Robert Stam writes extensively on the topic of fidelity, arguing that the notion of fidelity is problematic for several reasons and that it should not function as a methodological principle (Stam, p. 55). Stam (2000) argues that fidelity might be unachievable, as a shift from a "single-track medium" as a novel, to a "multitrack medium" as a film, inevitably means that it is impossible to maintain a literal fidelity to the source material (p. 56). The concept of fidelity assumes that "a novel contains an extractable essence [...] underneath the surface details of style" that could be transpositioned to another medium. Stam (2000) argues that there is no transferable core, as novels allow for a variety of readings, based on its "open structure" (p. 57). Besides, Stam challenges the notion of fidelity further by asking what specific elements an adaptation should stay faithful to in a narrative. Stam (2000) points out that the fidelity discourse in adaptation studies "reinscribe [a] axiomatic superiority of literary art to film", through three aspects. These are the medium's seniority, an inherent "iconophobia" (a notion that "visual arts are [...] inferior to the verbal arts") and a "logophilia" (in which texts are often valorised) (p. 58).

This study agrees with Stam's stance toward fidelity to an original novel that it is an unachievable goal that should not be the intention of adaptations. The shift from one medium to another invites a variety of new methods of expression, which inevitably affect the adaptation. In terms of Stam's argument that there does not exist an essential transferable core, this study partially agrees. While Stam's argument that the reading of a literary text can allow for a variety of readings, is arguably valid, this study argues that it is possible to transfer the narrative and its innate ideas to

new adaptations. Linda Hutcheon (2006), another theorist, also argues that the story is “the core of what is transposed across different media and genres” (p. 10).

In “*A Theory of Adaptation*”, Linda Hutcheon theorises about adaptations, to approach an analytical framework that can be applied to analyse a variety of aspects behind adapting. Through her book, Hutcheon (2006) “challenge(s) the denigration” of previous studies on adaptation, among which is the fidelity discourse (p. XIII). While presenting her analytical framework, she argues that there can exist many possible motivations behind adapting, other than just replicating a story. As she eloquently puts it, “adaptation is repetition, but repetition without replication” (Hutcheon, 2006, p. 7). Hutcheon (2006) points out that the focus of her book is not to make “extended case studies of specific adaptations”, as there exists a variety of excellent studies of cinematic adaptations of literary works (Hutcheon, p. XIII). The two most impactful are George Bluestone’s *Novels into Film* (1957) and Brian McFarlane’s *Novel to Film* (1996). Bluestone’s study focuses on the limitations of the two mediums and comparing the two, he eventually reaches the conclusion that the two mediums are incompatible, as they are mostly contrasting mediums (“A look into George Bluestone’s *Novels into Films*,” n.d.). McFarlane’s study focused instead on five specific literary film adaptations, and review how the transposition process has affected these texts (“*Novel to Film: An Introduction to the Theory of Adaptation*,” n.d.) These two previous studies share certain similarities with this particular study, as the limitations between the various mediums that are established and compared, similar to Bluestone’s study. Furthermore, this study’s focus rests on a unique adaptation series and how the transposition of the narrative has affected the adaptation, similar to McFarlane’s focus of the five texts. These two examples indicate that there have been similar studies in the past, with similar foci.

Hutcheon has also written another work with Gary Bortolotti, in which they further discuss the case of fidelity, along with an added topic, which is how stories adapt. In “*On the Origin of Adaptations: Rethinking Fidelity Discourse and "Success": Biologically*” Gary R. Bortolotti and Linda Hutcheon propose an innovative perspective on adaptations which is closely related to the Darwinian theory of adapting species. Through this comparison between a biological adaptation and a cultural adaptation, they uncover a unique axiom about stories, which is that they replicate and evolve with the changing environments, corresponding to how genes adapt (Hutcheon & Bortolotti, p. 444). Hutcheon and Bortolotti (2007) believe that, through this axiom of stories evolving and replicating, it is possible to dismiss the “theoretical impasse” that adaptation studies encountered in

the continuous sovereignty of fidelity discourse (p. 444). This precise axiom could potentially liberate adaptation studies and encourage a shift toward new potential discoveries and applications.

Hutcheon and Bortolotti reevaluate the previous assessment of adaptations through fidelity, toward new and innovative methods of conducting evaluations of an adaptation's success. For instance, by focusing on "lineages of descent" it is possible to uncover how narratives change over time, and if instead, the focus is primarily on the history of a specific narrative, it is possible to analyse and discuss the success of that particular narrative and its subsequent adaptations (Hutcheon & Bortolotti, 2007, p. 445). Success, in biological terms, is by no means judged in terms of fidelity to the 'original'; instead, biology celebrates "the diversity of life forms" and recognises that they share "a common origin" (Hutcheon & Bortolotti, 2007, p. 445). By moving past this negligible postulate posed by fidelity discourse, it becomes achievable to uncover approaches of considering cultural adaptation theory, and in extension, the significance of "certain narratives in a given culture" (Hutcheon & Bortolotti, 2007, p. 446).

Hutcheon and Bortolotti (2007) offer four additional juxtaposed methods of determining success. These approaches toward determining the success of an adaptation are "cultural impact" and "aesthetic value", "artistic merit" and "economic success" (p. 454). While the axiom provides the opportunity to determine the success of an adaptation through a variety of dimensions, these four approaches cover the universal methods of evaluating success. Ideally, these approaches should be used in conjunction to establish a complete understanding of an adaptation's success. Be that as it may, this field remains largely uncharted, with limited research on the topic, apart from Hutcheon and Bortolotti's works.

In "*Adaptation and Appropriation*", Julie Sanders (2006) has written on the topic of adaptations and appropriations, where she argues are both "sub-sections of the broader practice of intertextuality" (p. 2). Sanders' work contains a variety of references to previous works within the field of adaptation studies, yet the emphasis of Sanders' study lies on the functions of adaptations. Sanders' (2006) categorises adaptations as either a transposition, a commentary or an analogue (p. 20). A large portion of Sanders' study describes the terminology of adaptation studies that possess a broad variety of purposes. These terms include: "Version, variation, interpretation, continuation, transformation, imitation, pastiche, parody, forgery, travesty, transposition, revaluation, revision, rewriting, echo" (Sanders, 2006, p. 18). Additionally, Sander's (2006) argues that the readings of adaptations frequently celebrate the continuing interaction with other texts, which ultimately means

that “sequels, prequels, compression, and amplification” are essential at distinct times in the process of adaptation (p. 18).

Sander’s focus is rather narrow, in comparison to Hutcheon’s, yet the two authors both dispute the notion from fidelity discourse that adaptations are inferior to the original work. In contrast to Hutcheon, however, Sanders (2006) argues that adaptations are the process of complication through expansion rather than replication (p. 12). Sanders (2006) additionally points out, that adaptations aim to prolong the pleasure from the source material, which none of the other theorists’ dispute (p. 25). Finally, Sanders (2006) argues that adaptation studies should not focus on producing polarised judgements that evaluate adaptations (p. 20). In contrast, Hutcheon and Bortolotti argue through their axiom, in which stories function as adapting genes, which allow for evaluations on an adaptation’s success. While there is a difference between polarised judgements and evaluations, it is a relevant point to flag that these two theorists move in two different directions.

This study has chosen to apply the axiom offered by Hutcheon and Bortolotti, in which adaptations can be judged based on its success, in the form of either economic, artistic, aesthetic or cultural success. Although these four categories of success could be considered equally significant to grasp the success of an adaptation fully, this study intends to focus solely on the economic, or financial, aspect of an adaptation’s success, based on the reception it received from the audience. The three other aspects offered by Hutcheon and Bortolotti could uncover a variety of alternative findings, regarding how stories are replicated, selected, retold, and considered successful, that could potentially be essential to future adaptation studies.

This particular study emphasises on the approach that views the economic or financial success as a means of determining the success of an adaptation. Where other studies could focus on the supplementary approaches, this study aims to view adaptations through this particular lens. The emphasis of the study is, however, not only restricted to the economic success of an adaptation but instead highlights the critical connection between financial success and the reception of an adaptation. These two aspects are inextricably bound together, as the financial success of an adaptation relies on positive reception from the audience. Similar to Hutcheon’s standpoint, this study argues that stories, or more specifically narratives, inevitably adapt to contemporary societies and cultures to endure, and with that intention in mind, the reception of an adaptation is the essential element necessary to determine an adaptation’s financial success. Thus, the reception of an

adaptation is indicative of its success. Henceforth, ‘financial success’ references to an adaptation’s success based on its reception, and in extension, its ability to continue to survive in contemporary society.

Theory

This study aims to analyse the variations of *The Mist* to uncover any abeyant storytelling elements that could potentially affect an adaptation’s reception and success. The intention is to draw comparisons to similar adaptation series, based on the analysis of *The Mist*, to discuss how these significant changes to storytelling elements could be considered generalisable. Such an analysis could additionally clarify the reasons for the increase in adaptations in contemporary cinema and television. The subsequent section introduces the theories presented by Julie Sanders and Linda Hutcheon. While this study primarily draws upon Linda Hutcheon’s work on adaptation, Julie Sanders presents a few elements to analysing and understanding adaptation as well, which are crucial to the subsequent analysis and discussion.

Introduction to Julie Sanders: *Adaptation and Appropriation*

In her book “Adaptation and Appropriation”, Julie Sanders elucidates what particular elements constitute adaptations and appropriations, as well as the distinct differences between the two, in terms of functions and relationship to the source material.

Adaptation functions

Deborah Cartmell categorises adaptations into three major categories, which are “transposition, commentary, and analogue” (as cited in Sanders, 2006, p. 20). There are instances of other similar categorisations, but these are the primary ones that Sanders reinforces.

The first category that Cartmell proposes is a transposition of the narrative. This category contains a process of proximation, in which elements of the source text are relocated either generally, culturally, geographically or temporally (Sanders, 2006, p. 20). Gérard Genette describes the act of renewing particular elements of the source texts, in the adaptation, as a “movement of proximation” (as cited in Sanders, 2006, p. 20). Sanders exemplifies this through Shakespeare’s

original *Romeo and Juliet* and the 1996 adaptation from Baz Luhrmann, in which the traditional swords and rapiers were relocated into a modern-day handgun (as cited in Sanders, 2006, p. 20). The motive behind this act of transforming elements of the source text is purposely done to assist audiences in their “frame of reference in temporal, geographic, or social terms” (Sanders, 2006, p. 21).

The second category is commentary, and this occurs in the process where the adaptation shifts from being a proximation into something more culturally loaded, and through altering and adding different elements, this type of adaptation comments on the politics of the source text or *mise-en-scène*. For instance, the film version of Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*, displayed the witch Sycorax onscreen for the first time, as a comment on her previous “absence from the play” (Sanders, 2006, p. 22). The impact of such commentary arguably relies on the audience’s knowledge of the source text and their awareness of the inherent “explicit relationship to the source text” (Sanders, 2006, p. 22). As a means of providing some context for potential audiences, most formal adaptations choose to use the same title as the source text.

The third and final category is analogue, and it functions slightly differently than the previous two. Where transposition and commentary both display the adaptation’s intended purpose and relationship with the source text, the analogue may hide its relationship until the viewer realises the connection. Sanders (2006) argues that this type of adaptation could potentially “enrich and deepen our understanding of the new cultural product”, but, it poses a complex question of whether it is necessary to have pre-existing knowledge of the source text to experience the enriching effect, or if it will occur unaccompanied (p. 22).

Adaptations often function as a commentary on the source text by contributing a new perspective to the story. Frequently this commentary involves altering the characters and the narrative, by adding “hypothetical motivations” or giving voices to “the silenced or marginalised” (Sanders, 2006, p. 19). Some adaptations, however, function merely as a re-work, taking the source text and renewing it, making it relevant and comprehensible to newer audiences, by proximation and updating. In general, adaptation is a unique process that concerns a transition from one genre or medium to another. They are reinterpretations of a previously established text, in a new context, with potentially recent relocations in terms of the cultural and temporal setting. Furthermore, this relocation can, as previously mentioned, influence the original characters and narrative of the

source text. This type of transition can include a variety of shapes, such as “novels into films” (Sanders, 2006, p. 19).

Most studies on adaptation fixate on the significance of adapting or appropriating texts. Sanders (2006) makes the case that this type of study should not concentrate on identifying “good or bad adaptations”, as there are no clear margins for judging or categorising the texts into the two groups (p. 20). Fidelity to the source text, a point that many would apply to judge adaptations, is often counteractive since many of the creative acts that adaptation and appropriation offer, stem from the point of infidelity towards the source text. Therefore, adaptation studies’ focus is instead on analysing the “process, ideology, and methodology” of the new text, rather than merely attempting to make polarised judgements (Sanders, 2006, p. 20).

Pleasure of engaging with adaptations

Most debates on adaptations concern the general topic that adaptations either efface or consume their source text. John Ellis, argues that adaptations ultimately functions as a method of “prolonging the pleasure” that was attained by the source text, but that the adaptation trades the memory of the novel into a superficial one, that the adaptation consumes and contaminates the memory of the source text (as cited in Sanders, 2006, p. 25). Sanders disagrees with this statement and claims that the perseverance of the source text is crucial to the adaptation, as most of the pleasure derived by the reader or spectator stems in tracing the intertextual relationship between the two mediums. Sanders (2006) argues, that the crux of experiencing adaptations, comes from the interplay between expectation and surprise, as well as observing the similarities and differences from the source text to the various adaptations (p. 25).

Appropriation

There exists a crucial symbiotic bond between adapting and appropriating; one cannot exist without the other. Hutcheon (2006) argues that similar to classical imitation, the process of adapting a source text involves “making the adapted material one’s own”, which is arguably the aim of appropriation (p. 20). While adaptations usually inform audiences about their inherent relationship with a source text, appropriations proceed in a different direction toward a new “cultural product and domain” (Sanders, 2006, p. 26).

There are, however, several ways of appropriating, and Sanders (2006) divides these into two major categories: “embedded texts and sustained appropriations” (p. 26). The first category primarily consists of stage plays and film musicals, that are re-worked “canonical plays, poems, and novels” to fit into a new mode of engagement, that prioritises songs and dances to deliver narrative information. The second category, sustained appropriation, involves appropriations of a variety of texts, that can be described as “creative borrowings, citing allusions or redeployments”, which some argue are “plagiarism and inauthentic” (Sanders, 2006, p. 34).

Sanders (2006) argues that it is necessary to “view literary adaptation and appropriations” more positively, as works that create new “cultural and aesthetic” opportunities, which stand beside the various texts that have inspired it and enrich those texts (p. 26). Where adaptations signal their intertextual relationship to the source text, appropriations usually distance themselves from the informing source, into a “new cultural product and domain”. As a result, the appropriated text(s) are rarely acknowledged in the adaptive process (Sanders, 2006, p. 26).

Introduction to Linda Hutcheon: *A Theory of Adaptation*

Linda Hutcheon is a famous academic writer, who has written several influential books on topics such as “narrative self-consciousness, parody and irony” and later moved on to topics concerning postmodernism (“Linda Hutcheon,” n.d.). In her most recent book, *A Theory of Adaptation* (2006), Hutcheon confronts the widespread assumption that regards adaptations as inferior works. By theorising about adaptation, Hutcheon (2006) explores a variety of questions related to the topic of adapting from one medium to another, which primarily consist of “What? Who? Why? How? Where? When?” (p. VII). Through these questions, Hutcheon (2006) introduces a theoretical framework that can be applied to analyse and to achieve an understanding of the inner workings of adaptations “*as adaptations*”, the motivation or reasons behind adapting, and why adaptations are, in contrast to the general notion, “not derivative [or] second-rate” (p. 169).

Antecedent to introducing the full theoretical framework, and the accompanying theorising on adaptation provided by Hutcheon, the questions above concerning adaptation will be shortly described in the subsequent section, to clarify which aspects of adaptation each question encompasses.

What: This concerns the methods that various adaptations use to engage with its audience, and how each medium encompasses one of three degrees, or modes, of engaging with an audience (Hutcheon, 2006, p. XIV).

Who: The different limitations, advantages, and truisms of the various kinds of adaptations, as well as how each medium account for a variety of crucial storytelling elements (Hutcheon, 2006, p. XIV).

Why: The process of adapting and the personality of the adapter, which also includes concerns the economic, legal, pedagogical, political and personal reasons for adapting (Hutcheon, 2006, p.XV).

How: Experiencing adaptations and engaging with remediated stories in the three modes of engagement. Conjointly, the difference between “knowing” and “unknowing” audiences (Hutcheon, 2006, p. XV).

Where and When: The transculturation or indigenisation of stories across culture, language and history. How stories travel and how the meaning and impact of stories can transform correspondingly (Hutcheon, 2006, p. XVI).

Together, these questions encompass the basic structures necessary for an analysis of adaptation, while conjointly allowing for an acute analysis of the profound reasons behind adapting. By disregarding the economic reasons behind adapting as the sole impulse for the continuing trend, this framework allows for a deeper understanding of the distinct cause for the upsurge in contemporary adaptations.

Forms of adaptation

Adaptations appear in a plethora of peculiar forms, all of which have their unique storytelling strengths and weaknesses. Literature, cinema, opera, ballets, songs, these are simply some of the many different mediums that offer unique storytelling possibilities, and adapters can use them to “relate their stories in [...] different ways” (Hutcheon, 2006, p. 3). Regardless of the specific form, there are only three modes of engagement that the adaptation can express itself through which is either *telling*, *showing* or *interacting* (Hutcheon, 2006, p. 38-50). The latter mode of engagement, *interacting*, is not relevant to this study, as the focus remains on the novel and its subsequent adaptation to film and television series.

The telling mode is most commonly associated with literature and reading, as it *tells* its audience (or singular reader) a story, but it also contains songs. *Showing* a story is associated with the opera, theatre, ballet or cinema, as each of these examples of modes engages with an audience through aural and visual acts. Finally, *interacting* with a story is commonly found in video games, yet this mode is less relevant to this particular study. These forms are also visibly subject to hybridisation, with one excellent example being the theatre, which combines the telling aspects from literature with the showing aspect through dialogue and acting.

The modes of engagement are immersive, albeit they differ in degree and manner of engagement. For instance, the telling mode immerses its' readers by guiding their imagination, in a fictional world, through words. Oppositely, the showing mode immerses its' audience specifically through imagery and sound, in a similar manner to the Baroque art form *trompe l'oeil*. This art form focused on attempting to make art that appeared indistinguishable from reality: the showing mode aims to reflect reality, while the telling mode aims to involve reader imagination (Hutcheon, 2006, p. 22). This comparison indicates that while telling and showing modes both immerse their audiences; they accomplish this in two very distinct ways. Each mode includes an individual *specificity* (or *essence*), according to Hutcheon (2006), which ultimately means that these modes have at their disposal distinct means of expression, which allows each mode to achieve specific things better than others (p. 22).

While adaptations primarily deal with stories, it is essential to note that they do not consist of a "material means of transmission", or their fundamental rules, which means their choice of media or genre does not govern them. Instead, these means and rules allow them to communicate narrative meaning and expectations "*to someone in some context*", and as a result, they are created with that intention in mind "*by someone*" (Hutcheon, 2006, p. 26). Hutcheon (2006) argues that this implies that there is "a wider communicative context" that one should consider, and that this context shifts in correspondence with the given mode of engagement (p. 26). However, these media distinctions on their own are, according to Hutcheon (2006), not applicable in locating the success or failure of an adaptation (p. 26). These distinctions alternately assist in understanding the difference between engaging with the different media, from the private and individual experience to the public viewing of a dark theatre or cinema (Hutcheon, 2006, p. 27).

Adaptations as adaptations

Regarding analysing adaptations, Hutcheon (2006) begins by establishing that it is vital to understand and view adaptations *as adaptations* (p. XIV). Labelling a text as an adaptation is ultimately announcing its “overt relationship to another work or works”, which consequently makes adaptation studies hinged to comparative studies (Hutcheon, 2006, p. 6). Undeterred by this fact, Hutcheon (2006) insists that adaptations are not autonomous works, instead, adaptations maintain an individual aura and a unique presence in “time and space”, and that adaptations should be treated a *text*, to use Roland Barthes term for a “plural stereophony of echoes, citations, references” (p. 6). Only by viewing adaptations in relation to their counterparts (original or other adaptations) as “double- or multi-laminated works” can they be theorised *as adaptations* (Hutcheon, 2006, p. 6).

Hutcheon defines the phenomenon of adaptation through three “interrelated perspectives”, that refer both to the process of adapting and the adaptation as the product.

A formal entity or product: through this perspective, adaptations are “extensive transpositions” of one or several works. In the “transcoding” process of the adaptation, a change in medium, genre or frame can occur, which means that the context of the source work can change, to tell the story from a different perspective, which in turn can offer a new interpretation. Transposition is not limited to changes of medium, genre or frame, but can also function as a shift “from real to fictional, historical account or biography to fictionalised narrative or drama”. This transition, whether from one medium to a new one, is called “reformatting”, which according to Stam, always involves both “gains and losses” (Hutcheon, 2006, p. 16) (Stam, 2000, p. 62).

A process of creation: Adaptation involves re-interpretation and re-creation, which involves appropriating and salvaging from the source material. Adapters can be motivated to preserve stories and creatively reanimate them. Hutcheon uses African film adaptations of traditional oral legends as an example for this practice.

A process of reception: Adaptation is a form of intertextuality, as has already been established through Sanders. Hutcheon (2006) argues that audiences “experience adaptations (as adaptations) as palimpsests”, meaning that memories of previous work that “resonate through repetition with variation” as a referential framework (p. 8). Michael Alexander’s term “palimpsestuous” is fittingly used in this context to describe how adapted texts can perpetually haunt by their source texts (as cited in Hutcheon, 2006, p. 6). The analogy of palimpsest functions as an analogy for how the same piece of parchment can contain both an original text and an adaptation, where it is possible to

recognise the original through the adaptation.

To summarise, Hutcheon (2006) describes adaptations as; “acknowledged transposition of a recognisable work”, “a creative and interpretive act of appropriation/salvaging”, and “an extended intertextual engagement with the adapted work” (p. 8). Thus, adaptation is not veritably derivative, but rather that adaptation is, in Hutcheon’s own words, “the double process of interpreting and creating something new” based on the source text (Hutcheon, 2006, p. 20).

Content and Form

When discussing adaptations, it is essential to consider two aspects: the content (ideas) and the form (expression). According to Kamilla Elliott, adaptation has a unique ability to separate form from content (Hutcheon, 2006, p. 9). As a result, adapters can alter the form of the source material while maintaining the content (Hutcheon, 2006, p. 10). The alterations in adaptations are frequently related to the story, yet several storytelling elements can be changed or altered in an adaptation. The story becomes transposed through the three modes of engagement.

Adaptations often focus on making or finding “equivalences” that can correspond to the previous narrative elements of the source story. When adapting a novel to the cinema, the adapters must consider potential equivalences for elements such as “themes, events, world, characters, story units and closings” (Hutcheon, 2006, p. 10). The issue, which Millicent Marcus explains, is that there are two “opposing theoretical schools of thought” (as cited in Hutcheon, 2006, p. 10). The first argues that the story can be regarded “independently of any embodiment in any particular signifying system”, while the second school of thought argues that the story is inseparable from its “mode of mediation” (as cited in Hutcheon, 2006, p. 10). Audiences unknowingly accept the last statement, as they experience a story through a material form, yet for adapters and theorists, it is necessary to separate the integral elements of the story to analyse and theorise on the various constraints and advantages of different media (Hutcheon, 2006, p. 10).

Of all the various narrative elements that require equivalences, themes are the easiest to adapt across media, genre or “framing context”. Although themes are more crucial for novels and plays compared to television and films, they must always serve the function of assisting the story, by “reinforcing or dimensionalising it”, since the storyline is the most crucial element in both television and films. (Hutcheon, 2006, p. 11).

Characters are another storytelling element that can be transported rather quickly from one text, or one medium, to another. Adaptors often change the characters to fit into contemporary societies and cultures, and there are examples where characters are changed to varying degrees, for instance, to include specific minorities. According to Murray Smith (1995), characters are essential to the “rhetorical and aesthetical effects of narrative and performance texts”, since characters engage the audience’s imaginations, through the structure of sympathy (Smith, 1995, p. 105). This structure is based on the three concepts of recognition, alignment, and allegiance, which can be applied to analyse how a story presents a character and how that affects the relationship between the character and the viewer as a result.

Another essential element is the distinct units of the story, most directly through a reordering of the plot. Pacing can also be affected through compressing or expanding time. Focalisation or point of view can change, in order to lead to new perspectives and aspects of the previous story.

Finally, there are cases in which the adaptation transfigures the closing of a narrative (Hutcheon, 2006, p. 12). This aspect is often changed in adaptations to break audience expectations or to offer a different ending to the story.

It is crucial to consider how different media adapt these elements. In the first mode of engagement, telling a story consists of describing, explaining, summarising and expanding, usually through a narrator who possesses a unique point of view and an ability to travel through time, space, and into the minds of various characters. In the second mode, performing, showing a story requires a direct aural and visual performance (Hutcheon, 2006, p. 13).

Knowing and Unknowing audiences

It is essential to differentiate between the two types of audiences or spectators that an adaptation can have. Hutcheon (2006) describes spectators of an adaptation, who have a pre-established knowledge of the source work and understand the relationship between the two works, as a *knowing* audience (p. 120). *Knowing* audiences experience the adaptation *as an adaptation* and engage in a continuous “dialogical process” that directs attention toward comparing the two works (Hutcheon, 2006, p. 21) (Stam, 2000, p. 64). Hutcheon (2006) argues that by stressing this relation between individual works, several theories have challenged the notions of “originality, uniqueness and autonomy”

which have dominated the discourse concerning adaptations in a negative fashion (p. 21). However, Hutcheon adds that this functions primarily to recognisable texts, where audiences have become familiar with the different variations of the adaptations. One such example is related to how most contemporary vampire movies can be considered adaptations of Bram Stoker's novel (Hutcheon, 2006, p. 21). These adaptations that audiences are familiar with become labelled as "multi-laminated", which indicates their open and direct relationship to the previous recognisable works (Hutcheon, 2006, p. 21). This connection is part of the formal identity and the hermeneutic identity of the adaptations (Hutcheon, 2006, p. 21).

Pleasure of adaptations

Hutcheon introduces a few concepts that are crucial to understanding the pleasure of engaging with remediated texts, or adaptations. All of these concepts are ultimately and inextricably connected to a "desire to repeat particular acts of consumption within a form of representation", that discourages mere repetition (Hutcheon, 2006, p. 5). These are "repetition with variation", "recognition and remembrance" and "change" (Hutcheon, 2006, p. 21). In other words, what audiences desire from an adaptation is a repetition of the previous work, with a significant variation. Audiences can then engage with the adaptations in manner, where their recognition and remembrance of the source work is tested and applied to the internal comparative analysis of the two texts. Change is necessary for adaptations not to be labelled as mere 'remakes' of previous texts, and knowing audiences are keen on spotting inevitable changes in the story, characters, settings, and dialogue. Focusing on these internal changes essentially allows for deeper immersion with the story, and, in extension, a more in-depth viewing experience. As Hutcheon (2006) specifies, the inherent pleasure and frustration audiences experience when engaging with an adaptation stems from the familiarity of "repetition and memory" (p. 21).

Reasons for adapting

Hutcheon presents throughout her book a variety of reasons for adapting a story, from the adaptor's perspective. These reasons can range from personal to political, economic, legal, or pedagogical, depending on the intended message of the adaptation (Hutcheon, 2006, p. XV). While some would argue that adaptations are created rather effortlessly, as the source material is already established and known by audiences, the opposite is equally valid. Successful adaptations rely on being able to

relay the story of the source material to new audiences, which inevitably implies that a straightforward transposition of every storytelling element from one medium to another, does not result in a successful adaptation.

Adaptors face a variety of difficulties when adapting a story. For one, the adaptors must consider the difference between mediums, their strengths and weaknesses, and how that can influence the story. Furthermore, when adapting from a private medium to a public medium, such as from novel to film, it requires a simplification or compression of the story, as the medium of the novella allows for a more profound commitment to the story, in the details that can be described. The film adaptation must then inevitably establish equivalents to the storytelling elements of the prior text, which often proves difficult to adaptors. Meanwhile, adaptors need to balance the story, so that it can fit into the new medium, without omitting indispensable storytelling elements. This balancing act is essential, as the success of an adaptation relies on its audiences, and if they are unsatisfied with the creative choices that adaptors have made to the story, audiences will inevitably forget the adaptation. Adaptors similarly face the issue of remaining devoted to the source material and fans of the franchise, as these two aspects require a level of respect that limits the creativity and possibilities of the adaptation. While some would argue that it is essential to remain faithful to the source material, Sanders argued that creativity often flourishes when fidelity to the original is marginalised (Sanders, 2006, p. 17).

Hutcheon's Approach

The perspective Hutcheon (2006) offers, in which adaptation is granted a double definition that describes adaptations as both a product and a process, addresses “the various dimensions of the broader phenomenon of adaptation” (p. 22). By fixating on the three modes of engagement, Hutcheon (2006) believes that it is possible to locate “certain precisions and distinctions”, which can be used to create linkages across media, that in turn, puts the *process* of adaptation into perspective (p. 27). Engaging with stories occurs in time and space, in a specific society and culture, and as a result, “the contexts of creation and reception” become equally “material, public and economic”, as they are “cultural, personal and aesthetic” (Hutcheon, 2006, p. 28). When adaptors create extensive changes to a story's context, it dramatically affects the interpretation of the transposed story, both ideologically and literally (Hutcheon, 2006, p. 28). Along with the response they receive, these particular changes to the story can substantially reveal the contexts of reception

and production: even small changes that affect a stories' time frame can reveal the time of the adaptations' creation and its reception.

Through this specific focus, Hutcheon (2006) discovers that adaptations function very similarly to genetic adaptations in Darwin's theory of evolution (31). A story's "narrative adaptation" proves that a "mutation or adjustment" has occurred, in order to adapt the story to a specific or contemporary cultural environment (as cited in Hutcheon, 2006, p. 31). To support this claim, Hutcheon references Richard Dawkins, who had argued that there exists a "cultural parallel" to Darwin's theory: "Cultural transmission is analogous to genetic transmission" because it can advance "a form of evolution" (as cited in Hutcheon, 2006, p. 31). Dawkins argues that "language, fashion, technology and art" all evolve through a process that can be regarded as a "highly sped up genetic evolution" (as cited in Hutcheon, 2006, p. 31). This argument can be extended to stories and adaptations as they evolve similarly.

Furthermore, Dawkins posits a parallel to "genes", called "memes", that function as "cultural transmissions or units of imitation", yet when these "memes" are transmitted, they are continuously subject to changes in order to adapt to the current environment (as cited in Hutcheon, 2006, p. 32). Stories function similarly, according to Hutcheon (2006), as both are essentially *ideas*, some of which are more apt at surviving or reproducing in any given culture (p. 32). Stories adapt to the culture and environment they exist in, yet some stories have more "stability and penetrance" in the given environment, according to Dawkins (as cited in Hutcheon, 2006, p. 32). They adapt through adaptations, and in doing so, the strongest stories thrive.

The Ten Secrets of Adapting from Deborah Cartmell

In "*A Companion to Literature, Film, and Adaptations*" Deborah Cartmell (2012) writes an introduction that concentrates on the journey that adaptation has undergone through the past 100 years (p. 1-14). This introduction describes a journey from ancient Greece, where memory was 'adapted' to writing, which later led to the adaptation of novels and theatre plays to the cinema in the early 1900s (Cartmell, 2012, p. 1-14). In Cartmell's introduction, she presents ten "secrets" from Andrew Davies, who is a well-known adapter that has achieved fame through his adaptations. These secrets are as following:

"1. Read the book"

- “2. Ask yourself: why this book, and why now?”
- “3. Ask yourself: whose story is this?”
- “4. Do not be afraid to change things, especially openings.”
- “5. Do not start without a plan.”
- “6. Never use a line of dialogue if you can achieve the effect with a look.”
- “7. Crystallise dialogue to its essence.”
- “8. Write scenes that are not in the book.”
- “9. Avoid voice-over, flashbacks, and characters talking directly to [the] camera.”
- “10. Break [the] rules [only] when it feels like the right thing to do.” (Cartmell, 2012, p. 8).

These secrets should be considered as guidelines for adapters, as they can assist in finding the intention behind adapting a story, how to proceed, and what not to do. However, while these secrets are not relevant to the analysis of the particular adaptations, it can prove relevant to the discussion, as they function as essential focus points for potential adapters.

Methodology

This study predominantly employs the theoretical framework presented by Linda Hutcheon in her book, *A Theory of Adaptation*. As supplementary to Hutcheon's framework, the study additionally uses the information offered by Julie Sander's in her book, "*Adaptation and Appropriation*", which concentrates on the difference between adapting and appropriation, as well as uncovering some of the terminology and theories related to the practice. By applying the approach of adaptation studies, this particular study will attempt to examine which potential abeyant elements affect the reception and the financial success of an adaptation.

The approach used to analyse *The Mist* as an adaptation series based on the theoretical framework offered by Hutcheon. The framework is used to comparatively analyse the three variations of *The Mist*, which is the novel, the film adaptation, and the recent television series adaptation, to uncover the changes to certain storytelling elements in the different narratives. These changes to storytelling elements are essential in understanding the reception and the financial success of the particular adaptation. The analysis uses on Linda Hutcheon's approach, which is presented in the 'Theory' section to locate the changes to the adaptation's storytelling elements. Hutcheon's book offers a variety of points of analysis, which the analysis applies to the three variations of *The Mist*. This analysis will, in turn, assists in understanding the choices behind the changes to the narrative, and the adaptor's reason for adapting the narrative. In order to successfully use *The Mist* as an example of how a story is adapted and how the changes that occur during the adaptation process affect the reception, it is vital to have a comparative analysis of the three variations of *The Mist* for reference. Thus, the focus of the analysis is on how the adaptation process has transformed specific storytelling elements of the narrative.

The analysis consistently presents the elements source novel first, as it is the bases for the newer adaptations, before presenting the elements of the film and television series. Moreover, the analysis separates these various points of analysis into subchapters, which each focus on a different analytical aspect that highlights any abeyant aspects of adaptations that influence the reception. The analysis section begins by presenting the reception of three variations in *The Mist* adaptation series, based on the audience and critic reviews and ratings gathered from IMDb and Rottentomatoes. Afterwards, the questions posed by Hutcheon (2006), regarding "What, Who, Why, How, Where and When", are put into focus (p. XIV). These questions reveal the essential differences between the variations of *The Mist*, in terms of their mode of engagement, these modes

limits and restrictions, the reasons for adapting, how audiences engage with adaptations and the cultural context of the adaptation. When these have been established and analysed, the analysis shifts focus to the separate changes to specific storytelling elements of the narrative, through the elements of characters, point of view, themes, story units, closing, and events. The analysis ends with a summary of the essential findings in terms of the different variations' financial success, which will function as a basis for a discussion on whether these specific changes could be generalisable to other similar adaptation series and their financial success, based on their receptions. The analysis will, finally, gradually compare the changes to the storytelling elements in the different variations of *The Mist*, and how that has affected the overall reception of the adaptations.

Delimitation

As previously noted, this particular study intends to focus on the economic success of an adaptation based on the reception, which ultimately entails that the three other measurements of success, offered by Hutcheon and Bortolotti, are excluded. Albeit, this study does not consider the income of the adaptation as a basis for determining its success; instead, it relies on reviews and ratings from audiences and critics, to determine the success of an adaptation. This study's thesis is that an adaptation is financially successful if it has been well-received in terms of reviews and ratings, as it allows for further engagement with the narrative from the audience, which may generate subsequent adaptations to new media and establish a basis for future potential economic success.

Many cases suggest this to be accurate, as the narratives of well-received and critically acclaimed adaptations are often in demand and further adapted to separate modes of engagement. Nevertheless, there are instances where an adaptation was well-received yet failed at the box office, which indicates another factor of success that is equally vital to this study. The intention of an adaptation should be to relay the narrative in a manner that correspondingly allows the narrative to spread to new audiences and resonate with the contemporary culture and society it belongs in. If the adaptation succeeds at reaching and resonating with new audiences, there is potential for a closer commitment to the adaptation in a variety of forms and a desire from the audience for more subsequent adaptations or spin-offs. Thus, the narrative of the adaptation series survives.

As a final note, interactivity in the three modes of engagement is excluded from this study as it concerns video game adaptations through the intricate method of having players interact with a narrative. The interacting element is not present within the telling and showing modes of

engagement, apart from specific hybridisations. The telling and showing modes are the two primary modes of engagement that the thesis concentrates on in the adaptation series of *The Mist*.

Furthermore, the thesis does not incorporate to the source material of some of the adaptation series in the discussion, for instance, the comic books for *X-Men*, due to the vast number of issues that exist. While these could have proven relevant in determining an overall adaptation series financial success, the intention of this thesis is focuses on the adaptation's success and how the elements that affect their success can be generalised to other adaptations.

Analysis

The subsequent section applies the terms presented by Hutcheon and Sanders to analyse the relationship between the various adaptations of Stephen King's *The Mist*. Leading into the analysis is a summary of the novel, its fundamental ideas, and content, which prove relevant in understanding the changes to the individual storytelling elements. The analysis commences by establishing the reception of each of the texts in *The Mist* adaptation series to identify which texts were financial successes. This analysis relies on reviews and ratings from IMDb and Rottentomatoes to establish the different variations' financial success.

Subsequently, the analysis focuses on the change to *The Mist* as a story throughout the years, in order to adapt to contemporary audiences and society. These sections focus on the questions offered by Hutcheon (2006) labelled "What, Who, Why, How, Where and When", that each deal with a different aspect of adaptation, which was presented in the Theory section (p. XIV). For convenience, the first sentence of each section recaps what the question analyses.

Finally, the analysis will function as the basis for a further discussion on what constitutes successful adaptations, where the variations of *The Mist* function as examples of both successful and unsuccessful adaptations. In turn, *The Mist* adaptation series can be compared to other similar adaptation series to locate potential similarities that have affected the adaptation's reception and financial success.

The Mist

The narrative of the novel begins with the main character, David Drayton, and his family, who are living in the small town of Bridgton in Maine. In the aftermath of a thunderstorm, David notices a white mist on the horizon and is perplexed at its nature. Shrugging it off as a side-effect of the current heatwaves and thunderstorms, David and his son Billy head into the nearest town for supplies. When they arrive at the supermarket, they find a lot of other people who have come to stock up before any more storms, including a certain Mrs Carmody, whom David despises. In the supermarket, David, Billy, and Norton stand in line at the check-out, when suddenly, a man comes running in and screaming about something in the mist. Then, the mist sweeps in, imprisoning them all in the supermarket.

Some time passes before the generator stops working. David goes to check on it when he hears a slithering sound as something pushes up against the loading door. He shambles out through the darkness of the generator room and finds some of the workers in the supermarket, who disregard his warnings of something in the mist. One of them decides to go outside and check on the generator, yet when the loading door opens, tentacles emerge and grab him. David and the survivors close the door and leave the generator alone. As they leave the room, they begin discussing how to inform the other survivors in the supermarket of the thing they saw.

Unfortunately, when David attempts to convince Norton, he draws the attention of the rest of the survivors. David and the other workers attempt to explain what they experienced, which Norton refuses to believe in, while Mrs Carmody attempts to convince them that the mist is a punishment from God, and slowly, the survivors in the supermarket become divided into smaller factions. Not long after, Norton decides to lead some of the survivors, who refuses to believe that the mist is dangerous, into the mist. Through her constant preaches of biblical prophecies of the end times, Mrs Carmody gradually gains more and more followers, while David and the other survivors attempt to steer clear. When night comes, mutated insects appear on the windows on the front of the supermarket, and when some enter, panic ensues. The next day, David and a few survivors attempt to traverse the mist to the pharmacy next door, to get medicine for those who were injured. The trip turned out disastrous, as giant spiders roamed in the pharmacy, and David and a few of the remaining survivors barely make it back to the supermarket.

The situation escalates when Mrs Carmody has recruited the majority of the supermarket and begin demanding blood sacrifices to appease the mist. David, Billy and a few other survivors are able to defend themselves and escape the supermarket, get in a vehicle and drive off. The novel ends as the survivors continue driving into the mist, hoping that somewhere, it might end.

Reception

In order to be able to evaluate the two variations of The Mist adaptation series conclusively, it is necessary to analyse the reception that the individual works have received. The subsequent section will analyse the reception of the novel, the film adaptation, and the television series adaptation independently, based on a few hand-picked reviews that illustrate the advantages and disadvantages of each work. The film and television series reception are based on ratings from IMDB, along with

reviews from Metacritic and Rotten Tomatoes. All of the reviews can be seen in the corresponding appendices (2-4).

According to Goodreads.com, *The Mist* novel is rated 3.94 out of a 5-star rating, with more than 99.000 ratings in total, 32% of which rated it with five stars (“The Mist by Stephen King,” n.d.). These reviews on *The Mist* are written by individuals who have read the book and are critical to understanding the positive and negative elements of the novel.

A majority of the novel’s reviews relay a distinct quality of King’s novel, which is its supreme flow. Even some of the reviews that rated the novel lower had to agree that the novel instantly grabs the attention of its readers and allows an uninterrupted reading, where the novel does not let go of its readers before the conclusion. The conclusion was compared to the film, where several reviewers agreed that the film ending was superior to the novel, which was described as “amazing and mind boggling” (Appendix 2, Samir Nammoor’s review). In terms of the characters, the reviews ranged widely. Many of the positive reviews pointed out a desire to choke some of the characters – Mrs Carmody in particular. One of King’s strengths as a writer is that he can create relatable characters over a short duration, which is indicated through Mrs Carmody. However, many negative reviews pointed out how David, as the main character, was quite shallow and uninteresting.

According to IMDb, Frank Darabont’s *The Mist* is rated as 7,2 stars out of 10, with 250.000 ratings in total, 9,9% of which rated it with 10 stars (“The Mist 2007,” n.d.). On Rotten Tomatoes, *The Mist* received a 72% approval rating from critics, based on 142 reviews, and with a 65% approval rating from audiences, based on 198,000 individual reviews (“The Mist,” n.d.).

The Mist’s reviews varied widely, both in terms of the critics and audiences, where some praised it, while others criticised it. Nevertheless, most of the reviews argued that it was a solid adaptation of Stephen King’s novel. On the other hand, the primary issues that other reviewers thought it could have improved on, consisted of changes to the cast, the overall story and the CGI of the creatures. While opinions are somewhat varied, the film adaptation is in general praised for its nihilistic and unexpected ending. Furthermore, the actress playing Mrs Carmody (Marcia Gay Harden) was in several reviews praised for her excellent performance of a radical fanatic, which some argued was the sole reason for watching the film.

Christian Torpe's *The Mist* television series adaptation has on IMDb received 5,4 stars out of 10, with a sincere 18,000 ratings in total, where the majority of ratings gave it 6 and 7 stars with 15,5% and 15,7% ("The Mist 2017 User Ratings", n.d.). Rotten Tomatoes similarly shows an approval rating of 62% from critics, and a 49% approval rating from the audience, where the average rating was 5,72 and 3/5 individually ("The Mist: Season 1," n.d.).

The reviews regarding the television series were mostly negative, most of which pointed to the unsympathetic and undeveloped, clichéd characters. Critics and audiences alike had a particular enmity toward the series, based on a variety of issues. Some of them pointed out the predictable and bland script with plenty of plot holes, that focused mainly on contemporary social issues. These issues were used, some argue, to make the source material appear modern, yet many argued that it consequently 'missed the point' of Stephen King's novel. Compared to Frank Darabont's film adaptation, many reviewers argued that it did not live up to the expectations, that the previous adaptation had brought.

In conclusion, the individual work that received the most praise in terms of reviews was the source novel by Stephen King. While the reviews varied based on a variety of separate topics, the majority thought it was a well-written novel, that fans of horror and Lovecraftian literature would enjoy. The reviews of the novel was largely compared to the film adaptation from Frank Darabont, where a majority argued that the film's ending was superior to the novel (Appendix 2). Similarly, the film's Lovecraftian atmosphere was praised, despite the resentment of the dated CGI monsters of the mist. The television series from Christian Torpe was rated the lowest, with several critiques of its creative choices in the process of reimagining Stephen King's horror story.

Medium

The Mist as an adaptation series contains three different variations; the novel, the film, and the television series. Before one can begin comparatively analysing the different variations of *The Mist*, it is vital to consider the *content* and the *form* of the source text. Stephen King initially published *The Mist* as a novel in 1980, which arguably grants it the status of being the source text, as it is the first work that presents the readers to this particular *content*, or more specifically, this *idea*. While the novel could contain intertextual references or have been inspired by other works, it does not

present such an open relationship with another text to its readers, which means that it cannot be viewed as an adaptation through Hutcheon's terms. Furthermore, the novel functioned as the source text for the subsequent adaptations, which marks its' status as the source text of the adaptation series.

The film adaptation functions as a "transposition", as the story is transpositioned from one medium to another, with a few alterations to the storytelling elements. However, this description is rather vague, as there exist elements within the film that function as "commentary" on the source material and contemporary society. The television series functions similarly as a transposition, as it involves the transpositioning of the content of the novel to a serial format, but it conspicuously comments on both of the previous texts, due to their inherent similarities. The primary discrepancy between the three forms of expressing the content is that while the film adaptation aims to walk on a thin line of incorporating a sense of fidelity to the source material, while creatively altering some narrative elements to explore new options. Oppositely, the television series instead salvages content from the source material and adapts it, in an attempt to create a new story. As a result, the content of the television series is not Stephen King's content, but rather Christian Torpe's appropriated content. While this could spark many debates on topics of originality, it is vital to retain that the series advertises itself as a "reimagining" of the previous text (Appendix 1). By doing so, the adapter of the television series openly admits that the story is not the same as the film or the novel: it only contains traces of those previous stories. Besides, the series benefits from King's novel, as he is considered an original and well-known author. Thus, the television series functions as a palimpsest of the source material and the film adaptation, where the elements of both previous texts can yet be detected.

The mediums that the different variations of *The Mist* exist in, all contain various degrees of immersion. For instance, the novel immerses its readers into the story through either several sessions varying in length or one full reading, in which the reader commits their attention and imagination to the story that is told. In general, readers immerse through the narrator, the internal and external dialogue, actions, and most notably, the interiority of the characters. One of Stephen King's strengths is creating lovable or despicable characters, which is the primary method of immersion in his novels, and as a result, the readers of King's novels usually establish relationships to the characters. Films and other similar showing modes of engagement have certain limitations, yet it merely implies that audiences experience a different kind of immersion through

these media. Audiences immerse with the story of the film through the aural and visual acts that are shown.

Similarly, audiences immerse with the story of the television series through the accumulative knowledge that is parsed out over time. These two media forms share a critical element, that is essential to audiences' immersion with the story, which is characters. Audiences of the showing mode of engagement experience an immersion through the portrayed characters of the story, the situations they experience and their displayed emotions. As Murray Smith points out in his book, characters are vital to evoke an emotional response in spectators, and thus, through evoking emotions, they assist in conjuring an immersion with the story (Smith, 1995: 56). Ultimately, there is an essential difference between these two modes of engagement, where the audience can connect with the characters of the stories in two different manners: in the novel, interiority allows audiences to relate to the characters, where the film and television series, elicits a relation to its characters through their displayed exteriority, actions, and dialogue.

The Question of What

This section analyses the methods that the variations of *The Mist* uses to engage with its audience, specifically through the three modes of engagement.

The novel engages with its readers through the first mode of engagement, the *telling* mode. Telling a story through the *form* of a novel has several benefits to its readers, the most prominent being that it urges readers to use their imagination to depict the various events and elements of the story. The novel engages its audience through David's perspective: readers follow his journey from the beginning to the end, and through this focalisation, they are being told the story. Narrative questions do arise throughout the novel, mostly through foreshadowing of future events, such as how the mist is shown in David's dreams (King, 1980, p. 4), David's longing for Amanda (King, 1980, p. 89), and the danger that Mrs Carmody represents (King, 1980, p. 85). This method of foreshadowing engages audiences in a manner that allows them to hypothesise on future events and how that affects the story. When the events then occur, they are either satisfied with their estimates or surprised by the outcome; in film terms, this functions as a 'set up' for the audience with a potential 'pay off'. Another relevant note is that this mode of engagement contains a sense of interactivity through the readers' imagining act of depicting the story while it is being told. The

readers can create their images of the characters, their inherent voices and the locations the story is located in, which affects how the individual reader understands the events of the novel.

When the story of the novel was adapted to a film, it marked the transposition of the stories' content from the telling mode of engagement, inherent in the novel, to the *showing* mode of engagement of the cinema. This transition is from the private, individual and imaginative aspects of the novel to the public, aural and visual acts of the cinema. The adaptation openly declares its relationship to the novel by being named directly after its predecessor. Furthermore, on both the DVD-cover and the movie posters that the film adaptation sparked, it states "Stephen King's Legendary Tale of Terror", along with the tagline "Fear Changes Everything" (Appendix 1). This tagline indicates that not only that it is an adaptation and should in extension be viewed as an adaptation. The adaptation advertises itself as the *exact* story that Stephen King relayed in the novel: The content of the tale transpositioned from the form of a novella to the film medium's form. The film engages with the content of the source novel by compressing the story of the novella to fit into the film's running time of two hours ("The Mist (2007)," n.d.). Audiences of the film adaptation engage with the events and characters that they perceive during the film. Where the focalisation in the novel was on David's point of view, the film assumes the freedom to explore the setting of the story, i.e. the supermarket, and glance at the other survivors. The film accomplishes this feat while still retaining some sense of the previous focalisation since David functions as the main character of the film.

The television series is in the same mode of engagement as the film, yet they differ excessively in their form: their manner of *expressing* the story. The television series expands upon the same content of the source material, and in extension, the intention of the series is aimed towards prolonging the pleasure of the source text: the audience receives an extended engagement to the story and the central idea than the previous novel and film allowed. The film functions as both a re-visitation and a re-work, with minor changes to the storytelling elements, while the series functions as a reimagination of the source material. The serial adaptation engages with the source content of the novel in an opposite manner to the film adaptation, by expanding on the duration of the story to span over an extended period of episodic chapters, with each one running for approximately 40 minutes ("The Mist (2007)," n.d.). Additionally, the series also expands on the story time, by ending on a potential note that might invite a second season, even though Spike cancelled after the first season was released (McLennan, 2017). Since Spike cancelled the television

series, it is a reliable indicator that it was financially unsuccessful, which can be attributed to its inadequate reception.

The showing mode of engagement includes several methods of engaging with audiences through audio and image performances. When the story is expanded from a 180-page novel to a feature-length film, to a ten-part television series, it is necessary to consider the methods that are used to engage with audiences over such an extended period of consumption. The television series includes several changes that expand upon the content of the source material, for instance, by adding new characters, new locations, new monsters, and altering the progression of the story. Most prominently, however, the series adds a lot of contemporary themes to the story. All of these essential storytelling elements are analysed in depth later in the analysis.

As with most television series, the information is parsed out temporally, as to keep the viewers engaged in accumulating information and contemplating upcoming events. The series attempts to engage its viewers by establishing a set of perplexing events at the beginning of the narrative that the audience can delve into as the story progresses forward. Some of these narrative questions can be related to the novella and the film adaptation, such as “What caused the mist?”, “Did Steff survive?” or “What if Mrs Carmody is right?”. The two last questions are primarily relevant to the film and television series, as both attempt to offer answers to these questions to the audience, through a few key scenes. Despite these previously established questions, the series also invites several new ones, such as “Who raped Alex?”, “Who did Eve have a relationship with, before Kevin?” and “Who is Jonah and how is he connected to the Arrowhead Project?”. Eventually, these questions are answered in a somewhat unsatisfactory manner, according to audiences, yet they were intended as storytelling elements that kept the audience involved and engaged with the story.

Finally, where the novel ended with a sense of ambiguity and did not offer answers to the various narrative questions, the film intended to close off some of the narrative questions that were regarding the novel. The series functions, in a similar manner, intending to expand upon some of the questions that audiences have had during and after viewing the film. The final episode of the television series shows prisoners being ‘fed’ to the mist, seemingly by the military or the government, which could have potentially functioned as a mystery that led to a second season. Unfortunately, the television series’ low viewer count and the harsh feedback it received, led to

Spike cancelling the show, closing any opportunity to have those narrative questions answered (Spike: Cancelled).

The Question of Who

This section analyses the limitations and advantages of the various media that the story of *The Mist* exists in. Furthermore, the section explores how the different media make equivalents of essential storytelling elements.

The novel is an individual and a private mode of engagement, as each novel is limited to a single reader. While it is possible to spread the novel to more individuals at a time, through public readings or audiobooks, it inevitably trades the individuality of the mode and its inherent strength for more exposure: in other words, it becomes less private and moves toward a more 'guided' telling form. Depending on one's perspective of this particular mode of engagement, it can be seen as a strength or a weakness: while the story is limited to one person, it takes effort from that reader to commit to the story and to imagine the events that unfold. On the other hand, this ultimately means that it is a restricted mode of engagement, as there is no room for a bigger audience, without trading in the individuality, privacy and imagination of the novel.

The film adaptation is in a public mode of engagement, where audiences converge in a cinema to experience the film collectively, which marks the shift from the individuality of the novel to the publicity of broad audiences. While the film form is more advantageous in terms of reaching broader audiences, it contains other limitations. The film is crucially limited by its exteriority and cannot, in a proper manner at least, express interiority of the characters on screen. Voice-overs may be used to express interiority, but it often falls flat. Where novels can describe the emotions and thoughts of a character in detail to its readers, voice-over thoughts can only attempt to express those similar features through dialogue. Facial expression and body language can function as cues to the audience of what the characters might be thinking, but this does not concretely invite audiences into the minds of characters, in a similar manner to the novel. These are the two most prominent means of expressing interiority in film, which means that it is often necessary to commit to the exteriority of the image, which the film adaptation does by wandering around to the other characters and breaking the previously established focalisation on David.

While the film medium does not allow for the exclusivity to a single character and their internal thoughts, it does allow audiences to witness the reactions and emotions that that

character experiences. By doing so, the film medium allows for a different kind of engagement with its inherent characters compared to the novella, where the individual spectator is placed in a “structure of sympathy” with that character (Smith, 1995: 105). This structure is based on three aspects, recognition, alignment and allegiance, that each contains several aspects necessary to understand a spectator’s engagement with a particular character. The structure can assist in understanding what the different elements are, aurally, visually and ideologically, that allow spectators to “identify” with the characters (Smith, 1995: 83). While this study does not apply this theory from Murray Smith to analyse the audiences’ relationships with individual characters, it is a vital point that the film medium does allow for such a type of engagement with its displayed characters.

Apart from being able to reach wider audiences or engaging with the story and its characters, the showing mode does contain several other advantages. Showing a story takes place in the aural and visual acts, which inevitably means that the film medium does not require its audience to imagine the dialogue or the imagery: instead, it openly shows them. As a result, the film form exceeds at dialogue and action: where the novel relies on reader’s imagination to realise the story, the film uses the actor’s bodily functions, i.e. their bodies and voices, to bring life to the characters, the story and the story world. These elements engage audiences differently, since, instead of focusing on imagining the narrative elements, audiences can hypothesise and theorise on potential future outcomes or variations of the story they are shown. For instance, when watching *The Mist* television series, it is possible to hypothesise on future events based on the information offered through the first episode. Contrarily, this method of theorising and hypothesising can lead to other methods of engaging with the content of the story, through online communities and debate forums. Audiences can even become inspired by the content and engage with the source material by appropriating it to create personal interpretations of the story and then share them online, as fanfiction. It is vital to note, however, that this type of engagement is not limited to the film medium, as there are several cases of online communities, forums and fanfictions based on novellas or television series, or completely different mediums. Nevertheless, the showing modes of engagement have an advantage in this case, especially in the case of television series, as the audiences are often encouraged to participate in these types of community engagement.

The television series similarly shifts from the public experience back to the private experience, where the episodes are released through streaming services, such as Netflix. This return to the private allows for individual consumption of the form, as it allows for pausing, rewinding,

and re-watching. Arguably, the film mode contains this element as well, in its DVD format, yet there is a vital difference; *The Mist* as a television series is exclusively limited to television viewing, whereas the film adaptation is released both in cinema and on DVD. While the television series may have similar limitations as the film form, it does allow for a distinct viewing experience, where audiences can further engage with the story, its characters, and their ideals.

The Question of Why

This section focuses on the process of adapting and the personality of the adaptor. It is crucial to consider the reasons adapters have for adapting a story from one medium to another. While it is futile to attempt to uncover *all* the underlying reasons an adapter may have for adapting a story in one way or another, it is possible to contemplate on these reasons, based on the changes they have made to the story.

The novel is written by Stephen King in 1980 and takes place in a small town called Bridgton in Maine. While the novel is limited to its reader-base, it is part of the collection called “Skeleton Crew”, where several of Stephen King’s minor novels are collected. Furthermore, it is also included in “Dark Forces”, an anthology of horror stories, which indicates that while the novel was published alone, it spread out to audiences of horror fiction and Stephen King’s fans. While there are no precise estimates of how many copies were sold of *The Mist*, or *Skeleton Crew* and *Dark Forces*, for that matter, it is admissible to assume that it is a well-known horror story among fans of Stephen King and horror fiction alike.

The film adaptation is directed by Frank Darabont, who have adapted other works of Stephen King to films, such as the well-received *The Green Mile* and *Shawshank Redemption*. When Darabont’s name appears on the film’s cover, it indicates indirectly to knowing audiences, that the film should be perceived *as an adaptation* of a previous work of fiction. In turn, this allows audiences of the film to engage with the film, where they can locate the different changes made to the story comparatively. In an interview, Darabont described his affection for horror stories, where the real threat is how people respond and react in situations of extreme fear and panic, which is exactly what Stephen King focused on in stories such as *The Mist* (Frank Darabont Interview).

After several years of rumours concerning a potential television miniseries adaptation of *The Mist*, Christian Torpe was chosen as showrunner for the upcoming Spike television series.

Torpe has previously in his career had some success in writing manuscripts for television series, his most prominent work being the comedy series “Rita” from 2012. He explains in an interview with Collider, that when he was offered a chance to adapt a Stephen King work to a television series, he was ecstatic. As a fan of Stephen King from a young age, he wanted to ensure that it was a series that included intertextual connections to the previous texts. When adapting the story to a serial format, Torpe attempted to expand upon the source material. As a result, there are several changes to the narrative and the essential storytelling elements, that causes the television series to stand out from both the novella and the film adaptation (Radish, 2017).

The Question of How

This section analyses how the different variations of *The Mist* are experienced, especially in terms of Hutcheon’s knowing and unknowing audiences.

Each mode of engagement differs in how audiences experience and engage with the remediated stories. As mentioned earlier, the novel limits itself to a single reader at a time. While there may be many readers spread across space and time, the singular reader is in a private space when reading the novella, and as a result, that person experiences the novella in their unique way. When an adaptation involves a change in medium, from the personal experience of the novella’s form to the public experience of watching a film at the cinema, it inevitably alters each spectator’s engagement with the story. The form of the film adaptation does, however, allow for several various methods of engagement, for instance, private and shared viewings at home through DVDs. While the novella is limited by its form and cannot be experienced publicly, it can rather effortlessly be transpositioned to an audiobook form. This change to the medium does not affect the mode of engagement that the story exists in, as it is still situated in the *telling* mode, yet it does affect how the story is experienced. The story is told through an aural performance of a narrator reading the story to a listener, and as a result, the experience becomes a ‘guided’ one, rather than an individual experience. The imaginative act of reading does not disappear; on the contrary, the ‘guided’ form may allocate more time for imagining the story as it is being told, as the focus has shifted from reading words on a page to listening to words through a headset (or similar device).

When experiencing adaptations, be it as an individual or as part of an audience, it inevitably contains a fickle element: either the spectators are aware that the film they are watching is an adaptation, or they are unaware. These different viewing methods breed two vastly distinct

viewing experiences that are necessary to consider when analysing how audiences experience these adaptations. Knowing audiences, as Hutcheon labels them, understand the connection between the adaptation and the source text, and as a result, they experience the adaptations *as an adaptation*. Their viewing experience of the adaptation is, as a result, comparatively: they contrast the two texts with one another to locate the changes and alterations that have been made to the story. In turn, this viewing attains some semblance of understanding the adaptive process that the story has undergone. According to Sanders (2006), comparatively observing similarities and differences is what makes adaptations pleasurable to consume, along with the interplay of the audience's expectations and the surprise brought by the altered storytelling elements (p. 25).

On the other hand, unknowing audiences are unaware of the connection between the two (or more) texts, and correspondingly experience the adaptation as its work. This viewing experience is less focused on drawing parallels, and instead provides more time to focus on how the medium expresses the content.

The Questions of Where and When

This section considers the essential culture and history that has affected creation of the variations of the narrative. This also includes the journey from *The Mist's* novella form in 1980, to the film adaptation in 2007, and finally to the television series adaptation of 2017.

The novel was published in 1980 and arguably contains some of the cultural topics of the seventies, which mainly concerns the general distrust of the federal governments' intentions, along with several rights movements. Furthermore, only ten years earlier, the Apollo 13 mission was successful, along with several similar space missions from the USSR ("What Happened in 1970 Important News and Events, Key Technology and Popular Culture," n.d.). These cultural topics constitute the basis for what ideas inspired *The Mist* in this particular period in time; suspicion of the military and government, space travel and the idea of possible extra-terrestrial life. Finally, *The Mist* also focuses on how fear affects people in life-or-death situations. Together, these ideas establish what *The Mist* entails; a government/military experiment gone wrong that opens a portal to Earth for extra-terrestrial, with the remaining panic-stricken survivors imprisoned in a supermarket for safety. In terms of the setting, the novel is positioned in Bridgton, Maine, which implies that, along with the previously mentioned ideas from the 1970-1980s period, that this story is materialised in American culture.

When the trailer that announced film adaptation released, it indirectly relayed its relationship to the source novel, by stating “From the Master of Terror Stephen King” (Appendix 1). While this does not clearly label the film as an adaptation, it relies on audiences’ knowledge of who Stephen King is. King’s film adaptations have, since the 1980s, been amongst some of the most popular and critically acclaimed films in cinema. As a result, one could argue that most movie-goers and readers were familiar with King when *The Mist* was released, and as such, should be able to realise that it is an adaptation.

In terms of the society at the time of the film adaptations’ release in cinema, the general suspicion toward the military and the government yet exist. However, the turn of the century also brought several environmental concerns and natural disasters, which sparked several films that dealt with these concerns, such as “The Day After Tomorrow” and “2012” (“New Millennium,” n.d.). This topic also coincided with *The Mist*’s theme of an unnatural disaster engulfing the world and imprisoning people from the outside world. Finally, it is imperative to note that some of the changes to the film adaptation’s story function as a commentary on contemporary society.

One significant change relevant that can be traced through the adaptation series is how Mrs Carmody as a character has been transformed to fit a more contemporary religious figure, both in the film adaptation and the television series reimagination. This aspect is analysed further in detail in the ‘Character’ section, but it is an important note to mention here. Mrs Carmody transforms through this adaptation series from being an old witch-like lady in the novel to a young and radical god-fearing woman in the film adaptation, back to an older woman, yet her devotion to God has been altered in the latest adaptation to a devout believer in nature. This recent change in her religious devotion is more relevant to contemporary society with constant debates on climate change and global warming. However, both the young god-fearing woman of the film and the older woman who worships nature as a deity, seemingly function as the adapter’s commentary on contemporary radical beliefs. While the television series does contain equivalents to most of the essential themes of the source material, the most prominent change is through the inclusion of certain social issues, that are relevant in contemporary society. These social issues are related to certain characters, which is analysed further in the subsequent section.

Characters

The novel presents a wide range of characters, yet the main character that the readers follow is David. The interiority of the novel is limited to David Drayton, where his thoughts are described to the readers, while the rest of the characters are two dimensional. The cast of characters consists of; Billy and Steff (David's son and wife), Brent Norton (Drayton's neighbour), Amanda Dumfries (A woman at the supermarket that David has a short affair with), Ollie Weeks (manager of the supermarket), two unnamed military men and some lesser characters. While there are minor changes to the various characters, from the novel to the subsequent film and television series adaptation, that could potentially prove relevant to the analysis, it is considerably more significant to observe the changes that the two antagonists of the content have been submitted to. These antagonists are individually Mrs Carmody and the mist itself, whom both pose equally substantial threats to the survival of the people, who are locked in the supermarket.

Mrs Carmody is described in the novel, as an old hag, with yellow teeth from nicotine, who gradually becomes a self-righteous extremist and exclaims that the mist is sent as a punishment from a primitive God, and who demands blood (King, 1980, p. 84). Mrs Carmody gradually turns into a massive issue for the survivors, as she does not relent and accuses everyone, even children, of sinning. When the tension becomes too much, and conflict appears inevitable, Mrs Carmody shouts that Billy is the one who needs to be sacrificed (King, 1980, p. 152). The other antagonist, the mist, is described as an unnatural white fog that is obscured to the eye. Whether or not it is poisonous is unknown, the survivors only know that it is impossible to see through. In the mist, several alien creatures are spotted, but more importantly, it affects the animals that it touches. Moths and spiders are some of the few creatures that are spotted, who mutate in various ways, which implies that the mist affects its surroundings physically.

In the film adaptation, the most noticeable change to the character of Mrs Carmody is that she has been transformed from an old extremist to a young woman, yet she is still a radical believer. Furthermore, she does not believe that a primitive god caused the mist, but rather the Christian God, for instance by stating "the end times have come; not in flames, but in mist..." (Glotzel & Darabont, 2007, 00:41:45), and similarly to the novel, she claims that God demand blood sacrifices of those who have sinned.

The mist correspondingly appears the same way that the novel describes it, yet this time, audiences can *see* the mist engulf the supermarket. It has a chilling effect on the film and is a constant reminder of the danger outside. The only significant change is that the monsters that the

mist conjure in the film are somewhat different from the novel. For instance, in the novel, the mutated spiders were described to be the size of dogs and could shoot corrosive webbing. In the film adaptation, Darabont added an element to the spiders, where they would lay eggs in human corpses, that, when hatched, spewed thousands of tiny mutated spiders. The significant change from the novel to the film adaptation, is that the mist changes how it affects people; while the primary threat that the mist poses is confined to physical attacks of the mutated creatures or aliens in the mist, it manages to affect the main character, David, in a relatively different manner. As mentioned in the 'Conclusion' section of the analysis, the ending of the film depicts David as losing his mind after being rescued. The toll of the mist is psychological in David's case, as he has fought and survived against all odds, yet he has paid in full for his survival. This ending produces a thought-provoking point: If everyone you love dies, is it still desirable to survive?

In terms of the series, it is vital to note that many of the characters in the novel have been renamed. For instance, the Draytons who were initially the main characters, have been renamed to the Copelands: David is transformed to Kevin, and his son Billy has been transformed to a daughter named Alex. Stephanie has, in turn, been named Eve. Several characters have been added, such as Adrian, Alex's best friend, who is gay, as well as Jay, who is secretly Alex's stepbrother. Despite this alteration to the main character's family, it is rather clear to knowing audiences that these characters are equivalents to those of the previous texts.

The most noticeable change to the antagonists is how Mrs Carmody has been transformed into a more contemporary type of religious figure. While Mrs Carmody initially functioned as an archetype of a radical religious person in the novel and the film adaptation, this role has been passed on to another character, Father Romanov, who is somewhat gentler in his devotion to God. Mrs Carmody has instead been renamed to Nathalie Raven in the series, who worships nature and animals. She has also become the Copelands (the equivalents of the Draytons of the novel and film) neighbour and warn them on the potential dangers that driving short trips pose to the climate (Segel & Torpe, 2017, Ep. 1, 00:05:00). Nevertheless, Mrs Raven becomes just as devout in time, believing that nature is the true deity and that she is its vessel.

The psychological effect that the mist had on David in the film adaptation inspired the television series, and as a result, the creators expanded on this aspect. As the mist assaults several characters through the series, it becomes clear that it both functions on a physically and a psychologically level. For instance, when Mrs Raven's husband, Benedict, is murdered, the man could not tell if they were real, and consequently shoots Benedict in the head, before committing

suicide (Segel & Torpe, 2017, Ep. 1, 00:38:00) . Furthermore, Father Romanov is murdered seemingly by the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse, which indicates that the characters deaths may be caused by their worst fears (Segel & Torpe, 2017, Ep. 7, 00:26:00). There are, however, instances in which mutated insects or other animals murder the characters, so there is an inherent duality in the manner that the mist attacks the characters.

Finally, the mist has changed severely from the novel and the film adaptation, in that it does not summon any alien creatures, such as the tentacles or the spiders that shoot corrosive webs. Instead, the mist contains a mysterious dark figure, that could be a manifestation of the mist, or it could function as an indication how the mist chooses its victims.

Point of View

Through the novel, readers are exposed to a particular point of view, which is the main character, David's. The readers of the novel are focalised to David's story, from the beginning where he explains to how they have been plagued with heat waves and thunderstorms in Maine, to the end where he drives off with a hope that somewhere, the mist might end (King, 1980, p. 1-165). This focality on David means that readers experience the *content* through him, but more importantly, it allows the readers to enter his thoughts, which express his real emotions. To most of the other characters in the novel, he attempts to suppress his fears, so that he might be rational and able to focus on the issues at hand.

The film adaptation by Frank Darabont follows the focalisation on David as the main character, yet it allows itself to move around freely among the other characters in the story. As mentioned in the 'Story Units' chapter, where the novel used chapters to create short intermissions in the story, the film adaptation moves around in the mist and the supermarket at instances between actions. The focalisation on David in this film does, however, add to the impact of the conclusion, which is analysed further in the 'Conclusion' chapter.

The series, on the other hand, does not have a fixed focalisation on a single character, such as the novel and the film adaptation does. Instead, it shifts between the various characters and their focalisation, which tells the *content* of the story from their perspectives. While the showing mode is still unable to portray interiority accurately, this method of following an ensemble of

characters, potentially allows audiences to gain a deeper understanding of the story. Audiences are offered access into the character's subjectivities, yet it is mixed between being an opaque and transparent one, which consequently portrays a few of the characters as having mysterious secrets.

The mysteries revolving the individual characters are eventually unfolded, yet they end up appearing inconsequential to the main narrative, or slightly transparent. For instance, one of the mysteries concerns Jonah, who suffers from memory loss when the series starts. It turns out that Jonah is a general of the Arrowhead Project, yet despite this small piece of information, the audience is offered no explanation or pay-off. Thus, the information that is offered appears irrelevant to the narrative. The revelation that Jonah is a general is merely a cliff-hanger, instead of inviting intrigue and suspense to the audience's experience. The fact that the point of view follows Jonah in the series, along with the other characters, implies that these individuals carry some significance for the narrative. When the character's mysteries are reduced to a degree where they appear self-evident, the audience loses interest in them. Thus, the point of view that incorporates several characters narratives, while adding to the complexity of the story, consequently affects the reception, if the narratives are deemed as filler content.

Themes

Since "*The Mist*" is a horror novel, its themes are inherently connected to fear and survival. While the story does contain a lot of various themes, ranging from devotion to family to suspicion of the military and the government, the most central theme is how people *respond* and *react* in catastrophic situations. In essence, the story is about how fear affects people and how it can rapidly make people deteriorate from appearing civilised to inhuman.

The tagline on the film cover "Fear changes everything" (Appendix 1) prepares audiences for what the story of the film adaptation is primarily about: fear. Furthermore, the film adaptation mainly contains equivalent themes to those of the novel, which indicates, that while the adapter has altered minor elements of the story, it is inevitably a revision of King's work that has been adapted to another medium. Despite the film's omission or alteration of certain story elements, the essential themes for communicating the *content*, remains intact. The only critical change is the *form* of the story: how the story is expressed to its audience. Albeit, there is an aspect that is connected to the theme of fear, that has been intensified in the film, which is when people are fear-stricken, they begin searching for a responsible or guilty member. In the film, after the two military

men who commit suicide, the survivors instantly accuse Private Jessup of being responsible for the events at the Arrowhead Project, that caused the mist. The fanatics sacrifice Jessup to the mist, believing that it will bring penance and make the mist vanish.

The television series prominently modifies the themes in question. While the primary themes are fear, and how it affects people, religion and being cut off from the world, Torpe introduces several new events to the story, that inevitably expand on the themes of the story. These added themes either function as a commentary on the previous texts, or merely to expand on the source material. The novel and film's setting of the people locked in a supermarket has been altered slightly so that they are now located within a larger mall. The survivors attempt to survive, locked in the mall, where they face several dangers, as the mist engulfs some corridors and their rations steadily decrease. Most of these elements and themes are similar to the novel's source material, yet with expansions that add more subject matter to the story. It is vital to note that some of the prominent themes of the series are closely connected to the individual characters.

Accompanying the primary theme of fear of the source material is the theme of survival. Equivalently to the other thematic changes, the survival aspect of the series focuses on portraying a sense of human selfishness. For instance, Gus (the mall owner) cleverly assumes a leadership role where he prioritises his survival and hoards food in his office. When confronted, Gus resorts to murder, and instantly frames someone else (Alex) who is already viewed as a potential threat to the whole community. Adrian additionally prioritises his survival, yet this form of survival is not connected at all to the mist. Instead, his survival is closely related to a type of 'social survival', where he irrationally believes that if he loses his last friend, he will be shunned entirely from society. Consequently, Adrian chooses to rape Alex and frame Jay for the assault, and afterwards, he manipulates Alex to distance herself from Jay. When confronted by Kevin, Adrian resorts to murder and manipulation, to return to Alex.

Religion is another theme that is vital to the content of *The Mist*. In the series, Father Romanov and Mrs Raven depict two contrasting religious views: Christianity and 'naturism'. The theme of religiousness is used to question the purity of these contrasting views, which leads to a minor thematic conclusion, where the two characters traverse the mist, to prove the existence of their deities. This seemingly thematic conclusion leads audiences to believe that Mrs Raven's religious views are superior, yet when she arrives at the mall and attempts to convince the survivors of her deity, they do not believe in her. Consequently, Mrs Raven loses her self-righteous and

confident demeanour and is depicted as only an old, fragile woman, murmuring to herself. The theme of the religion of nature is certainly relevant to contemporary society, where individuals tend to be more conscious of nature and the impact of humanity's actions on Earth's climate and various animals.

In extension of religion is the aspect of how fear instigates a search for those guilty. Contrarily to the film, there are four military men in the mall: one dies in the mist, two commit suicide, yet this time, the private is not sacrificed to the mist. Furthermore, the series expands on this particular aspect near the conclusion of the series, where the survivors in the mall attempt to sacrifice Jay to the mist, as he was framed for the rape of Alex. Jay's father, Connor, has been convinced that Jay is guilty, and believes it necessary to sacrifice him, to make the mist disappear. The mist does, however, not disappear when Jay is consumed.

Torpe also included a few other contemporary and relevant themes to the story. These are homosexuality, toxic masculinity and rape. Adrian is homosexual, which the Copeland family generally accepts and supports, while most others are appalled by this fact. Adrian's father is homophobic and does not communicate to him if he shows any signs of femininity, such as wearing make-up (Segel & Torpe, 2017, Ep. 1, 00:06:25). Furthermore, the only other gay character portrayed is Tyler Denton, who engages in a secret relationship with Adrian, yet in public he beats up Adrian multiple times (Segel & Torpe, 2017, Ep. 1, 00:14:00). Tyler is ashamed of his own sexuality and feels a need to portray a hatred towards homosexual behaviour openly. This theme is quite relevant to contemporary society, as the series indicates that homosexuality is frowned upon by most. Contrarily, in contemporary society, many dispute this view and attempt to display their femininity and homosexuality openly.

Rape is a theme that is exceedingly prominent in the series. This element was added by Christian Torpe and seemingly instigated the successive events. Early in the story, someone rapes Alex at a party, and Jay becomes an immediate suspect (Segel & Torpe, 2017, Ep. 1, 00:19:00). This theme, contemporary and relevant as it may be, seems to function separate from the remaining themes of fear, survival and religion. The theme does concern fear, but it quickly becomes marginalised by most of the characters, in some sense. Kevin is the only character who investigates the rape, where Eve spends the majority of her time blaming Jay and trying to keep Alex safe. The other survivors gradually turn on Alex, implying that she lied about the rape, which could function as a portrayal of how people in stressful situations begin blaming others for causing

the situation, which does fit into the themes of fear and survival of the source material. It could also function as a commentary on contemporary society, where people often claim that rape victims are at fault of the assault. Nevertheless, the fact that this theme is in the foreground and takes up a lot of screen time makes it somewhat predictable that the survivors in the mall would eventually turn on Eve and Alex (Segel & Torpe, 2017, Ep. 10, 00:21:00).

Story Units

The pacing of the novel is initially slow and ensures that readers are familiar with the characters and the setting they are in before the mist arrives. When the mist appears, it is not sudden; it has been building up over to its' arrival for 30 pages, where it ominously floats in the background, both in terms of the story and the individual reader's imagination. When the situation turns dire, the pacing quickly changes and focuses readers attention by using scene cuts – where the events are described in rapid succession. Along with the dialogue between characters, as well as David's thoughts on various subject matters, these elements make the pacing of *The Mist*, shift from slow and pleasant, to quick and chaotic. Furthermore, the chapters of the novel are each rather short, which makes the content pleasant to read. The novel also contains a fair share of cliff hangers, that keep readers invested in the story, as they want to know what happens next.

In terms of time, the events of the novel occur over a few days. Readers are not offered a definite time frame of the story, but each chapter is labelled correspondingly to a diary: “I. The Coming of the Storm” (King, 1980, p. 1), “III. The Coming of the Mist” (King, 1980, p. 36), “IV. The Storage Area. Problems with the Generators. What Happened to the Bag-Boy.” (King, 1980, p. 51), “VII. The First Night” (King, 1980, p. 99). While these chapter titles prepare the readers for the upcoming events, they also assist in understanding how much time has passed since the mist first appeared. On the second night, the final confrontation between the extremists and the survivors occur, which leads to David and a few others leaving the supermarket and driving off. Conjointly, these elements indicate that the story takes place over the span of approximately two to three days.

Where the novel was slower paced and contained an underlying threat of the ominous mist in the background, the story of the film progresses faster to the point when the mist becomes a life-threatening issue to the survivors. This adaptation is limited by the timeframe that the story has to be told within – two hours – and as a result, it focuses on the impact of the mist, and the resulting

actions the characters perform, instead of slowly building up to the event like the novel did. However, as someone mentioned in the AV-club (Robinson, 2007), this is also a trait from Frank Darabont, which can be traced to his other Stephen King film adaptations. One important note is that, while the novel had chapters to create cliff hangers, the film compensates for such a lack by keeping the dialogue between the characters in focus, and by exploring the supermarket and what the characters are up to at times where the action is limited. For instance, when the other survivors are boarding up the front of the supermarket, the camera cuts to Mrs Carmody praying in a toilet by herself (Glotzer & Darabont, 2007, 00:38:00).

The series expands the story of the novel, and the subsequent film adaptation, to fit into 10 episodes of approximately 40 minutes each. As a result, the pacing is much different, where events are shown separately and sequentially, yet may co-occur. In each episode, the audiences follow the main characters as different conflicts arise, and tension builds between the trapped survivors. Since it is a contemporary television series, there is an ensemble of main characters that all are equally vital to the story. Hence, while Kevin is one of the main characters, he does not function as *the* main character, as David did in the novel and film.

Furthermore, there have been added more locations to the series. Where the source material primarily transpired in a supermarket, the series has expanded this element to a bigger mall with several stores within. Additionally, there has been added a church and a hospital to the story, seemingly to fit with the themes of the content, which further functions as a method of expanding. There are also scenes in which the characters traverse the mist and take shelter in cars, gas stations and houses, all of which are additions to the story. In each episode, the focus changes from character to character, slowly parsing out information to spectators about their journeys.

Closing

The novel closes with an open end, where David, along with his son and a few other survivors, escape from the supermarket and drive away in a van. As they drive in on their private road, that led back home to Steff, they found it impassable due to the many trees that had closed off the road. Afterwards, David and the survivors drive toward Portland. On the way, they could hear the creatures of the mist rumbling around in the woods, and the sky also darkens with a large “nightmarish and half-seen kite” that pass overhead, as well as a giant six-legged creature the size of a cliff. The novel eventually concludes as they continue driving and slowly run out of gas, while

hoping that, at some point, the mist might end. This conclusion allows readers to invent individual conclusions, where the survivors either make it to the other side of the mist or not.

One of the significant changes from the novel to the film adaptation is that Frank Darabont's conclusion diverges extensively from the ending of the novel. Where the road back to David's home was initially impassable in the novel, the main characters can cross it in the film. David's house is shown as covered in spider webs, with Steff covered in webs except for her face (Glotzer & Darabont, 2007, 01:40:50-01:42:20). They drive away, hoping that they will get clear of the mist, yet they run out of fuel ultimately. David draws the gun and counts to four bullets, yet they are five people in the car. David says, "I'll figure something out" (01:46:35) and shoots the rest, including Billy, out of mercy. The shots are shown from the outside of the car, where each shot lights up the interior. He begins shouting and puts the gun in his mouth, pulling the trigger several times, in vain, as there are no more bullets. He then exits the vehicle and shouts at the mist to come to get him. To his ultimate despair, a tank appears in the mist, and it slowly begins clearing, as the military fights back and burns away the mist and its creatures. David drops to his knees and screams, as he has lost everything important to him. The mist has psychologically broken David (Glotzer & Darabont, 2007, 01:51:00-01:53:00:).

This closing of the film adaptation has been drastically changed from an ambiguous end in favour of a much more nihilistic one. Stephen King mentioned in an interview, that when Frank presented the ending, that he loved it. As a side-note, King also said that "anyone who reveals the last 5 minutes of the film should be hung from their neck", implying that it is an ending that should be experienced for oneself (Reyes, 2017).

In correspondence with the drastic change in the conclusion, the series additionally changes several aspects of the ending. Since the majority of the story has been changed, the Copelands are reunited, along with Vic and Mia. However, where David in the previous texts escaped the mall, the series takes a turn in the other direction. As they are about to drive away, Kevin stops and puts the car in reverse (Segel & Torpe, 2017, Ep. 10, 00:32:30). He then drives the car through the mall glass doors and lets the mist in (Segel & Torpe, 2017, Ep. 10, 00:33:00). Connor, Alex's birth father, comes with them and they drive off from the mall, while the mist consumes the survivors within. A happy song juxtapositions the imagery of the survivors dying and the group driving off. Meanwhile, Jonah drives toward the Arrowhead project, with Adrian shown to be hiding in the trunk. Kevin and the group of survivors decide to keep driving when they spot a

train that enters the town. They follow it to the station, where men in uniforms throw prisoners off into the mist. The series ends on a close up of Kevin, who realises that the men are feeding the mist (Segel & Torpe, 2017, Ep. 10, 00:40:10). This ending functions as an opening for a second season, yet Spike cancelled the television series after it aired, so chances of a second season that digs into these mysteries, of why someone would feed the mist and what happened at the Arrowhead Project, are slim to none.

The manner in which the ending has changed from the novel to the television series shows a significant change. Where David and the survivors initially left the tenants of the supermarket alive, Kevin dooms those in the mall to be consumed by the mist, which offers a sense of justice to audiences. Both the religious fanatic, Mrs Raven, and the selfish survivors of the mall, including Gus, got what they deserved. It is also a bittersweet ending, as Jay, who sacrifices himself to save Alex. The ending of the series is not as nihilistic and impactful as that of the film adaptation, instead, it is more mysterious and ambiguous. Though the television series adaptation of *The Mist* appears with an open ending more similar to the novella, such similarity can instead be attributed to the serial television traditions of leaving endings open for subsequent seasons, instead of a consciously planned ending to the story of the series.

Events

In extension of the 'Conclusion' chapter, there are several events that have been altered through the adaptations, not to mention the process of adapting, which could be analysed to understand what Darabont and Torpe individually concentrated on in their adaptations.

In the novel, several minor events inform readers about the characters, their relationships, and the world. These events have been omitted during the process of transpositioning the content from the novel to the film mode, as they were potentially deemed inconsequential to the story. For instance, the first section of the novel described the heat wave and the thunderstorms that had occurred in Maine before the arrival of the mist, which has been omitted from the film adaptation. In extension, David experiences a couple of inexplicable "dreams" that warned him of what was approaching, as a form of foreshadowing (King, 1980, p. 4). While this element could have been used in both subsequent adaptations to create suspense, it was excluded from both the film and television series, in favour of merely having the mist suddenly sweep in and engulf the surroundings. Conclusively, this means that the adaptations, while arguably being a in the horror

genre, lean toward the action genre. Character development is thus side-lined in favour of action sequences. The series involves more drama than both the film and the novel, the horror elements of the story are therefore diminished somewhat.

The film and television series adaptations both focus on the inherent fear that the mist causes, instead of creating a chilling and harrowing experience for audiences. The film comes closer to reaching an experience that is harrowing, compared to the series, but primarily through its conclusion. In terms of the introduction of both adaptations, audiences are not indulged in feeling the suspense of the approaching mist, such as in the novel. The film skips the introduction to the characters and the setting, showing the mist in the distance before they head to the supermarket (Glotzer & Darabont, 2007, 00:03:30). The mist then arrives almost precisely on the ten-minute mark, which in turn means that the suspense is somewhat limited.

In contrast, the series also attempts to create some suspense in the first episode, by showing Jonah and his dog, Rufus, being engulfed by the mist. The scene then abruptly cuts to the main characters as they go about their daily lives. The events that constitute their 'daily lives', however, have been intensified in the series, which causes the mist to be presented as a secondary plot line, apart from the short introduction. The pilot episode instead places these intensified events in the foreground, where Eve is suspended from teaching at the school, and Alex sneaks off to a party and unfortunately becomes the victim to a rape (Segel & Torpe, 2017, 00:05:00). These events are not only abnormal but compared to the novel and the film's introductions, they function as attempts to add to the source material. Nevertheless, the manner in which the mist as a storytelling element is marginalised to present these other outrageous events silts the image of the series by concentrating on a completely separate topic, rather than the one that used to have been in focus.

The relationship that develops in the supermarket between David and Amanda has similarly been omitted from the film adaptation, to allow more time to the conflict that arises between Mrs Carmody and David's survivors. Contrastingly, this 'devotion to one's relationship' theme has been twisted in the television series, so that it does not occur under the circumstances of the mist, but prior to the mist's arrival. In the final episode, when Eve is confronted by the other survivors of the mall, she admits that Connor is Alex's true father. While this element might have been added to emphasise on Eve's past and expand on the source material, its function seems to primarily connect all the events that have occurred, as a sort of reason for the mist. As a result, the story of the television series appears to be guided by these altered aspects, that were intended as a

means of expanding the story, so that it might fit into a ten-episode series. These aspects, or events, should perhaps not have been added, or presented, as the *primary* storyline, but instead as the *secondary* to have been a more successful adaptation. It is also possible to consider that these aspects could have functioned well if they had been changed so that they did not take the focus away from the mist. After all, does the threat of the mist not include enough content for a series?

To summarise

The analysis of *The Mist* adaptation series found that according to audiences, what made the film and the novel exceptional was that it remained faithful to the fundamental idea of the mist sweeping in and imprisoning people, and how that fear and confinement subsequently affects them. Moreover, what made the film adaptation by Darabont mainly celebrated among audiences and critics can be located in the added ending to the story, which made the adaptation exceedingly memorable.

In contrast, *The Mist* television series incorporated the fundamental idea of the source narrative, yet it had been marginalised in favour of other more contemporary and relevant ‘social justice’ topics. There are several reasons why the choice of putting these topics in the foreground could become an issue. For instance, when surveying the various reviews to the series, it is quite prevalent that audiences have remarkably radical and contrasting opinions on these various topics, and as a result, many viewers were frustrated with how the various characters were represented in the series. While the topics were potentially added to make the series appear modern and contemporary, it inevitably blurs the fundamental idea behind *The Mist* and drags down the rest of the story.

What made television series an unsuccessful adaptation, then, was the fact that the creators concentrated on the contemporary and modern social justice issues, rather than what *The Mist*, as a concept encompasses. As one of the reviewers eloquently points out, the television series ‘missed the point’ (Appendix 4). The analysis does indicate that the intention behind creating *The Mist* as a television series, was not merely to profit on the story. Instead, it was intended to extend or prolong the pleasure that audiences achieved from the previous texts and to reach out to new audiences. Unfortunately, the series was created in a manner that derived the adaptation from the pleasure that was experienced in the source material and film adaptation, in favour of adding filler themes and topics, that did not contribute to the fundamental content of the source material.

Discussion

This section functions as a comparative discussion to locate any potential flaws that could arise when adapting a story. The discussion will introduce the unsuccessful adaptation and its relationship to its other texts, before discussing any similarities that the adaptation has in common with Christian Torpe's *The Mist*. The subchapters discuss one, or several, adaptations series that could be described as unsuccessful based on their reviews. Each of the subchapter's titles has been labelled as a method of communicating what these adaptations can teach future adapters.

Respect the fundamental idea: *Wolverine* (2009-2017) and *Deadpool* (2016-2018)

Superhero movies are some of the most prominent contemporary films adaptations, both in terms of highest grossing movies and the most debated, yet audiences of these films rarely realise they are watching adaptations of comic book stories. While these films are usually held in high regard, there are several examples of inherently unsuccessful superhero movie adaptations. One of the most disliked, apart from *Green Lantern* (2011), is *X-Men Origins: Wolverine* (2009).

The movie adaptation was created as a prequel to the *X-Men* trilogy, where the origins of Wolverine were to be established, yet the film was rather poorly received. On IMDb, it is rated as 6,6 stars out of 10, based on more than 430.000 ratings ("*X-Men Origins: Wolverine* (2009)," n.d.)). On Rottentomatoes, the adaptation had gained an approval rating from critics of 37% based on 250 reviews, and a rating of 58% from the audience, based on 550 individual ratings ("*X-Men Origins: Wolverine* (2009) User Ratings," n.d.). The most prominent complaint among the reviews was related to the appalling depiction of the character Deadpool, who had been exposed to several changes that were pressured onto the movie by Fox (Dworken, 2018). As Ryan Reynolds stated, the actor who played Deadpool in the movie, what caused a backlash from the audience "was the Deadpool part (...) The decision to sew his mouth shut and just completely go rogue from the canon was kind of tough, and I knew it was going to be tough for the audience." (Rottenberg, 2016, para 11)

After the disaster of *X-Men Origins: Wolverine*, at least to the Deadpool character, Ryan Reynolds spent a lot of time to bring a stand-alone *Deadpool* (2016) film to the previously disappointed audience. The significant change between the stand-alone film and the previous work is that the script was based on the actual origin story, and was permanently fixed in the adaptation process. Furthermore, the adaptation was not affected by pressure from a studio, as there had previously been in *X-Men Origins: Wolverine*. The film managed to achieve an ‘R’ rating instead of being limited to ‘PG-13’, as most superhero movies are, which Reynolds argued gave them the chance to “stretch our legs and explore this character in a different way than most of these superhero tentpole movies explore it.” (Rottenberg, 2016, para 19). The movie’s reception was a massive success, with positive reviews from critics and audiences alike, and finally, fans of Deadpool could experience a proper portrayal in cinematic form. Deadpool has an 8 star rating out of 10 on IMDb based on more than 818.000 ratings (“Deadpool (2016),” n.d.) along with an approval rating of 84% from critics based on 320 reviews, along with a 90% rating from audiences, based on more than 185.000 reviews (“Deadpool,” n.d.)

Despite these movies’ independent failure and success, they have one thing in common, which is that neither of the adaptations was strictly faithful to the source material. Both movies take the content of the source material and change its *expression* from one medium to another. The distinct and massive difference between these two works is that in *X-Men Origins: Wolverine* (2009) the creators were pressured into salvaging the idea of the ‘Deadpool’ character, along with the other antagonist characters, and the narrative consequently suffered from this pressure. The creators additionally made several significant changes to the various elements of the characters, without any regard for the source material of the comic books. *Deadpool* (2016), on the other hand, adapted the source material to another medium, in a manner that displayed inherent respect for the previous work and the Deadpool character, rather than merely viewing both as a metaphorical ‘goldmine’ for a superhero movie. The changes that were made in the Deadpool movie were not made solely to draw in more money from audiences, but to improve upon the origin story of Deadpool and his character. It is critical to stress the significance of this prominent distinction: The difference between what makes an adaptation successful or unsuccessful can be partially located in these distinct methods of regarding the source material.

These two movies share some similarities, compared to the two variations of *The Mist*. For instance, where *X-Men Origins: Wolverine* added and altered specific storytelling elements merely in an attempt to expand the origin story of Wolverine, the adaptation process of Christian

Torpe's *The Mist* similarly attempted to expand the source story by adding more material. In both cases, the added or altered elements draw the focus away from what the story should concentrate on, which was Wolverine's story and the mist. As a result, the adaptations either damage the core content or marginalise its core *idea*. *Deadpool* (2016) and *The Mist* (2007), on the other hand, both concentrate on *showing* the content of the source material while adding elements to intensify the experience of the particular expression. These additions are made out of respect of the previous material; Frank Darabont's *The Mist* expanded upon the ending of the novella to add closure, and *Deadpool* made smaller changes to the character and the origin story, while maintaining the primary plot of the comic books, so that it would be a proper representation of the character in cinema.

Finally, it is essential to note that while *X-Men Origins: Wolverine* was a financially unsuccessful adaptation, the adaptation series revolving the Wolverine character continued to survive and subsequently received two more adaptations, *The Wolverine* (2013) and *Logan* (2017). Both adaptations were financial successes and received high ratings both IMDb and Rottentomatoes, which can be attributed to the audience's admiration of the Wolverine character and his narrative, rather than the story of *X-Men Origins: Wolverine* ("The Wolverine (2013)," n.d.) ("Logan (2017)," n.d.). Likewise, as the *Deadpool* character received a stand-alone movie adaptation, the adaptation series of *Deadpool* continues to thrive with its sequel *Deadpool 2* (2018), which was equally well-received. Both of these individual adaptation series belong to the more massive *X-Men* franchise, yet they have through these individual adaptations established a basis for their narratives to survive in contemporary society, based on the audience's general appreciation of the narratives and characters.

Convey the idea to embrace multiple audiences: *Warcraft: The Beginning* (2016)

An example of a video-game story adapted to another medium, is the 2016 *Warcraft: The Beginning* film adaptation, in which audiences were shown the story of the original games, that led to the massive *World of Warcraft* MMORPG (abbreviation for: Massive Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Game). Fans of the franchise were ecstatic at the prospect of viewing the epic story told in cinemas. The *Warcraft* movie was rated as 6,9 stars out of ten on IMDb, based on 225.000 individual ratings, and on Rottentomatoes, the movie suffered from a 28% approval rating from

critics, yet made up for it with a 77% rating from audiences (“*Warcraft: The Beginning* (2016),” n.d.).

One of the inherent issues of *Warcraft: The Beginning* movie is that it was not created as a stand-alone film. *Warcraft: The Beginning* (2016) told the story of the first *Warcraft: Orcs and Humans* (1994) video game, and consequently, the story told in the movie adaptation was not new to fans of the franchise. Furthermore, many of the changes that were made to the story functioned more as intertextual references to events, characters or places, that would become relevant for potential sequels, instead of concentrating on the source story and expressing it to its audience. The movie continuously nudges or cues to audiences to elements of the *Warcraft* universe, but these cues functioned merely as paying homage to the previous video games. Instead of trying to introduce a new world, a set of characters and the two factions, the movie expected audiences to be familiar with these essential storytelling elements, so that they could understand what was happening. The portrayal of the world, the items and armours within, were exceptionally made and mostly faithful to the recent video games, yet it did not make up for the lack of an idea to connect all the elements. The movie could have been intensified on the experience of introducing the story, so that new audiences and fans alike could feel connected with it, not to mention the characters, and allow for potential sequels. If the filmmakers had paid less attention to paying homage and nudging to knowing audiences of the franchise and instead focused on a story of two factions that are propelled into a calamitous war, the movie could have ended up remarkably different.

If there is one thing that *Warcraft: The Beginning* could teach potential adapters, is that there necessarily exists an essential balance that can be located between pleasing the fans and broadening the story to new audiences. While the audience generally enjoyed the film, those who were not familiar with the world that the story was set in, found the characters to be rather tenuous and superficial. Furthermore, the story was rather unappealing to new audiences and primarily functioned to pay homage to the video game franchise. For instance, when comparing the reception of *Warcraft: The Beginning* to the upcoming *Sonic the Hedgehog* adaptation, which is discussed in a subsequent section, it indicates a distinctly different intention for adapting the narratives. *Warcraft: The Beginning* was explicitly made for fans of the franchise, and similarly, *Sonic the Hedgehog* also concentrates on appealing to audiences of the video game franchise. The major difference is that the creators behind *Sonic the Hedgehog* have listened to the critique of the initial trailer and decided that the experience of the movie is more crucial, rather than maintaining the creative freedom to alter a character’s appearance, which would ultimately affect the movie’s

reception. While *Warcraft: The Beginning* was not initially met with a similar backlash, the movie concentrated on appealing to its fan-base, rather than new audiences, which consequently affected its story, characters, story world, and reception. The fans of the franchise, however, were not offered a lot through the changes to the narrative, as it was primarily similar to the narrative of the initial *Warcraft: Orcs and Humans* game, only compressed so that the major events were portrayed in fast succession.

As one of the ten rules of adapting states, adaptations to the showing mode of engagement, should not rely on dialogue if the effect can be achieved through a look. When watching *Warcraft: The Beginning*, a large portion of the character's dialogue is aimed toward providing exposition to audiences, which indicates that the viewing experience becomes rather superficial. Audiences did not necessarily invest in the story of the movie, as it did not allow them to experience it through its telling. More importantly, since the adaptation is located in the showing mode of engagement, it is essential that the story is shown rather than told, which, self-evidently, cannot be accomplished through dialogue. Another point regarding the ten rules, is that adapters could ask themselves: "Why [adapt] this [material] and why now?". Concerning *Warcraft: The Beginning*, the answer is seemingly that it is made to please the fans of the franchise, yet this focus severely limits the audience for the adaptation. Furthermore, it might indicate that part of the intention was related to increasing the sales of the upcoming *World of Warcraft: Legion* expansion. Consequently, the movie could not be considered a financially successful adaptation, as it failed in terms of relaying the story new audiences, which consequently diminished the franchise's chances of generating successive adaptations.

Regarding *The Mist* television series, the creators similarly attempted to reach out to multiple audiences, but merely by adding social issues and altering characters to fit into certain minorities that appear contemporary to the current society. By emphasising on these aspects of the story, equivalently to how *Warcraft: The Beginning* primarily appealed to fans of the franchise, the story of *The Mist* television series is aimed towards audiences who find these social topics interesting, rather than the fans of the source material from Stephen King's *The Mist*. As mentioned in the 'Reception' section, audience reviews revealed a variety of radical opinions on these topics, and along with the fact that the characters were superficial and crudely misrepresented, the story of the television series becomes less appealing to the multiple audiences.

Warcraft: The Beginning and *X-Men Origins: Wolverine* adaptations were both unsuccessful adaptations, as they did not bring the story to new audiences. The narrative was not adequately adapted to survive in contemporary society, and as a result, the individual narratives died with the adaptation. The failure of the previous adaptations does not necessarily mean that the *X-Men* franchise died along with it, or that Wolverine's narrative could not be expanded upon at a later time. The *X-Men* adaptation series continues to survive and thrive in contemporary society, as is evident with the recent instalments, that function either as prequels, sequels or even a completely different timeline. Similarly, the *Warcraft* adaptation series continues to thrive through its video games and similar adaptations, despite the failure of the film adaptation. Inevitably both adaptations were unsuccessful in their aim to reach new audiences and to relay the narrative to them.

Focus on the fundamental idea: *The Giver* (2014) and *Ready Player One* (2018).

In recent years, cinema and television have experienced a surge of 'Young Adult' adaptations. The films adaptations change the fundamental idea of the source novels, to appeal to young adult audiences through themes of unobtainable love and rebellion. The novels that inspired these adaptations focused instead on a variety of unique ideas. For instance, *Ready Player One*, written by Ernest Cline, focuses on themes that question the different versions of reality, how identity affects online personas, whether an actual appearance is significant in the face of a superior virtual one, immortality in virtual worlds, and mortality in reality ("Ready Player One Themes," n.d.). The film adaptation in 2018 does touch on these subjects, but they are largely marginalised in order to concentrate on the inherent love story between the main character Wade Watts and Art3mis, as well as their rebellion against the IOI. The film adaptation of *Ready Player One* was well-received by critics and audiences alike, despite its focus on these two prominent themes of love and rebelling. *The Hunger Games* trilogy has equally, despite their focus on these themes, been quite successful among critics and audiences alike.

In contrast, however, there are exists a surplus of similar Young Adult movie adaptations, that have similarly marginalised the primary themes and essential ideas of the source material, which have been mostly unsuccessful. Movie adaptations of the various franchises such as *The Giver* (2014), *Eragon* (2006), *Divergent* (2014-2016), *Ender's Game* (2013), have all suffered a significant transformation to their core idea and content, with the intent to concentrate on the love

between two (or several) characters, and these character's rebellion toward some higher power. While these franchises, and their specific adaptations, have received different approval ratings by critics and audiences, they have all been received rather poorly by the majority of the audiences, to the extent of ridicule in some cases.

The process in which adapters disregard the primary idea of a story, in favour of appealing to a younger audience through two specific themes, that are frankly depicted as rather superficial by these adaptations, inevitably gives the audience a shallow viewing experience. These adaptations become publicised as yet another movie in a long line of inadequate adaptations. Notwithstanding, there are examples of celebrated Young Adult adaptations that involve love stories and rebelling. The *Harry Potter* adaptation series is an excellent example of how an adaptation should balance the themes of love and rebellion while maintaining the initial and fundamental idea and content of the source material.

In addition, when adapters fixate on appealing to the Young Adult audience, they frequently disappoint fans of the source material, as they have clear expectations of what elements the adaptation should contain, as equivalents to the themes and questions posed by the source material. It is not a question of fidelity to the original, but rather a question of respecting the fundamental ideas of the source material and relaying them to new audiences. By fixating on a general Young Adult audience, not only does the film adaptation become strictly limited, it additionally discourages new audiences from engaging with those adaptations. Moreover, the previous fans of the franchise are discouraged from engaging with the adaptations, as they have disappointed their expectations. Thus, the adaptation fails at relaying the story to more people, and instead becomes an unremarkable and insignificant movie, that only a select audience wants to watch. On the other hand, those narrow audiences might feel that even an unsuccessful adaptation allows for a prolonging effect that was initially derived from the source material, and therefore vigorously defend the adaptation, despite its discernible flaws. In relation to *Warcraft: The Beginning*, some die-hard fans truly believe that it was a successful adaptation, despite its lacking success, both in terms of the box office, the majority of its reviews, and in terms of relaying the story to new audiences.

As has already been established, *The Mist* television series marginalises the primary content of the source material, in favour of portraying modern issues and attempting to appeal to multiple audiences through, unfortunately shallow, characters of specific minorities. The manner in

which it marginalises content is similar to the above-mentioned adaptations, where the various ideas of the source texts are abandoned for the sake of putting a romance story in the foreground. A large part of *The Mist* television series identically focuses on the forbidden love between the younger characters of the cast – between Alex and Jay, and Adrian and Tyler. It is essential to ensure that younger audiences can relate to the characters of a television series, especially if the creators want it to endure for several seasons. *The Mist* television series does not accomplish this, as most of the time that the audience engages with these characters, it concerns their feelings and relationships with each other, instead of how they react in the situation that the mist has caused. Correspondingly to the ‘Young Adult’ adaptations, that appear as merely another dull love, the subplot concerning these younger characters in *The Mist* eventually end up rather unremarkable.

In terms of the ten secrets of adapting, the second point presents an extremely relevant aspect of why these stories are adapted. These adaptations are seemingly adapted to the showing mode of engagement, as they are contemporary works among that have a preestablished fan-base. These adaptations are often made to satisfy a demand from the fan-base, which should ordinarily be a satisfactory reason, but there is a catch. When the adaptations are created, the adaptors rely on the previous blueprint of focusing on the inherent love story and rebellion of the narratives, and amplify those themes, as a means of quickly producing an adaptation that can appeal to the fan-base. When the fan-base is subsequently disappointed by the adaptation’s primary superficial focus and marginalisation of the fundamental ideas and content, it indicates that the viewing experience of this method of adapting is unsuccessful. While the narrative in itself may still allow for new methods of adapting, the film adaptations have stained the image of the adaptation series. This is true both in the case of fans who prefer the novels to the films, and the other audiences who are not interested in the narrative, as it has been marginalised to focus on a shallow love story.

Value experience over profit: Sonic the Hedgehog (2019)

Seemingly in response to the upcoming *Detective Pikachu* (2019), an adaptation of the Pokémon franchise, another adaptation began production. Sonic the Hedgehog, a character from a line of video games, is being adapted to a live-action film adaptation. When the trailer released on April 30th 2019, it received a huge backlash, based on the visual changes to the Sonic character. Where the studio had attempted to make him appear realistic, it ended up looking utterly wrong in the eyes of fans everywhere.

In a fortunate turn of events, the director of the live-action adaptation, Jeff Fowler, gave a statement on Twitter, where it was clear that the criticism toward Sonic's portrayal would be heard, and that the studio would do what was necessary to correct the change to the character ("Folwer, J, Tweet," 2019). Since the Twitter message, there have not been any news, and the fans of the franchise have respected that the studio requires time to fix the mistakes to the Sonic character, which in turn allows the creators to focus on making the necessary changes to please the audience. This critique of the adaptive process has shown a crucial example of how adaptations of beloved characters should be handled: with a certain degree of respect. While the incident may have caused several changes to the movie's schedule and added a larger workload to those working on animating Sonic, it will inevitably show that Paramount and Sega are not interested in merely making a film to make money. Instead, they want to give fans an experience that they can enjoy, without harming the characters involved.

While this may sound close to the argument from fidelity discourse, there is an essential difference. Fidelity discourse argues that the 'original' is superior, which is not a self-evident truth, in the case of adaptations. The point is that it is necessary to be consistent with the elements that pleased the original fans, in this case, the design of the Sonic character. While changing Sonic to appear realistic may display the character as modern and make the adaptation seem contemporary, it is essential that the elements that appeal to the fans of the franchise remain the same. Changing an animated character's design to appear more realistic, just for the sake of doing it, is not always the correct choice, as this backlash indicated.

At this time, it is impossible to determine if *Sonic the Hedgehog* will become a successful adaptation economically. Nevertheless, it shows great promise that the creators of the movie do not value profit over the audience's enjoyment, as it indicates that the adaptation intends to satisfy its audiences. If the creators of *Sonic the Hedgehog* had disregarded the backlash of the visual appearance, and instead went with it, it would have sent a vastly different message to its audience.

Regarding *The Mist* television series, the intention was not solely to profit on the adaptation but to extend the experience of the source material. However, this intention was seemingly side-lined for the sake of adding more filler content. One could argue that likely, the creators of *The Mist* did not see the potential that the narrative contained in a serial setting, without these contemporary filler topics included. *Sonic the Hedgehog* can, hopefully, succeed in achieving

an experience that brings the pleasure to its audiences, without adding inconsistent themes to the story, where *The Mist* could not.

Conclusion

The objective of this study was to evaluate the success of the individual variations of *The Mist* adaptation series based on their reception, and how specific changes to the overall narrative and certain storytelling elements have affected these individual adaptation's financial success. In order to accomplish the first objective of the study, it was necessary to establish an analytical framework that could be used to evaluate an adaptation's success. The challenges of creating such a framework are numerous, especially when the fidelity discourse has restricted the field of adaptation studies, which has affected the amount of research on this particular topic, apart from valuing adaptations based on their faithfulness to the original.

Thus, it was necessary to research how other influential works within the field of adaptation studies have attempted to evaluate adaptations. The study found in its research that an assortment of theorists within the field of adaptation studies have theorised on the process of adaptation. These theorists, including Hutcheon, Bortolotti, Sanders, and Stam, to name a few, have all written extensively on adaptations and have uncovered a variety of essential findings to this study. Moreover, these theorists share a disinclination to acknowledge fidelity discourse as an intrinsic truth and challenge the general notions offered by the discourse.

Through the influential works of these individual theorists, it was possible to uncover a method of evaluating an adaptation in a variety of ways that contrast the antecedent method of judging the adaptation in terms of fidelity. The method that Hutcheon and Bortolotti uncovered did not offer a full theoretical framework for assessing adaptations, merely examples of ways to evaluate success. As a result, it was necessary to establish a fixed definition of what the method necessitates, which rests on a combination of the reception of an adaptation, through audience and critic reviews and ratings, and an analysis of the fundamental changes to the storytelling elements within each variation of the adaptation series. Conjointly, these two aspects cooperate to establish a method of evaluating an adaptation's financial success. Furthermore, it was necessary to establish that the financial success of an adaptation, does not correspond to a guaranteed profit. Instead, this study argues that the financial success of an adaptation rests on its ability to convey the essential ideas of a narrative to new audiences. If an adaptation succeeds at reaching new audiences and resonating with them, it opens up the possibility to generate subsequent adaptations or variations. As a result of such a success, the narrative survives, which is ultimately the aim of an adaptation.

To accomplish the second objective of the study, which was to locate the abeyant storytelling elements that have affected the reception of the adaptations, it was necessary to analyse *The Mist* as an adaptation series. In order to do this, it was necessary to locate an analytical framework that could correspond with the objective, which was found in the extensive work on adaptation from Hutcheon. In her book, she provides an analytical framework for comparing different variations of an adaptation series, to locate the changes that have been made to specific storytelling elements in an adaptation. The analytical framework necessitates an extensive analysis on a variety of topics with distinct foci, which offer varying results, all of which are essential to the process of adaptation.

The analytical framework located in Hutcheon's work proved useful in the analysis, which provided an insight into the several essential differences between the variations of *The Mist* adaptation series. The study found that by reviewing the alterations to the essential storytelling elements, it opened up for the opportunity to locate the abeyant elements that could affect the reception of an adaptation. Surprisingly, this analytical framework highlighted not only the alterations that had negatively impacted the reception; it equally emphasised the positive changes to the narrative that had been well-received. As mentioned previously, this revelation, in combination with an analysis of the reception of an adaptation, constitutes the method that this study uses to evaluate success in adaptations. Moreover, the analytical framework could be applied to uncover the intentions behind the changes to storytelling elements, which provided some insight into the reasons for adapting.

The final objective of the study was to investigate if the conclusions that could be made concerning *The Mist* adaptation series were generalisable to other adaptation series. In order to achieve this objective, it was necessary to extend the previous analytical framework, of a combined analysis of reception and changes to storytelling elements, to other adaptation series, to experiment if the framework could be applied to separate adaptations and produce similar results.

In the discussion, the framework was applied to a variety of adaptation series, which uncovered a variety of results. These results displayed that what generally affected the reception was connected to the reasons for adapting the narrative. In some cases, the study found that certain adaptations had aimed toward pleasing a particular audience, which had limited the potential of the narrative to reach broader audiences. In other cases, the reasons for changing specific storytelling elements of a narrative were merely superficial, which reflected on the final product. These findings

were equally relatable to *The Mist* adaptation series, which confirms that the conclusions that can be drawn from the analytical framework of this study are entirely generalisable to other adaptation series.

Thus, all of the objectives that the study had initially formed have been met. The study has been successful in locating a method of evaluating success in adaptations, and with a few necessary changes, the method has been improved. The study has been equally successful in uncovering the abeyant changes of certain adaptations, that have affected the reception. In terms of this particular objective, the analytical framework of the study has even exceeded the original expectations and located both the positive and negative elements in adaptations that can affect the reception. Finally, the study has found that the conclusions that can be made in regard to an adaptation series, can be generalisable to other adaptation series. In turn, this can assist in understanding the reception of the adaptation, as well as evaluating the financial success of an adaptation.

It is worth mentioning that the objective of this study is not to display a comprehensive picture of the disadvantageous and potentially generalisable elements of an adaptation series. In order to accomplish such an objective, it would necessitate a broader focus that incorporates an evaluation of an adaptation based equally on its artistic, aesthetic, cultural, and economic success. Moreover, it would necessitate an in-depth analysis of the different media's unique strengths and weaknesses and how those might affect the adaptation's subsequent success. Even though this could shape an exciting point for further analysis, focusing on determining an adaptation's success through alterations to the narrative and its reception seem more critical, as it aims to establish an understanding of adaptations as successful in their replication. As a result, the focus of this study rests on the financial success of an adaptation, as it allows for an understanding of success as a combination of the changes to the narrative and the adaptation's reception, that allows the narrative to resonate with vast audiences and survive in new variations and subsequent adaptations.

The study found that the prevailing element for success fundamentally rests on consistently maintaining the fundamental idea of the source material in focus when adapting a narrative. The analysis and discussion demonstrated that specific adaptations have attempted to marginalise the fundamental idea, in favour of adding other elements to the narrative or transform it

severely. While the reasons behind these choices may be connected to appealing to certain audiences, it was found that it repeatedly caused the reception to suffer.

The discussion further found that some of the intentions behind certain alterations to the narrative, that had affected the reception negatively, were made for a variety of reasons. Some were attempts to appeal to certain audiences or minorities, while others were attempts to add content to the narrative or to make the story appear modern or original. These alterations were found to be mostly detrimental to the reception, as the adaptors marginalised the fundamental ideas of the source narratives through these changes. It is possible to make these alterations when adapting, but it is crucial to keep in mind, what ideas the narrative is essentially comprises. While adaptors should strive for creativity and originality in their adaptations, this study aims to demonstrate that it is essential to not fragmentise or marginalise the narrative to an extent, where the audience cannot discern the intriguing connection between the two variations of the narrative.

An excellent example is *The Mist* television series, where the danger of the mist is marginalised for the drama between its characters. In their reviews, the audience communicated a sense of detachment from the original idea of the threat that the mist posed and was disappointed with the emphasis on shallow social issues. In this case, the connection to Stephen King's novel, or Frank Darabont's film adaptation, functioned closer to a gimmick, or a safety net, to draw in fans of the previous variations, yet these fans communicated a great disappointment from the television series focus.

Most crucially, the study has found that the adaptations which were the most successful, were those whose narratives have succeeded in reaching out to broader audiences that could resonate with the narrative. As the narratives have resonated strongly with the audiences, a basis for generating subsequent adaptations and variations have been established, which has allowed the audiences to engage with the narratives in a variety of ways. These ways of engaging have even been adapted to new media, that allow for a different kind of immersion with the narratives, thus furthering the lifespan of the narrative. As a result, one could argue, that adaptations are rather convenient to pitch to producers, as the recognised narratives often promote a higher chance of success and income through successive adaptations. This study attempts to demonstrate that just because a narrative is recognisable and appears convenient to adapt, the process of adaptation should not be underestimated. Adapting a narrative for the wrong reasons inevitably reflects on the reception, which results in an unsuccessful adaptation.

The discussion shows that both the Wolverine and Deadpool characters suffered from the *X-Men Origins: Wolverine* adaptation, as the changes that were made to the storytelling elements, were not justifiable. The changes were not committed for the betterment of the fundamental ideas of the source narrative, but rather for potential profit.

In relation to the *Warcraft: The Beginning* adaptations and its restriction to certain audiences through the adaptor's creative choices. Instead of concentrating on successfully relaying the narrative to new audiences and resonating with those viewers, the narratives aimed to please a limited group of fans. Consequently, the focus from the adaptors to please the fans caused the experience of the film became superficial and relied on exposition through dialogue to cue fans to upcoming events.

The example of *Sonic the Hedgehog* shows how creators can recognise that the impact of their changes to a character can affect the reception of the adaptation. The matter in which the creators handled this particular backlash, displayed respect toward the wishes of the fans, that indicates a desire on their part to stay true to the fundamental idea of the Sonic character. This matter might flag a relevant point for future adaptations, in which the alterations to the narratives are tested on a user audience, before committing to abeyant elements that could subsequently impact the reception of the adaptation negatively.

The counterparts to the unsuccessful adaptations had dealt with these issues in a different manner, which, in turn, reflects on the reception of the adaptations. Where the unsuccessful adaptation had marginalised the narrative or limited it to certain audiences, the successful adaptations had instead emphasised on the fundamental ideas of the adapted narratives, so that they were at the crux of the narrative, as it was being relayed to new audiences.

These discoveries are crucial, as it can be used to reflect on the fidelity discourse that has dominated adaptation studies. While fidelity discourse argues that an adaptation is either faithful or unfaithful to the *original*, this discussion indicates that the most successful adaptations, in terms of reception, are those that remain faithful to the fundamental *idea* of the narrative, rather than the original work. Perhaps the discourse on fidelity could be diverted toward this notion, that puts the content of the narrative in focus, rather than a preestablished notion of a superior original, that often happens to coincide with being a literary work. Through this lens, adaptations should not aim to be faithful to a previous source, but rather aim toward being faithful to the content and ideas that the source represents. In extension, adaptations should represent these aspects of the source

material in new and innovative ways, so that the overall narrative may resonate with a broad variety of audiences.

Further Work:

The thesis has found it possible to evaluate an adaptations' success, which allows for further research on locating the abeyant elements that affect an adaptation positively and negatively, yet this is merely one of many approaches that could be applied to adaptations.

Several aspects could be analysed to prove vital to portray a comprehensive picture of what constitutes a successful adaptation, such as an extensive analysis of an adaptation series economic, artistic, aesthetic and cultural success. Such an analysis could equally be generalisable to other adaptation series. These four aspects would only cover the universal methods of defining success, and there could potentially exist other abeyant reasons for an adaptation's unsuccessful reception, that cannot be measured through these parameters. In that case, it would be necessary to direct the analyses toward the specific aspects that were relevant to the success of an adaptation and attempt to create a theoretical framework that incorporates those aspects of success.

Hutcheon and Bortolotti mention, one approach includes tracing the narratives of adaptation series through time, which can uncover a variety of findings. For one, it could display how the strongest narratives are continually adapted and resonate strongly with one or several cultures, based on the innate ideas and content of the narrative.

This approach could also emphasise on uncovering the lineage of storytelling in various media and comparing it to the recent methods of storytelling, to uncover how certain storytelling methods have undergone a similar alteration or adaptation. Oppositely, the study could aim at analysing the current elements of consumer culture, for instance, through binge-watching, which has become a common phenomenon in western society, yet it is only the latest method of consuming content. Additionally, the study could attempt to analyse streaming services, which can similarly be considered an adaptation, in terms of being a new and contemporary method of distributing content to audiences worldwide, which was previously not feasible.

The focus of another study could lie on locating which elements resonate with western culture or societies. Furthermore, the aim of such a study could be directed at comparing the values that are portrayed in narratives that resonate strongly with related or opposing cultures and societies.

Another study could be located in terms of the three modes of engagement, where it could be possible to evaluate a video game adaptation's success and compare it to the adaptation series it belongs to, and this focus could uncover several findings for future video game adaptors. There are several other aspects necessary to analyse if one's intent is to evaluate a video game's success, including the overall interactivity of the video games. This aspect concerns how much control the player of a video game possesses, and how they are can interact with the different storytelling elements of the video game, i.e. the world, and its characters.

A completely different direction could be analysing the level of interactivity in a specific video game adaptation and how that has affected the reception. A great example of analysis would be the *World of Warcraft* adaptation series, as the recent expansions have been criticised to the extent that players began demanding for the old version of 2005. Blizzard, the creators of *World of Warcraft*, have since then promised to re-release the old game again, with minimal changes to the game and the gameplay. Such a study would be exceedingly interesting and could highlight how the new adaptation of the *World of Warcraft* franchise fares, what critical changes caused the re-make of the original game, and why the fan-base would prefer such a dated game.

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