

Amy Kemp. Lets Go to the Movies: The Adaptation of Young Adult Novels Into Popular Film. A Master's paper for the M.S. in L.S. degree. April, 2014. 63 pages. Advisor: Sandra Hughes-Hassell

This study follows an examination 26 film adaptations of Young Adult novels, conducted to determine a correlation between the amount of story changes occurring from the original book to the film and the measure of financial and critical success the film receives.

Over the past fourteen years, the market for film adaptations of popular young adult novels has exploded. Fans are often disappointed, however, as the films frequently make numerous changes to the original story. Three main categories of change emerge: changes in characterization, changes in plot, and changes in content censorship. The success of these changes varies, depending on how they are used. Many changes are not motivated by story enhancement at all, but by personal, industry, or cinematic advantages. The study shows that there is no correlation between amount of changes and financial or critical success, though there is a link between book popularity and film revenue.

Headings:

Film Novelizations

Motion Pictures

Young Adult Films

Young Adult Literature

Young Adults—Books and Reading

LET'S GO TO THE MOVIES: THE ADAPTATION OF YOUNG ADULT NOVELS  
INTO POPULAR FILM

by  
Amy L Kemp

A Master's paper submitted to the faculty  
of the School of Information and Library Science  
of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Master of Science in  
Library Science.

Chapel Hill, North Carolina

April 2014

Approved by

---

Sandra Hughes-Hassel

## Table of Contents

<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Methodology .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Data Collection .....</b>	<b>12</b>
Data Analysis.....	12
Limitations.....	13
<b>Findings .....</b>	<b>14</b>
Characterization .....	15
Plot.....	28
Censorship .....	42
<b>Putting it Together.....</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>Conclusion .....</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>Appendix A: All Film Adaptations from 2000 to 2014 .....</b>	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
<b>Bibliography .....</b>	<b>57</b>

## Introduction

It's the phrase you hear time and time again: "The movie was okay, but the book was better." It seems that, despite bringing in millions of dollars in revenues, Hollywood's movie adaptations can never quite measure up to their literary predecessors. This is especially apparent in the Young Adult genre. Though a relatively new genre on the scene, Young Adult novels now are not only some of the best selling books in the country, but also form the basis of the most popular and highest grossing films (IMDb, 2014). Fans of these novels (and de facto, of the films,) can be fanatical in insisting that the intricate details of the story be carried out faithfully on screen, especially when it comes to things like character appearance, plot details, and the story's ending. But do these intense requirements have an effect on the film adaptation's success?

As a librarian with a Bachelor's degree in Film Studies, I wanted to explore the ways in which YA literary works change between the written page and the silver screen. I was also curious what impact these changes have on the film's financial and critical success. This information is greatly helpful to the film industry, as it provides insight into what kinds of screenplay adaptations provide the best financial and critical results. It is also important for authors of YA fiction to be aware of what changes their work is likely to go through when it is sold to film studios. If an author

wants to insure certain creative aspects remain unchanged in the work, they need to have their contract stated accordingly. Finally, the audiences are also benefited when they have increased awareness of what cinematic changes are typically made and why. Knowledge of how things work can take the sting out of unwelcome adaptation changes and can provide an overall better viewing experience.

I developed a study wherein I analyze the amount and type of changes film adaptations of Young Adult novels make from the literary originals. I wanted to discover the categories of these types of changes, possible motivations for the change, and if they enhanced the film and plot or detracted from them. I also wished to discover if the total amount of deviance impacted the film's success. I hypothesized that higher amounts of changes will decrease the success of the film, both financially and cinematically.

## **Background**

More than two-thirds of the US/Canada population went to the movies at least once within the past year, with the typical moviegoer attending an average of six times per year. Teens aged 12-17 have long been a target demographic for studios because of their frequent cinema attendance, currently totaling thirteen percent of all ticket sales (MPAA, 2013). Statistics, however, show that teen theater attendance has dropped in recent years, with attendance for consumers aged 12-24 down 40 percent since 2002 (Atkinson, 2012). Teens will still pay to go to the movie theater for specific films, especially if it is a film that has been heavily hyped and

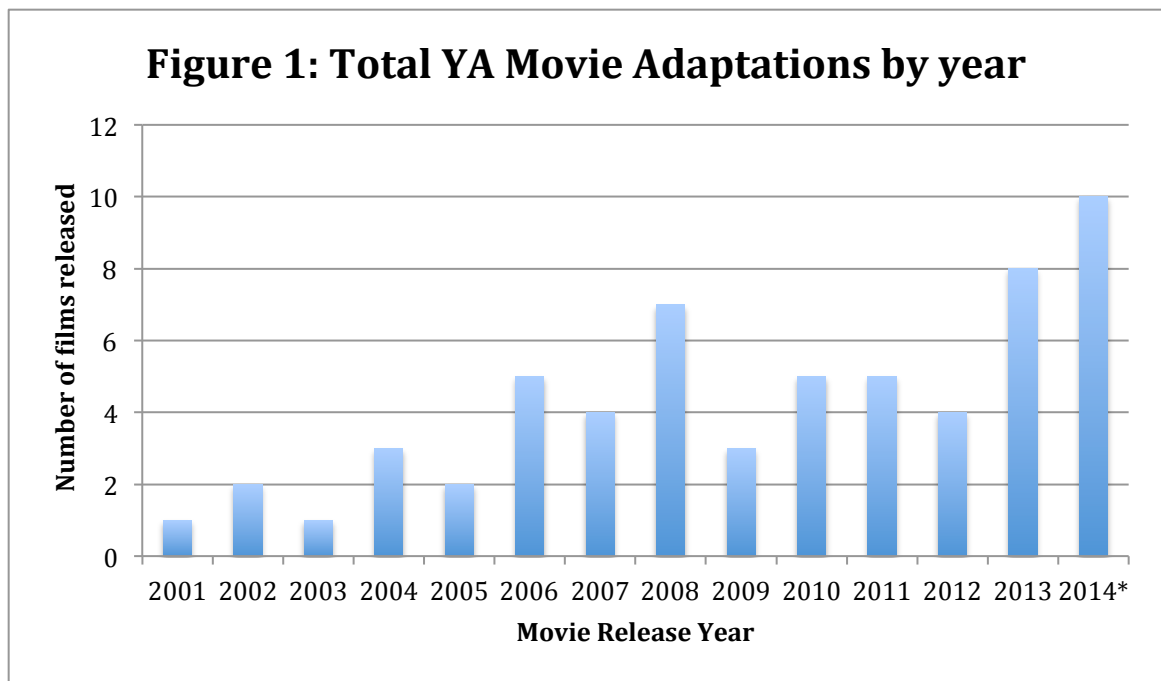
anticipated. It is the social aspect of movies, though, that is the biggest impetus continuing to bring teens to the theaters. According to a recent study, many teens will go to the movies regardless of what is playing. Says global financial firm Morgan Stanley, “[Teens] will just go and choose when they get there. This is because going to the cinema is not usually about the film, but the experience –and getting together with friends” (Robson, 2009). When this happens teens are likely to choose a film they’ve heard something about, which is even more likely if said film is based on a successful book.

Young Adult fiction, also called YA, is a genre of books characterized by being marketed toward young adults. The American Library Association defines young adults as the demographic between the ages of 12 and 18 (Nel & Paul, 2011). The term is attributed to educational reformer and literature critic Sarah Timmons, who, in the 1800’s, first described a “young persons” market between childhood and full adulthood (Nel & Paul, 2011). Despite this, the distinction of the genre did not become fully apparent until the mid 1960’s, with the release of SE Hinton’s classic “The Outsiders” (Adapted for the screen in 1983) (Owen, 2003). The Young Adult genre grew throughout the 70’s, 80’s, and 90’s, into the multi-billion dollar industry it is today. It has even become increasingly popular with non-intentioned demographics. Recent studies show that 55% of young adult fiction is bought for readers over the age of 18 (Publishers Weekly, 2012).

The market for YA literary adaptations is also booming, correlating with the popularity of their literary predecessors. A genre of teen movies was first created in

the 1950's, as the post WWII middle class emergence created a generation of young people with larger allowances and more free time (Fox, 2009). Teen films truly took over in the 1980's, when movies featuring the "Brat pack" showed their audience-winning box office abilities and quickly became cult classics. These films were immensely popular, but were almost always original creations, and not based off of other popular material (Fox, 2009). It wasn't until the 2001 release of *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* that studios discovered there was an audience for the adaptation of beloved novels as cinematic blockbusters. As the multi-billion dollar Harry Potter franchise was followed by other successful series, it became clear that YA novels provided a ready-made audience and were a lucrative source of movie material. Fourteen of the top 100 grossing movies of all time were adaptations of popular young adult novels, all of them released within the last 13 years (IMDb, 2014).

Seeing a clear demand for the genre, production companies have, within recent years, exponentially increased their literary adaptation output (See Figure 1). Some YA authors are even cashing in on the trend. Twilight series author Stephenie Meyer and partner Meghan Hibbett have recently started Fickle Fish Films, a production company that aims to bring works of literature to the big screen. They are currently in production with two YA adaptations (Meyer, 2014). In all, there are over 60 Young Adult books with movie adaptations currently in the works (May, 2013).



*\* 2014 data depicts projected releases and is subject to change*

The art of turning a popular book into a popular movie is extremely delicate. As one CNN reporter describes, “Film adaptations are a balancing act of fan expectations and filmmaker priorities” (Strickland, 2013). Phillip Pullman, author of the popular *His Dark Materials* series, agrees. “Every film has to make changes to the story that the original book tells,” he claims, “Not to change the outcome, but to make it fit the dimensions and the medium of film” (Pullman, 2007). If the filmmaker diverts too drastically from the original, they risk alienating their core audience. Many literary aspects, however, do not translate well into film, so the directors, screenwriters, and producers must choose how to best represent the overall tone of the book while still creating a compelling visual narrative.



## **Methodology**

Through my study, I wanted to discover what types of changes are made to the original work when adapting a story for the screen, with special emphasis on the purpose for these changes whether they added to the film as a whole or detracted from it. My main query was whether the amount of changes made for the adaptation would have any impact on the film's success. I hypothesized that higher amounts of changes from the original story would decrease the success of the film, both financially and cinematically.

## **Study Sample**

Due to the genre's current theatrical domination, many institutions, from MTV to the LA Times, have taken an interest in listing and rating YA novel adaptations. To my surprise, however, I could find no list that was fully comprehensive or accurate. I combined a multitude of online lists with my own cinematic and literary knowledge to form my own updated and solely YA based list. I discovered 61 film adaptations of YA books released or expecting release between the years 2000 and 2014 (See Appendix A). Of these 61, I selected 26 for the study sample (see Table 1).

**Table 1: Study Sample of YA Adaptations**

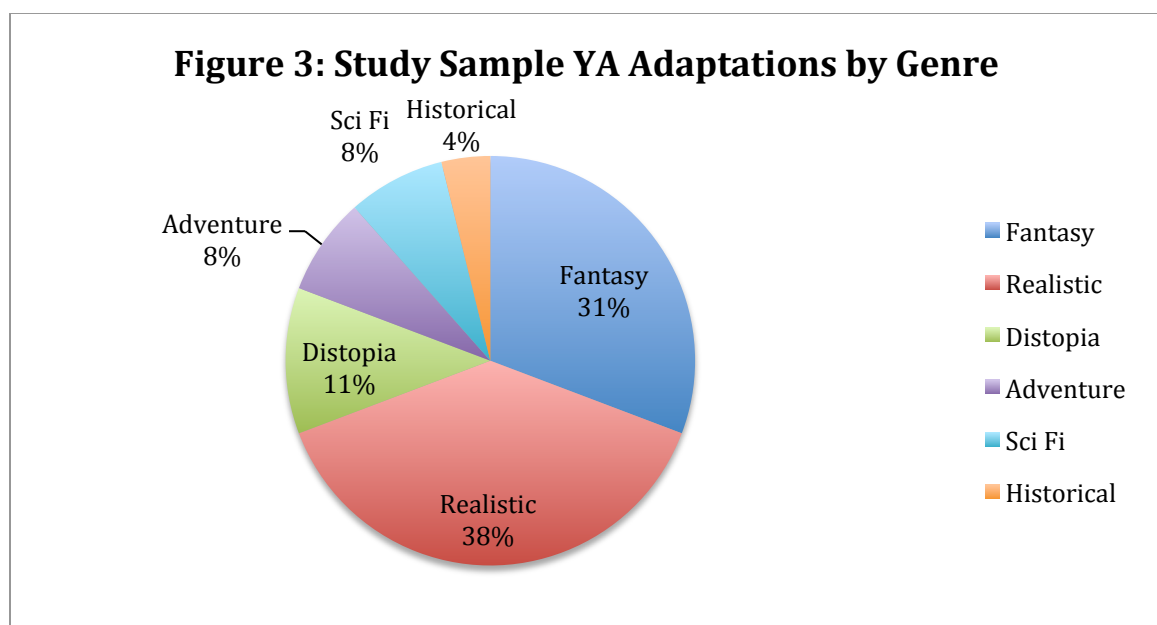
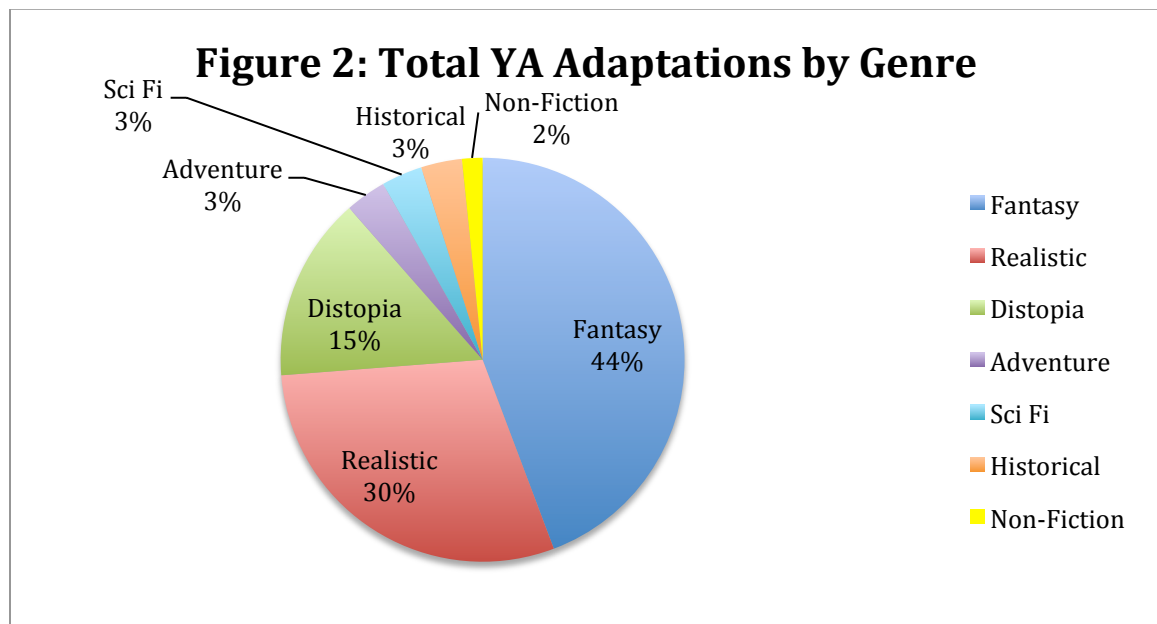
<b>Book Title (<i>Movie Title, if different</i>)</b>	<b>Book Publication Date</b>	<b>Movie Release Date</b>	<b>Genre</b>
<b>Beastly</b>	2007	2011	Fantasy
<b>Beautiful Creatures</b>	2012	2013	Fantasy
<b>Blood and Chocolate</b>	1997	2007	Fantasy
<b>City of Ember</b>	2003	2008	Distopia
<b>Confessions of a Teenage Drama Queen</b>	1999	2004	Realistic
<b>Derby Girl (<i>Whip It</i>)</b>	2007	2007	Realistic
<b>Ender's Game</b>	1985	2013	Sci-Fi
<b>Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone</b>	1997	2001	Fantasy
<b>Holes</b>	1998	2003	Adventure
<b>Hoot</b>	2002	2006	Realistic
<b>How I Live Now</b>	2004	2013	Distopia
<b>I am Number Four</b>	2010	2011	Sci-Fi
<b>It's Kind of a Funny Story</b>	2006	2010	Realistic
<b>My Friend Flicka (<i>Flicka</i>)</b>	1941	2006	Realistic
<b>Nick and Norah's Infinite Playlist</b>	2006	2008	Realistic
<b>Stormbreaker (<i>Alex Rider: Stormbreaker</i>)</b>	2000	2006	Adventure
<b>The Boy in the Striped Pajamas</b>	2006	2008	Historical
<b>The Golden Compass</b>	1995	2007	Fantasy
<b>The Hunger Games</b>	2008	2012	Distopia
<b>The Lightning Thief (<i>Percy Jackson and the Olympians: The Lightning Thief</i>)</b>	2005	2010	Fantasy
<b>The Perks of Being a Wallflower</b>	1999	2012	Realistic
<b>The Princess Diaries</b>	2000	2002	Realistic
<b>The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants</b>	2001	2005	Realistic
<b>The Spectacular Now</b>	2008	2013	Realistic
<b>The Thief Lord</b>	2000	2006	Fantasy
<b>Twilight</b>	2005	2008	Fantasy

To qualify for consideration in my study, the film first had to be based on a YA novel. Though seemingly simple, this step was more difficult than anticipated, because although there is a clear definition of what a YA novel is, it can be rather hard to determine which books qualify, especially with books on the border between Juvenile and Young Adult or Young Adult and Adult. For most, I deferred to the classification given by the Wake County Public Library. For some, I ended up just making a judgment call.

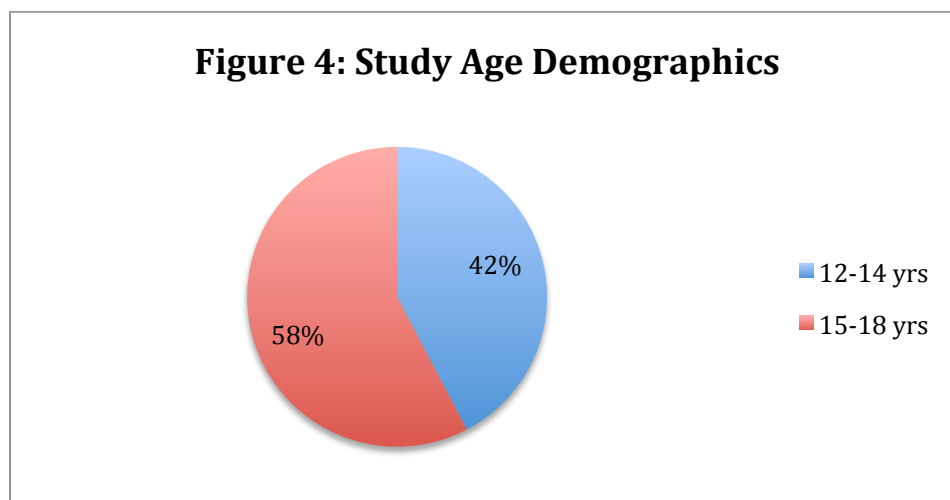
Second, the film had to be based on either a stand-alone book or the first book in a series. (I didn't feel the need to include all eight Harry Potter movies, for example.) The film also had to have a 1:1 film to book ratio. For example, the film *The Vampire's Assistant* does not qualify because it is one movie based on three different books in the series. *Breaking Dawn Part 2*, aside from also being a sequel, is one movie based on only half a book. All films in the study had to receive a theatrical release, complete with revenue statistics and critic reviews. For simplicity's sake, I also limited my selection to films already released on DVD. This ended up excluding films with theatrical release dates after November of 2013.

I also attempted to select a diverse collection of adaptations that represented many different genres and age levels. In book/film genres, my goal was to select percentages of each genre roughly equivalent to their cinematic prevalence in the total modern YA adaptation canon. As shown in figures 2 and 3, the percentage of fantasy adaptations included in the study ended up being about 13% less than the overall YA adaptation norm due to the overwhelming number of fantasy sequels in

various series that did not meet the criteria. (Harry Potter, Twilight, Percy Jackson, etc.) A similar trend was seen in the Distopia category (Hunger Games,) though on a smaller scale. This was compensated for with an increase in the percentages of Realistic, Adventure, and Sci-fi adaptations.



Adaptations based on books for younger YA's (aged 12-14) made up 42% of the sample, with those based on books for older YA's (aged 15-18) comprising the remaining 58% (See figure 4.)



For a list of all YA adaptations released between 2000 and 2014, see Appendix A.

## **Data Collection**

Once I had my sample selection, I went through the list one work at a time. I read the novel first, then I watched the movie while following along in the novel. Frequent pauses in the film were taken to ensure that nothing was skipped or overlooked. Whenever I came across something in the film that did not match the events or description in the novel, I wrote them down in my notes, with separate pages for each adaptation. Some portions were read/watched multiple times to help eliminate error. Most changes noted were factual and straightforward. (A character from the book didn't appear in the film, etc.) I tried very much to not include changes resulting from personal opinion (He's not as handsome as the book says, that event was boring, etc.) unless it clearly impacted the film, was blatantly obvious, or was considered important by noted critics. I also steered clear of changes caused by assumptions. If the original novel does not explicitly state something to the contrary, it cannot count as an adaptive change. As the works were viewed, it became apparent that most of the changes fell within the categories of characterization, plot alteration, or content censorship, so special attention and scrutiny was given to those areas.

## **Data Analysis**

Once I completed the compilation of adaptive changes in my notes, I then organized these changes into the three main types of change, calculating which

categories were most prevalent. I searched the internet for news articles and interviews with the novel authors, the film screenwriters, and the film directors. This research gave industry perspectives on why these changes might have been made. Finally, I calculated the total number of changes in each film adaptation. I attempted to find correlations and trends between the amount of changes an adaptation utilized and outside statistical data, including book popularity, total movie revenues, and critical ratings.

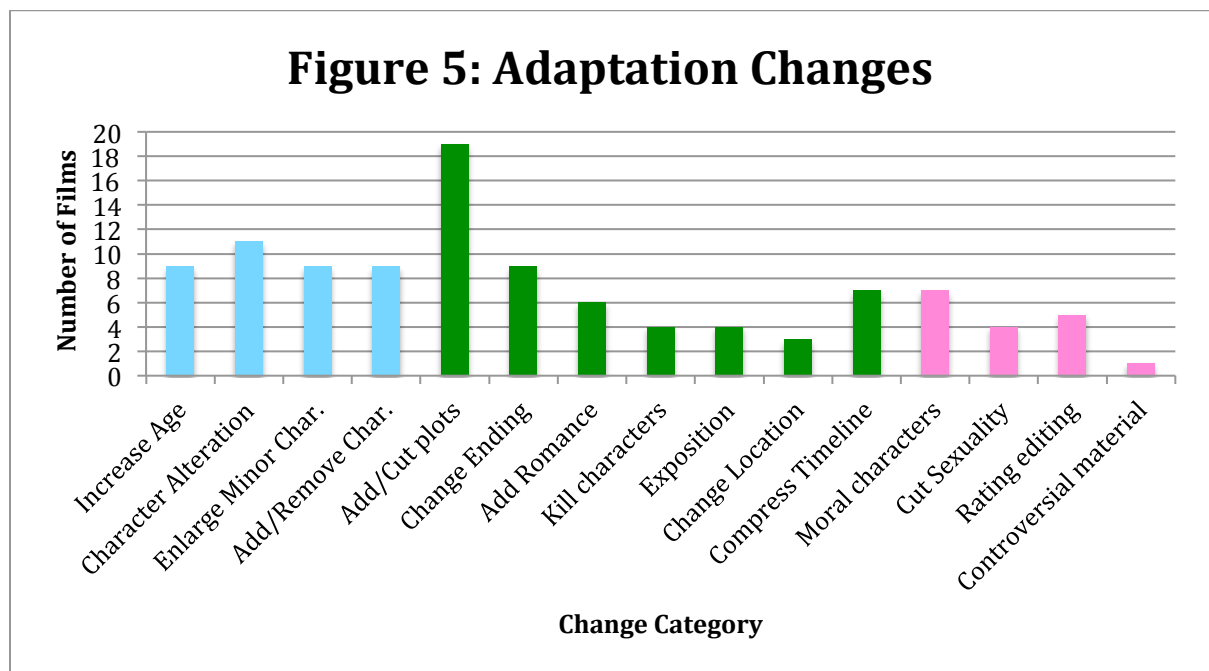
### **Limitations**

There are several limitations to this study. First and foremost, I was the only coder, leaving room for human error and not allowing for differences in opinion. Despite my best efforts, it is possible that I missed some changes, or that another coder could disagree with the changes I considered notable.

The data itself is limited because there was no way to take into account differing significance in the changes. Altering the ending of the story in a film is likely more impactful to the film as a whole than changing a character's hair color, but both would be weighted equally in the overall change tally. Though I would have liked to create a way to consider the influence of the changes in the data, I could not find a way to do so while remaining objective.

## Findings

Overall, there were 15 areas of changes, which fit into three types of categories, as shown in Figure 5. These categories are Changes in Characterization, Changes in Plot, and Changes due to Censorship. Since most adaptive successes depend not on the kind change itself, but on how the change was utilized, I included examples of when a type of change supported the adaptation, when it seemed unnecessary, and why.





## **Characterization**

Characters are the focal piece of the story. They are the audience's connection to the world and events depicted. Meaningful and complex characters can almost manifest to us as dear friends, and as such, readers can be ferociously protective of them and their depictions. My research has revealed four main ways in which movie adaptations of YA novels alter a story's characters, occurring in both positive and negative ways: Increasing character ages, changing character physicality/ personality, enlarging minor characters, and adding or removing characters altogether.

### **I. Increasing character's ages**

Surprisingly, a fairly common movie alteration to book characters is to increase their age. In a book, a juvenile character can be or achieve anything the author wishes. When adapting for a film, however, screenwriters have much more realistic limitations. All actions by a character must be undertaken, at some level, by a real child or teen. This has led to a large amount of rules and regulations on what child actors are and are not allowed to do. Individual state laws establish codes on safety regulations, mandatory schooling hours for the children, and especially work hour limitations (SAG, 2014). The older the child playing a certain character, the more hours a day they can shoot scenes. If characters are in their mid to late teens, films even have the option of casting young looking adults, removing juvenile work restrictions completely. While some producers will choose to use older teens and

adults but pretend that they are the original character age, the majority will simply increase the stated age. Thirty-five percent of sampled adaptations increased character ages, as shown in Table 2. The average sample age for all 26 novels was 13.9. The Film adaptation average age increased to 15, an eight percent raise.

**Table 2: Age Changes in Adaptations**

Story	Book Age	Film Age
<b>Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants</b>	15	17
<b>The Thief Lord</b>	12	15
<b>The Lightning Thief</b>	12	16
<b>Ender's Game</b>	6	14
<b>My Friend Flicka</b>	10	16
<b>Beastly</b>	16	17
<b>Derby Girl</b>	16	17
<b>Blood and Chocolate</b>	16	19
<b>It's Kind of a Funny story</b>	15	16
<b>Averages of adaptations with change</b>	13.1	16.1
<b>Total Average from study sample</b>	13.9	15

The Good:

The book *Ender's Game* follows the life and adventures of Ender Wiggin from the young age of six until he is thirteen. When collaborating on the script, director and screenwriter Gavin Hood realized the impossibilities in casting a child that could seemingly age seven years throughout the course of the film. Additionally, he recalls, he was reluctant to double cast the role because "If we were changing actors

on the audience, they would find that very disruptive to their viewing experience. You essentially need this complicated kid... how will you find that in three or four actors" (Clark, 2013). Eventually, he cast 16 year old Asa Butterfield as Ender, making the character far older than in the book. Hood's reasoning, however, was very practical.

"We tried actors from age 7 all the way to age 14, and the younger actors, even though there were some really good ones, it was very hard to find an actor that could be both awkward and shy and withdrawn at the beginning...and yet by the end come through with this moment... it just didn't work. I think we were just very lucky to find Asa, who is highly intelligent, genuinely humble and could do the physical work in the wires...a lot of demands for a young actor" (Clark, 2013).

An older actor was better equipped to execute the physical and emotional demands of the character. Additionally, the film was shot in chronological order. This is highly unusual and costly in the film industry, though it paid off in character continuity, as Asa grew two inches over the course of shooting. Hood's decision to use a single actor was motivated by characterization, and paid off in the technical quality of the film.

The Bad:

The wildly popular series *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* follows the quests and trials of Percy Jackson, the twelve-year-old son of the Greek God Poseidon. The movie, however, portrays young Percy and his friends as 16-year-old high schoolers. According to director Chris Columbus, the reason for the change very similar to that of Hood in *Ender's Game*: increased actor and character maturity (Nemiroff, 2010). The film, however, coupled their increased age with allowances for more non-canon

'adult' reactions, mainly overall increased violence, perpetual flirting from satyr Grover, and an awkward romantic tension between Percy and fellow Demigod Annabeth. Instead of allowing the actors to adapt to the characters, the film changes crucial personality and plot aspects of the characters to fit the actors. Additionally, the book series has Percy starting at age twelve and eventually growing to sixteen. As the studio seems determined to continue the film series, despite falling profit margins in the sequel, will future films be forced to accept Percy (and actor Logan Lerman) aging accordingly? Perhaps show Percy coming back from college to save the day during spring break?

## **II. Change Major Character's Physicality or Personality**

When reading a book, the reader automatically pictures the characters in their mind. Sometimes, the author provides a description of the characters to provide a foundation. Other times, the readers are left mostly to their own devices. Either way, fans can be very particular about whether an actor looks like how they envisioned the character. Sometimes, even accurate castings cause fan trouble. In 2011, a contingent of Hunger Games fans were unhappy that an African-American girl was chosen to play the doomed tribute Rue, even though author Suzanne Collins specifically mentions Rue's 'dark skin' (Goldberg, 2012). When it comes to casting characters popular books, studios and directors are faced with an extremely uphill battle, often resulting in concessions being made. An exceptional or popular actor can be cast without really looking like a particular character description. A character's personality can be altered to better fit changes in the story or to create

more interesting growth. Forty-two percent of surveyed films made changes to a major character's physicality or personality (See Table 3). Films in this category don't include those with minor changes or changes based on personal opinion ("Her hair's not blonde enough! I pictured him meaner!") only those whose changes are specifically sated, blatantly obvious, or impact the storyline.

**Table 3: Major Character Changes**

<b>Adaptation</b>	<b>Physical Change</b>	<b>Personality Change</b>
<b>Alex Rider: Stormbreaker</b>	Darrius: White American instead of Egyptian	
<b>Beastly</b>	Kyle: Scars & Tattoos instead of fur & claws Lindy & Kendra: Attractive & fashionable instead of average/hideous	
<b>Ender's Game</b>	Ender: Bigger than most of his friends & superiors instead of the youngest & smallest	
<b>Flicka</b>	Katy: Girl instead of boy	
<b>Holes</b>	Stanley: Skinny instead of fat	
<b>How I Live Now</b>		Daisy: Sullen & rude to cousins instead of moderately happy
<b>Percy Jackson &amp; the Olympians: The Lightning Thief</b>	Annabeth: Dark straight hair instead of curly & blonde Medusa: Beautiful instead of ugly witch	
<b>The Golden Compass</b>	Mrs. Coulter: Blonde & fair instead of dark	
<b>The Princess Diaries</b>	Mia: Long haired brunette instead of short haired blonde	Queen Clarisse: Kind instead of cruel
<b>The Spectacular Now</b>	Cassidy: Regular instead of fat Aimee: Brunette instead of blond	
<b>Whip It</b>		Bliss: Uncomfortable & unhappy instead of entitled and rude

### The Good:

In the novel *Holes*, Stanley Yelnats is described as a very overweight and insecure kid who is frequently teased by his classmates. When arriving at Camp Green Lake and forced to dig daily holes, he loses weight and gains strength & confidence. Loosing weight over a period of time is hard to depict in a film, though, especially in kids. Casting went with then-newcomer Shia LeBeouf as Stanley, even though he was extremely skinny. Novel author and screenwriter Louis Sachar has since mentioned his initial reluctance for the role.

“I was concerned when I was told that Shia [LaBeouf] would be cast, not because I thought he had to be overweight, I didn't think that was an essential element of the story... but because the book had become such a success I thought people would come to the cinema, see Shia, and think "That's not Stanley". But that hasn't been the case. Shia conveys the right emotion, vulnerability, and the right kind of quirkiness. I've never heard of anyone complaining that he's not overweight” (Russell, 2003).

Although it wasn't exactly the same as the book, eliminating the weight loss saved a lot of time and hassle, gave a great actor the role, and didn't really impact the plot anyway.

### Neutral:

*My Friend Flicka* tells the tale of a 10-year-old boy growing up on a horse ranch in Wyoming. It's film adaptation, title shortened to *Flicka*, told the tale of a... 16-year-old girl? Yes, 10-year-old Ken becomes 16-year-old Katy. In essence, not a whole lot about the character changed. Both were still dreamy, irresponsible, stubborn second children who were determined to one day run the ranch despite their father's preference for the older son. Screenwriters Mark Rosenthal and

Lawrence Konner explain that the change came all the way from the top, as it was actually the idea of Fox 2000 President Elizabeth Gabler. Rosenthal explains that “the new twist gave... an exciting dilemma: What if the child that really understood the land and the ranch was the daughter, and not the son? This coupled with her headstrong personality and sometimes irresponsible ways generated a new way to look at the material.” “Things pretty much flowed from the one central new idea,” agrees Konner, “allowing us to create a father-daughter story where both characters had to learn something about themselves and each other. Each one had to re-examine their role within a revised family dynamic” (20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox, 2006). Changing the character to an older girl gives the film a ‘whole family enjoyment’ aspect instead of creating a primarily children’s themed film, and likely tugged at the heartstrings of every little girl in America who’s ever desperately begged for a pony. The change is pretty drastic, though, and if anyone came into the movie solely from the viewpoint of the book, they would be rather disappointed. In the end, it comes down to a matter of personal preference.

#### The Bad:

In the fairy tale remix *Beastly*, handsome but conceited Kyle is turned into a beast by hideous witch Kendra, and must remain in that form until he can find a girl to love him as he is. Said girl turns out to be fellow classmate and scholarship student Lindy, described by Kyle as average, if not downright unattractive. Lindy is played by Vanessa Hudgens. This is a prime example of the “Hollywood effect,” in which ‘average’ looking characters are gorgeous, and ‘good-looking’ characters look

like Gods. Even taking into account personal preference, there are very few people in the world who would dare call Vanessa Hudgens unattractive, or even average. Kendra meanwhile, though called hideously ugly, is played by Mary Kate Olsen, and is only shown to be unattractive so far as she has excessive amounts of eye shadow and a slightly colored scar on her face. As one reviewer describes “There’s no such thing as ugly in Hollywood... The producers cast 90-pound fashion label kingpin and model Mary Kate Olsen. Kyle calls her a ‘self-mutilated, tatted Frankenskank,’ but Olsen’s character is just fashion-forward — a goth goddess dressed as if by Jean-Paul Gaultier” (Hill, 2011). It’s films like this that give girls around the world unhealthy body complexes, driving them to buy more, fix more, do more to look like the unattainable image of Hollywood beauty. If Vanessa Hudgens and Mary Kate Olsen are the standard for unattractive, what hope do the rest of us have for being pretty? The film’s inability to understand the concept was best described by film critic Catherine Jones. “This reworking”, she explains, “undermines its central message about substance over style by sacrificing characterization for glossy visuals. *Beastly* tries to convince its target teen audience that... the true value of a person is intelligence and sensitivity. But the message is delivered by a good looking, perfectly groomed cast” (Jones, 2011). Casting directors have a responsibility to portray real-looking girls in pop culture, and this film has failed spectacularly.

### **III. Enlarge Minor Characters**

Thirty-five percent of the sampled films significantly increased the size or importance of certain roles compared to their book counterparts, shown in Table 4.



Often this was to fill a void in certain areas of the film. A novel focusing on one or two people is great, but usually movies need more characters for the protagonist to interact with in a meaningful way, otherwise you could end up with a very boring two hours of film. It was also used as a means to appeal to a broader demographic, such as increasing the role of a female character in a male centric film. Some adaptations even enlarged characters to emphasize differences between the protagonist and others around them.

**Table 4: Characters enlarged**

<b>Adaptation</b>	<b>Character Enlarged</b>
<b>Alex Rider: Stormbreaker</b>	Jack
<b>Beautiful Creatures</b>	Sarafine; Amma
<b>City of Ember</b>	Doon's Father; Saul
<b>Ender's Game</b>	Petra
<b>How I Live Now</b>	Joe
<b>It's Kind of a Funny Story</b>	Bobby
<b>Nick and Norah's Infinite Playlist</b>	Caroline
<b>The Princess Diaries</b>	Queen Clarisse
<b>Whip It</b>	Maggie Mayhem; all Hurl Scouts

The Good:

*It's Kind of a Funny Story* is the semi-autobiographical tale of a teen's contemplated suicide and subsequent stay in a mental hospital. During Craig's time as a patient, he describes and comes to know his fellow residents, each having their own mental problems. With the exception of his love interest, though, all patients are given approximately equal amounts of attention. The film adaptation, while keeping all the original patients, promotes middle-aged father Bobby to be Craig's

particular mentor and friend. Screenwriter and director Anna Boden made this decision.

“I think the focus on the central relationship between Craig and Bobby was important. The book already had the important relationship between him and Noelle, but there were so many relationships that the book explored in depth... that we really decided early on that we just didn’t have the time... and we focused in on this one character and kind of combined a bunch of different characters in the ward to create Bobby” (Tobias, 2010).

Though the film still displays the overall kookiness of the grand cast of characters, the increased use of Bobby gives Craig (and the viewer) the vocal point of a person he both admires greatly but and refuses to turn into. And since he’s played by Zach Galifianakis, he’s also wickedly funny to boot.

Neutral:

In the supernatural novel *Beautiful Creatures*, witch Lena dreads turning 16, when she will be claimed for either the Light or the Dark. Behind the scenes and greatly pushing for Dark is Lena’s super evil mother Sarafine, whom she has never met. While Sarafine is constantly referred to as a threat, (and spends her time sneaking around town masquerading as locals,) she doesn’t actually reveal herself until the very end of the novel. In the film adaptation, Sarafine reveals herself much earlier on to the audience and certain characters, detailing her dastardly plans of world domination. Her earlier presence is the catalyst for a very complicated and confusing plot addition, and some might find her outrageous Southern accent and scenery-chewing acting overbearing, but her earlier introduction also gives her gravitas and something to build up to in the climax, instead of being the big bad villain that randomly shows up at the end of the story. In addition, as played by the

immaculate Emma Thompson, she's easily one of the most interesting parts of this convoluted southern gothic romance. In fact, author Kami Garcia has remarked that Sarafine's early entrance was her favorite scene of the film. "The scene is a little different" she admits, but "watching Jeremy Irons and Emma Thompson go head-to-head gave me goosebumps" (Lamoureux, 2013).

The Bad:

*Nick and Norah's Infinite Playlist* is the dual-perspective story of how Nick and Norah meet and fall in love over the course of one night. Though they're hanging out in the city with their friends, the story is primarily about the interactions of these two, with the last third of the book taking place entirely between just them. The filmmakers, however, felt that they needed to split the action between the two lovebirds and their friends. Says director Peter Sollett "I thought *Nick and Norah* needed an additional objective... So, what we did was we had Caroline go visit. It's an ensemble film, a lot of people to establish. We sweated a little bit about how to organize all the distribution of all that information" (Kelly, 2008). In order to distribute the characters, they created an entire subplot where Norah's drunk friend Caroline gets lost in the city, causing a giant manhunt to get her back. Instead of being taken home after the first few chapters, movie Caroline pops up periodically throughout the entire film, usually vomiting or spewing nonsense. While book Caroline was described as a moderately intelligent and good friend who likes to party, movie Caroline just becomes a running joke.

#### **IV. Add/Remove character**

For the most part, the film adaptations kept the same characters given to them by the original work, with only thirty-five percent adding or removing a significant character. Of these, the large majority were films that were cutting an existing character, whether out of time constraints, plot-flow considerations, or the screenwriter's desire to go in a different direction. Only two films added a significant character that was not in the book (See Table 5).

**Table 5: Characters Added or Removed**

<b>Adaptation</b>	<b>Character Deleted</b>	<b>Character Added</b>
<b>Alex Rider: Stormbreaker</b>		Sabina
<b>Blood and Chocolate</b>	All of Vivian's human friends; most of her pack	
<b>Hoot</b>	Mullet's mother	
<b>How I Live Now</b>	Osbert; Major McEvoy	
<b>Percy Jackson &amp; the Olympians: The Lightning Thief</b>		Persephone
<b>The Hunger Games</b>	Madge; Avox girl	
<b>The Princess Diaries</b>	Mia's father; Tina Hakim Baba	
<b>The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants</b>	Perry; Ellie	
<b>The Spectacular Now</b>	Sutter's stepfather	

The Good:

In *The Princess Diaries*, Mia's father tells her that she is actually a crown princess, and since he can no longer have children, she must prepare to one day be the next ruler of his country. While the novel has many strengths, this basic premise has many logical flaws. If Mia is 15, her father has had at least 15 years to consider

marrying and the procreation of future heirs, not to mention the likelihood of preserving sperm since biological heirs are apparently so crucial. Much more sensible is the movie's take, in which Mia's father dies unexpectedly before the story begins, leaving her as the only remaining biological heir. Additionally, in a novel where everyone is seemingly antagonistic towards Mia, killing off the father gives the viewer one less person to dislike.

These were added bonuses, of course, but the real reason for the change actually had more to do with star power than plot benefits. According to book author Meg Cabot, the producers killed off Mia's father in order to increase the size of the role of actress Julie Andrews, playing Mia's grandmother. Cabot was such a fan of Ms. Andrews that she didn't even mind the alteration, telling the producers "Julie Andrews, yeah, you can kill the dad, whatever you have to do" (Rabinovitch, 2004). In the end, the excellent Julie Andrews gets more screen time, and the plot makes more sense. Everyone wins.

#### The Bad:

In the best-selling series *The Hunger Games*, one of the first characters the reader is introduced to is Madge, the mayor's daughter. She is friends with hero Katniss, despite their vastly different backgrounds, and even gives Katniss her infamous mockingjay pin. The film cuts Madge's storyline, having Katniss acquire the pin at the local black market. According to novel author Suzanne Collins, this change was made solely because of time limitations. "When you're adapting a novel into a two-hour movie you can't bring everything with you" She reveals, "So a lot of

compression is needed. Not all the characters are going to make it to the screen. For example, we gave up Madge” (Sims, 2012). While this isn’t really a devastating loss, Madge was the main method of contrast between the devastatingly poor Seem children and the more moderate town children. Removing Madge from the first film also automatically means she cannot sensibly show up in the subsequent films, even if an important plotline utilizes her.

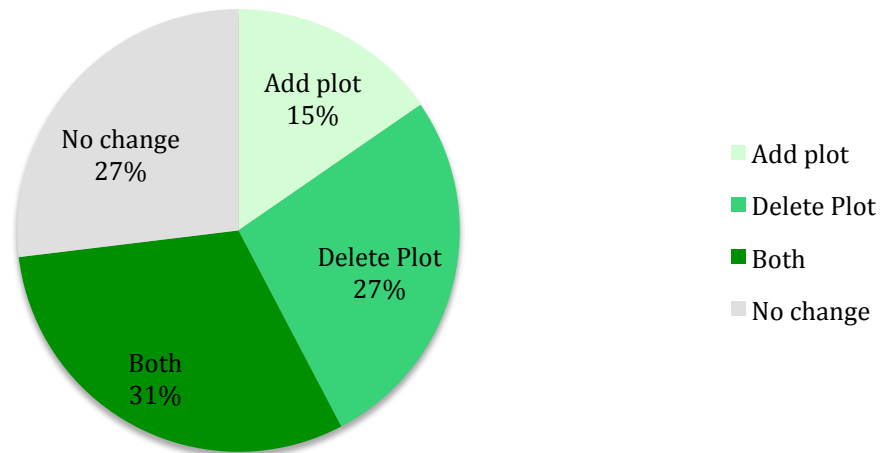
## **Plot**

If characters are the foundation of a story, then the plot creates the walls and the roof. The plot of a film or book is responsible for keeping the audience’s attention and drawing them into the created world. Unsurprisingly, it is alterations to the plot that comprises the majority of adaptation changes. These categories of changes include adding or deleting plots, changing the ending of the story, adding a romance, killing off characters, adding exposition sequences or narration, compressing the story timeline, and changing the setting.

### **I. Adding/Cutting plots**

The most frequently occurring change, at seventy-three percent, is the complete deletion of existing plotlines or creation of entirely new ones. This distribution is shown in Figure 6. Adding plots can increase excitement and fill time, while removing plots can speed the pace of the action and shorten the overall runtime.

**Figure 6: Films adding or deleting plots**



#### The Good:

Earning hundreds of billions of dollars, the Harry Potter series is the pinnacle of lucrative YA adaptations. While the later films take more liberties with their interpretation of the story, the series' first installment, *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, is noted for following the book with extreme precision. In fact, one of its only significant changes was the deletion of a side plot in which antagonistic student Draco challenges Harry to a midnight duel, then sets Harry and his friends up to be caught when they arrive for the engagement. By this point in the film, however, it's already been well established that Draco is awful, and since the subplot only serves as a catalyst for Harry & Co to find Fluffy the three headed dog, it's hardly missed. The discovery of Fluffy is simply attached to the end of a different adventure, saving a bit of screen time in a film is already over two and a half hours long. Chris Columbus, the director, has since mentioned that the majority of plot

deviations from the original material were because of film length constrictions.

“Those sorts of things, there was just too much to film” Columbus laments (O’Hara, n.d.).

The Bad:

In *City of Ember*, Twelve-year-olds Lina and Doon discover a message with clues for the escape of their crumbling subterranean society. As if that weren’t interesting enough on its own, the film adaptation adds a subplot where their respective fathers were also previously involved in a conspiracy to find an escape from the city, which resulted in the death of Lina’s father. While not a bad idea in itself, it’s not terribly well explained, and takes attention away from the central characters. When asked about her views of the film, novel author Jeanne DuPrau responded that she was slightly disappointed with what they chose to add. “Unfortunately, the movie left out scenes from the book that I thought were important, and it added scenes that I thought were unnecessary and confusing.” She states. “So I guess I join the crowd of authors who have mixed feelings about movies made from their books” (Brazeale, 2011).

## **II. Changing the ending**

It’s surprising just how many film adaptations (a whopping thirty-five percent) deem it necessary to change the ending of the story (See Table 6). It seems that if nothing else, at least a story’s conclusion would be sacred, but studios are often of the opinion that changing the ending will make the film more marketable. This is especially evident when the original ending involves the dissolution of a



central romance, a great disappointment, or a sad death. Sometimes, the original ending doesn't contain enough action or climax, so events are changed. Occasionally, an ending must be altered due to prior plot changes making the original ending impossible, but for the most part, it's just the screenwriters and studios wanting a happy ending.

**Table 6: Adaptation Ending Changes**

<b>Adaptation</b>	<b>Book Ending</b>	<b>Film Ending</b>
<b>Beastly</b>	Kyle is shot, Lindy's kiss saves and transforms him	Kyle tells Lindy to go to Peru, she tells him she loves him, and he transforms
<b>Beautiful Creatures</b>	Ethan is stabbed, Lena tries to save him and his life is traded for Macon's, Ethan discovers new song	Macon is shot disguised as Ethan, Ethan's memory is wiped of Lena, but it returns as he is about to leave town
<b>Blood and Chocolate</b>	Vivian takes bullet for Gabriel, accepts him as her mate, and becomes alpha female	Vivian shoots Gabriel and escapes with Aiden
<b>Nick and Norah's Infinite Playlist</b>	Nick & Norah talk a lot, walk around, then go home	Nick and Norah find the band Where's Fluffy, both turn away exes, then leave concert.
<b>Percy Jackson and the Olympians: The Lightning Thief</b>	Percy returns bolt to Zeus, is cornered by Luke in woods & stung by scorpion, and decides to live at home	Luke and Percy fight on empire state building, Percy takes bolt to Zeus, he decides to remain at camp, and petrifies Gabe
<b>The Golden Compass</b>	Lord Asriel kills Roger and opens portal to parallel universe, Lyra follows him through	Lyra and Roger fly north in search of Lord Asriel
<b>The Princess Diaries</b>	Mia reconciles with friends at school dance	Mia formally accepts rank and crown at Genovian ball
<b>The Spectacular Now</b>	Sutter turns to alcohol	Sutter applies to college and goes after Aimee
<b>Whip It</b>	Bliss's team wins championship	Bliss's team loses championship

### The Good:

The novel *Derby Girl* tells the story of unhappy misfit Bliss who finds her place in the world through roller derby. Conflict comes when her roller derby championship game is at the same time as the Miss Blue Bonnet beauty pageant, which her mother insists she enter. At the last minute, her family acquiesces and lets her leave the pageant to play in the big game, where she is amazing and leads her team to a championship victory. In the film version, renamed *Whip It*, while Bliss still plays in the game, the result is in a last minute loss, leaving the team extremely disappointed. They rally, though, reminding themselves that they joined because they loved to skate, not because they wanted to win games. They celebrate with their infectious joyful cheer and running joke from the beginning of the film, "We're number two! We're number two!" Having them loose the match, while atypical for Hollywood ending alterations, gives Bliss the benefit of having something to work towards later, as well as bringing the now winning-obsessed girls back to the carefree and lovable losers they started out as. Losing the championship also seems slightly more realistic, as just weeks prior the team was in dead last and had never won a game in years. Since the writer of the screenplay was also the writer of the book, she was able to change the ending in a way that made sense, pleased the audience, and still stayed true to the characters.

### The Neutral:

In *The Spectacular Now*, charismatic alcoholic teen Sutter falls in love with shy Aimee, only to lead her down his own destructive path. In the end, he realizes

this and manipulates her into leaving him for her own good. He returns to the bars, perpetuating a cycle of booze and living in the now. In the film adaptation, Sutter realizes the error of his ways, applies to college, and travels across the country to get Aimee back. It's a much happier ending, and some fans will be pleased that Sutter was able to turn his life around. Fans of the original, however, might find Sutter's miraculous change rather naïve, portraying Sutter's lifestyle as something he can just snap out of if he wants. Book author Tim Tharp acknowledges the difference in endings, but didn't mind it too much. "The book is really a tragic story" he has mentioned. "[The screenwriter] later on mentioned this ending and I started laughing and thought it was a joke. But, what pictured at the time was this slow motion running towards each other with their hair blowing in the wind. Something corny like that, and they didn't do that" (West, 2013). Regardless, the change is well integrated and maintains the film's verisimilitude, so once again it just comes down to personal preference.

#### The Bad:

When adapting the novel *The Golden Compass*, director and screenwriter Chris Weitz was determined to remain as closely as possible to the original, though he claimed that it felt as though "By being faithful to the book I was working at odds with the studio" (Grossman, 2009). In the end, he was able to persuade the studio to his vision with one exception: the ending. The original story ends with heroine Lyra's best friend Roger being killed by her father in order to further his scientific research and exploration. Weitz later described the "tremendous marketing

pressure" he was under to create an "upbeat ending" for the film (McGrath, 2007). He solved this conundrum by ending the film before the death, as Lyra and Roger first set off to find her father. The remaining events from the book were to be combined with the events of the series' second book for a sequel film, though plans of subsequent adaptations were later discarded. The biggest problem was not that the ending was changed, but that the new ending was not well integrated to the film. Most viewers and critics felt the ending abrupt and unsatisfying.

### III. Adding a romance

All girls like romance, right? So, what better way to attract the tween audience than adding a non-canon romance into a story's adaptation? This tactic is primarily used in movies catering to young teen girls. It is also frequent in young teen 'boy' adventure films that want to expand their demographic to interest girls as well. Unfortunately, it is difficult integrate successfully into the story without feeling gimmicky. Additional romances occurred in twenty-three percent of surveyed films, shown in Table 7.

**Table 7: Added Romances in Adaptations**

<b>Adaptation</b>	<b>Romance Added</b>
<b>Alex Rider: Stormbreaker</b>	Alex & Sabina
<b>Blood &amp; Chocolate</b>	Gabriel & Astrid
<b>Confessions of a Teenage Drama Queen</b>	Lola & Sam
<b>Flicka</b>	Howard & Miranda
<b>Percy Jackson &amp; the Olympians: The Lightning Thief</b>	Percy & Annabeth
<b>The Princess Diaries</b>	Queen Clarisse & Joe

### The Bad:

In *Confessions of a Teenage Drama Queen*, high school diva Lola is determined to focus on her acting career to the exclusion of all else, even boys. Unfortunately, the screenwriters didn't get the memo, as they end the film with Lola kissing her previously platonic friend Sam. While it would have made sense had they developed the attraction more throughout the film, shoving it in at the last minute just seems rushed and somewhat random.

### Even Worse:

At least the romance in *Drama Queen* was with an actual character. In the film *Alex Rider: Stormbreaker*, they bring a character in to the story for the sole purpose of being a love interest to young Alex. Sabina, while in later *Alex Rider* novels, does not play a role in *Stormbreaker*, so author Anthony Horowitz had to come up with reasons for her to be involved in the plot, coming across as contrived and distracting. Afterwards, when asked if there was anything he would have preferred not made it to the screen, Horowitz replied that he wished "There wouldn't have been a girl... The fan base knows that he meets Sabina Pleasure in film three, not film one. So in a sense, that is a betrayal" (Canavese, 2006).

## IV. Killing off characters

For the most part, when books transition to screen they are sanitized, not made more mature. For about fifteen percent of the sample films, however, characters that live through the original are killed off, either for dramatic effect or to

serve as the catalyst for further plot alterations (See Table 8). It can be a meaningful tool, so long as it has relevance and occurs in a believable situation.

**Table 8: Characters Killed in Adaptations**

Adaptation	Character Killed
<b>Blood and Chocolate</b>	Esme; Gabriel
<b>City of Ember</b>	Mayor Cole (implied)
<b>How I live Now</b>	Isaac
<b>The Hunger Games</b>	Seneca Crane

The Good:

By the end of *The Hunger Games* Katniss and Peeta have both survived, to the extreme irritation of President Snow. Katniss is warned now her extremely powerful dangerous foe. In a display of chilling power, the film shows the president having Gamemaker and pardoner Seneca Crane locked in a room with only a bowl of poison berries, indicating Seneca's forced suicide. This is a plot thread mentioned in the second book, but by bringing it to the first film and actually showing it, it informs the audience more about Snow's mentality and ruthlessness than any simple description or warning could. Also, having Crane die from the same berries that nearly killed Katniss and Peeta gave the death a touch of irony that made it all the more meaningful.

The Neutral:

*How I live now* is the story of American teen Daisy's struggle for survival with her cousins in the British countryside following the outbreak of World War III.

When the girls are separated from the boys, Daisy leads her youngest cousin Piper on a cross county trek to find them and get back to their home. When they reach the farm where the boys were being held, the Daisy finds the remains of a village massacre. In the book, neither boy was killed, and all four cousins are eventually reunited on their home farm. In the movie, however, as Daisy searches through the dead bodies, she discovers that one is in fact young cousin Isaac. This certainly lends to the gravitas and horror of Daisy's situation, though one could argue that this was already accomplished with the many deaths that preceded it, not to mention the many deaths, rapes, and destruction that followed. Was it necessary? Perhaps not. Was it impactful? Definitely.

The Bad:

In *City of Ember*, twelve year olds Lina and Doon attempt to follow clues leading out of their collapsing city. Along the way they deal with interference from Ember's corrupt mayor. For the most part, it's very typical tween dystopia adventure. Then towards the end of the film, the mayor finds himself locked in a room with a giant mutated man-eating mole, the camera pans to the outside of the room, and the viewer hears screaming. I found this needlessly violent and disturbing, and not at all fitting the tone of the rest of the film, especially for the rather young audience. Even author Jeanne DuPrau has stated that she "Wasn't happy with the monsters" (Brazeale, 2011). As the book includes no mention of the mayor once Lina and Doon begin their escape, the whole thing seemed uncalled for.

## **V. Expositionary explanations**

Sometimes, movies don't have the time to explain the details of a particular setting through action. Often, for simplicity, they will add some sort of introduction explaining to the viewer what's going on. This is particularly seen in fantasy or dystopia movies, where entire cultures or phenomenon must be established very quickly in order for the rest of the movie to make sense. Occasionally these introductions are built into the original novel. In other cases, filmmakers have to come up with creative ways to convey the appropriate information while seamlessly shepherding the viewer into the narrative. Introductions of this kind were added to fifteen percent of sampled adaptations, as shown in Table 9.

**Table 9: Methods of Exposition**

<b>Adaptation</b>	<b>Method of exposition</b>
<b>Alex Rider: Stormbreaker</b>	Biographical Speech
<b>The Golden Compass</b>	Intertitles and narration
<b>The Hunger Games</b>	Newscasts and Interviews
<b>The Spectacular Now</b>	College admission essay

The Good:

The Hunger Games are a traditional occurrence of the dystopian nation of Panem, where every year 24 four teens are sent from the 12 outlying districts to fight to the death in an arena. To expedite this information, the film opens with newscasts and interviews about the games, both prior and upcoming. Director Gary Ross did this with a very clear purpose in mind.

“Well, I wanted you to have a hit of the Capitol at the very onset... instead of giving you an introductory set piece or movie-ish opening... and so I wanted to drop in on Caesar Flickerman and Seneca Crane in mid-conversation so



*boom*, you're in that world and you're pulled into it. I thought that was tremendously important both in terms of the style of the movie that urgently engages you and at the same time to give you a taste of the Capitol, to give you context, because so much of the front is spent in District 12 and I think this needs to be contextualized (Buchanan, 2012).

Through the interviews and newscasts, the audience receives creative and integrated information about the world in which the film takes place, as well as a method of commentary that the film utilizes for the rest of the plot to give neutral perspectives and background information. They even serve as a means of explaining to the audience what Katniss is thinking or planning without having to rely on a voiceover narration.

The Bad:

In the film *Alex Rider: Stormbreaker*, screenwriter Anthony Horowitz chose to show the contrast between what Alex knows about his family and the reality by utilizing cross cuts between his uncle on a spy mission and Alex talking about his own boring life circumstances. It does save time on elaborating Alex's circumstances, but the motivation they chose for Alex to talk about his life? Giving an oral biographical report about himself to his classmates. Boring, sloppy, and uncreative. Even just having Alex giving a first person voice over narration would have been better.

## **VI. Changing Locations**

Eleven percent of the sample films changed the location of the events, shown in Table 10. For some, it was simply to explain away the director's choice of filming location. For others, it was a deliberate change for story purposes. Regardless, a

changed setting can potentially give the adaptation a very different vibe from the original novel.

**Table 10: Location Changes**

<b>Adaptation</b>	<b>Book Location</b>	<b>Movie Location</b>
<b>Blood and Chocolate</b>	Maryland	Bucharest, Romania
<b>The Princess Diaries</b>	New York City	San Francisco
<b>The Spectacular Now</b>	Oklahoma	Georgia

The Good:

*The Princess Diaries* takes place very specifically in New York City. This is clearly established repeatedly throughout the novel. The film, however, shifts the story to San Francisco. The reason for this was actually to appease director Gary Marshall, who lives in San Francisco and wanted to work from home (Rabinovitch, 2004). Regardless, the move is well incorporated into the plot of the film, with subplots detailing a beach party, cable cars, a tour of the bay, and the infamous San Francisco hills. Setting the film in San Francisco provides an overall sunny and bohemian tone that matches Mia's lifestyle. And really, did the world need yet another teen movie set in New York?

The Bad:

*Blood and Chocolate* is the supernatural tale of a werewolf girl who falls in love with a human boy, against the wishes of her pack. The book is set in Maryland, with an introduction detailing the events behind the pack's relocation from rural West Virginia to their new more suburban home. The film adaptation takes place in

Bucharest, Romania. Eastern Europe seems to be the go-to location for all sorts of creepy creatures, from werewolves to vampires to evil wizards. Romania is interesting and has some great architecture for filming, but sequestering the werewolves in their ancestral homeland, to quote author Annette Curtis Klause, “Kind of negates the whole point of the plot: werewolves could be sitting right next to you” (Smith, 2006).

## VII. Compress Timeline

Some books take place over the course of a single night. Some take place over many years. A filmmaker has to pace the action so that the audience remains engaged while the story is told. This sometimes means that events that occur over large periods of time get compressed into more manageable spans. Twenty-seven percent of the sampled adaptations use this technique (See Table 11).

**Table 11: Adaptation Timelines**

<b>Adaptation</b>	<b>Book Timeline</b>	<b>Film Timeline</b>
<b>Beastly</b>	2 years	1 year
<b>Beautiful Creatures</b>	7 months	5 months
<b>Ender’s Game</b>	19 years	A few months
<b>I am Number Four</b>	Unclear; likely under 1 year	Unclear; likely a few months. Skips all of John’s training.
<b>It’s Kind of a Funny Story</b>	About 2 years	1 week
<b>Percy Jackson and the Olympians: The Lightning Thief</b>	3 months	About a month
<b>The Spectacular Now</b>	Less than 1 school year	Unclear; skips to breaking up with Cassidy

### The Good:

*It's Kind of a Funny Story* chronicles troubled teen Craig's growing psychological issues over the course of several years, cumulating in a weeklong stay at a mental hospital for contemplating suicide. While the events leading up to Craig's break down are somewhat interesting, the main action and hook to the story is the mental hospital. The film takes advantage of this, and instead of covering several years, it only covers his week in the hospital. Any information absolutely necessary from the earlier times is either incorporated into the hospital action or is shown via occasional flashbacks. Interesting, clean, and succinct.

### The Bad:

In *Beastly*, Kyle needs someone to fall in love with him to return to his former natural state, and is given a two-year deadline. He spends the first year growing as a person, and the second making friends with and wooing love interest Lindy. The film, however, compresses Kyle's deadline to a few months, meaning he only has a matter of weeks to make Lindy fall in love with him. It happens, of course, but seems very rushed and not terribly realistic (at least as realistic as fairy tales can be.) I would much rather have had the full year for them to slowly fall in love, even if the filmmakers had to accomplish it through carefully constructed montages.

## Censorship

There is a saying that a picture is worth a thousand words. This may or may not be true, but it certainly has merits when it comes to MPAA censorship. A novel may describe certain events or write certain words as much as it likes, but if a movie shows an untoward image or speaks a word out loud, it immediately starts being restricted, limiting the audience a particular film can reach. Four different methods of story censorship occur in the adaptation sample: making characters more moral, sanitizing sexuality, editing to meet a particular MPAA rating, and removing controversial story aspects.

### **I. Characters made more moral**

As a multi-dimensional representation of people, film characters are at times held to higher moral standards. They are seen as role models of different types of behavior for kids or teens to observe, which sometimes places unfair obligations on screenwriters to turn the characters into certain types of 'heroes'. Twenty-seven percent of surveyed adaptations made characters 'better' people than their literary depiction (Table 12,) whether through omission of questionable actions (frequently drugs) or changing their character entirely.

**Table 12: Characters Made More Moral**

<b>Adaptation</b>	<b>Character Changed</b>
<b>Hoot</b>	Roy
<b>It's Kind of a Funny Story</b>	Craig
<b>Percy Jackson and the Olympians: The Lightning Thief</b>	Poseidon
<b>The Boy in the Striped Pajamas</b>	Bruno's Mother
<b>The Princess Diaries</b>	Queen Clarisse
<b>The Spectacular Now</b>	Sutter; Cassidy

Whip It	Bliss
---------	-------

### The Good:

In the book *The Princess Diaries*, Mia is seemingly alone in a sea of awful people. Her father ignores her, her best friend has dumped her, and her mother is dating her math teacher. Worst of all, however, is her grandmother, whom she has just discovered is the queen of Genovia, and has recently sold her own granddaughter out as a publicity stunt. The film adaptation depicts Queen Clarisse as a kindly, if somewhat reserved, matron who comes to love and appreciate Mia above even the political future of her country. Certainly a 180-degree transformation. Author Meg Cabot was initially reluctant about the change. "At first I was a little iffy when I heard Julie Andrews would be playing Grandmere" she explained. "Julie is too nice to play such a mean character! But when I saw Julie's performance, I knew she had just the right amount of regalness mixed with grandmotherly warmth" (Readers Read, 2002). In the end, the story already has enough villains, and Mia could certainly use someone on her side. On a side note, I don't think Julie Andrews, beloved portrayer of Queen Clarisse, is even capable of being evil. It goes against the laws of nature.

### The Bad:

Similarly, in *The Lightning Thief*, Percy Jackson also has a lot going against him. He's just found out that his father wasn't lost at sea like he thought, but is actually Poseidon himself. In the book, Poseidon isn't too thrilled about Percy, as his

conception breaks some pretty important Big 3 laws. He has no interest in getting to know him or in being a father, and only cautiously interacts with him because he needs his help. As realistic as this, it's not terribly reassuring to the thousands of children who are adopted or come from similar single parent households. In the film, Poseidon loves Percy very much. So much, in fact, that his love was distracting him from his Godhood, which is why he had to give Percy up. While that's very nice for film Percy, it's not really that necessary, as Percy already has a great support system in his mom and friends. It would be more interesting if the film had shown that even if Percy's dad hadn't wanted him, Percy would have still been a great hero with value.

## II. Sanitize Sexuality

Books with sexual scenes or even sexual references frequently have that material cut from film adaptations. This is especially evident in plot lines with sexual abuse. While this is frequently due to rating restrictions, sometimes even non-restrictive depictions or mentionings are removed to maintain focus on other aspects of the plot. Fifteen percent of the sample adaptations removed sexual references or acts from the story, shown in Table 13.

**Table 13: Adaptations Cutting Sex References**

<b>Adaptation</b>	<b>Character/Pairing Sanitized</b>
<b>The Boy in the Stripped Pajamas</b>	Bruno's Mother & Lieutenant Kotler
<b>The Perks of Being a Wallflower</b>	Charlie; Sam; Charlie's sister
<b>The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants</b>	Lena & Kostos; Bridget & Eric
<b>The Spectacular Now</b>	Aimee

### The Good:

The novel *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* tells the tale of a nine-year-old German boy's innocence in the face of the atrocities of the Nazi concentration camps. A side plot in the book mentions the removal of the handsome young Lieutenant Kotler from the camp, and indicates that it was due to young Bruno's father, the commandant, discovering an affair between the Lieutenant and Bruno's mother. This thread was eliminated from the film, likely due to its irrelevance to the main plot, its lack of necessity, and changes in the characterization of the mother. Instead, the Lieutenant is said to be removed because of his father's political views, a discovery previously made in both the novel and the film.

### The Bad:

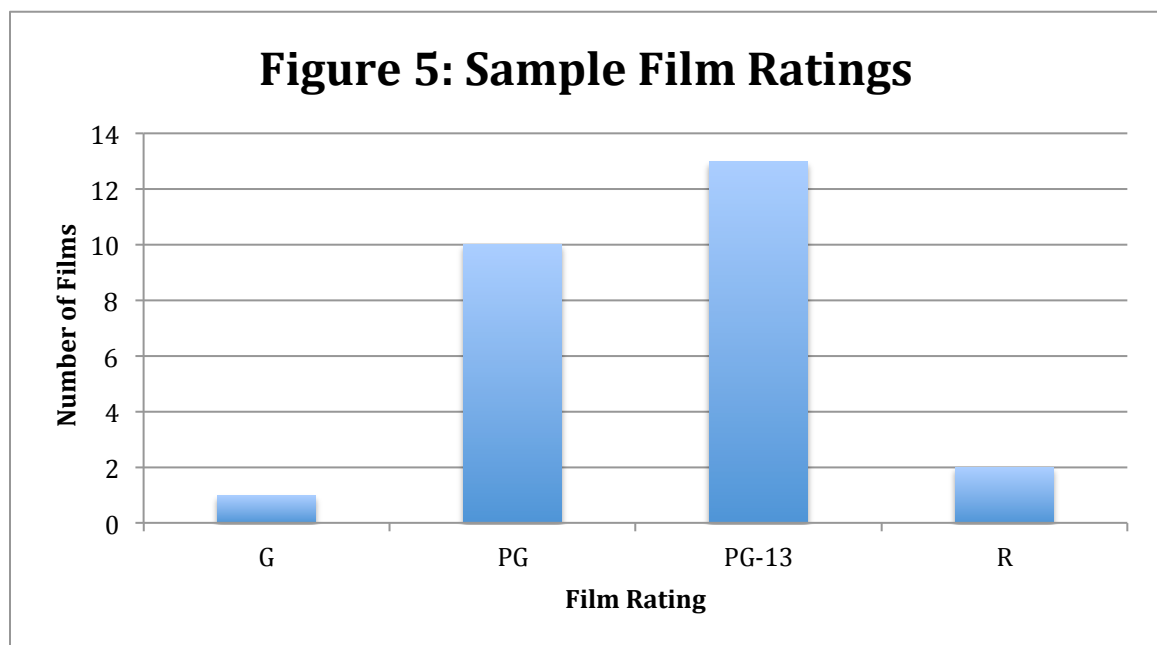
While some sexual elements in *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* were likely removed for ratings reasons (such as the scene where protagonist Charlie learns how to masturbate,) several others were cut or altered unnecessarily. When Charlie's crush Sam tells him about how she was sexually abused as a child, her age at the time was changed from 7 years old to the marginally less disturbing age of 11. A plotline is removed where Charlie witnesses a rape at a younger age and describes it to Sam. An additional plotline is removed involving Charlie's sister being into physically dominant boys, then becoming pregnant and getting an abortion. Author, screenwriter, and director Stephen Chbosky has since mentioned that he did film some of these scenes, but they were left out of the film (Neumyer, 2013). While



some of these cuts were due to time constraints and narrative flow issues, it's unlikely that all of them were.

### III. Editing for MPAA rating

The Motion Picture Association of America has strict rules as to what content can be viewed by minors. They assign all theatrically released films into one of five ratings; G (suitable for all audiences,) PG (parental guidance suggested,) PG-13 (material may be inappropriate for children under 13,) R (children under 17 not admitted without a guardian,) and NC-17 (No one under 17 admitted) (MPAA, 2014). If films want to be able to reach their primary demographic, they must make sure that the material in the film, be it violence, sexuality, or language, meets the parameters for their desired rating. Material in novels, however, is less restricted, so frequently films will have to cut conversations or events that would boost the rating too high. The rating breakdown of the sample films is shown in Figure 5.



Nineteen percent of sampled films had to make obvious concessions with content to meet requirements for their final rating.

#### The Good:

The most common word in the English language is The. The most common word in *Nick and Norah's Infinite Playlist* is F\*\*\*. Not literally, of course, but the word is one of the most prominent and distinctive aspects of the novel, and is used over 100 times in the first third of the book alone. According to MPAA regulations, the use of sexually oriented curse words can only occur once before the film is automatically given at least an R rating, immediately siphoning out revenue from most teens under 17 (MPAA, 2014). Director Peter Sollett in particular became very familiar with the workings of the MPAA during the writing and filming of the adaptation, even to a frustrating extent. "The MPAA didn't like [certain things]." He jokes. "It got pulled back. It got pulled back. It got pulled back... it was sort of censored as we were making the movie. Learned a lot about that on this movie" (Kelly, 2008). Though the word is very central to the book's narrative structure, it is worth removing the word to keep the film more accessible to its primary demographic at PG-13. The screenwriter gets creative with other more acceptable slang, and the movie does not suffer for it.

#### The Bad:

In the *Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants*, four teen girls chronicle their summer as they deal with real-life girl issues, from parents to death to first time sexual encounters. While relatively modest, it is still very much a story for teenagers.

The film, however, in order to create a wider demographic, pushed hard for a PG rating. While this is not necessarily bad in itself, the film had to water down or even cut several of the issues the girls explore, most notably the storyline with Bridget losing her virginity. Instead of a meaningful discussion of female sexuality and the emotional consequences of having sex before you're ready, the issue was turned into Bridget wishing she could discuss boys with her dead mother. While still deep, it's not really the point of the plot.

#### **IV. Cut controversial material**

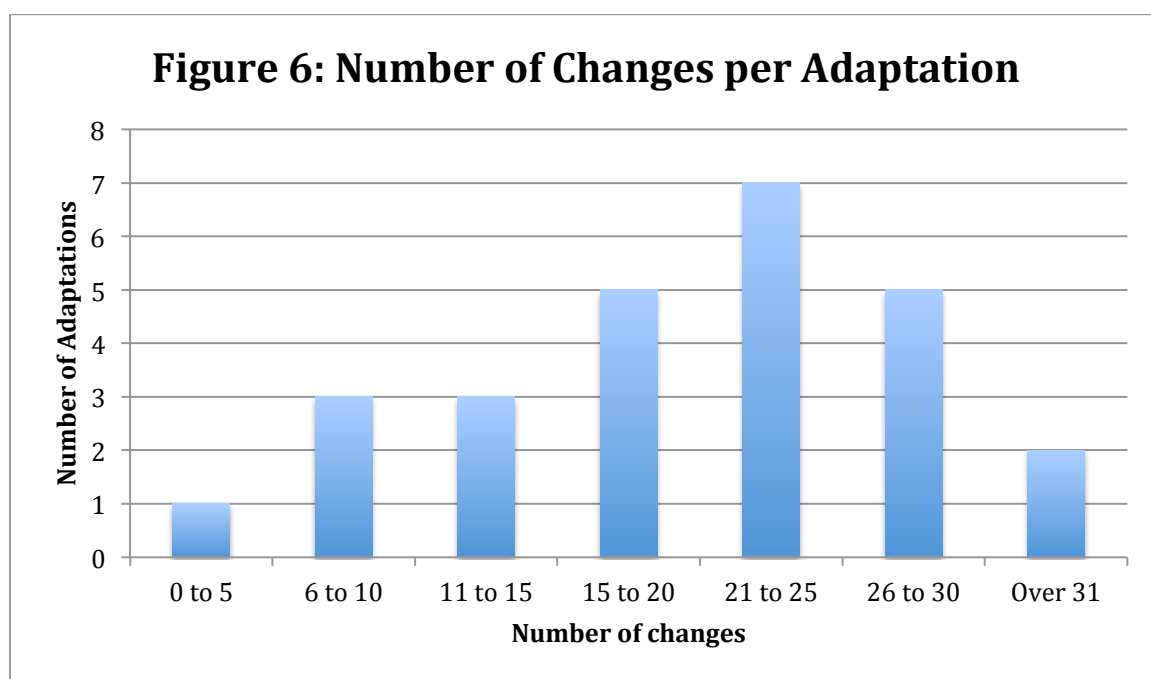
They say any publicity is good publicity, but if that publicity comes from protests and boycotts, it can certainly be less than optimal. If material from a book has proven to be volatile, a filmmaker may choose to leave it out of an adaptation for marketing reasons. This is especially evident with the adaptation of *The Golden Compass*. At the center of the novel is a group called the Magisterium, very clearly based on the Catholic church. The Magisterium are obsessed with finding the cure for original sin, going so far as to conduct horrific experiments on children. The book was lambasted by the Catholic Church for its implications and anti-religious elements (McGrath, 2007). To appease the protestors, the film eliminated any mention of religion or sin. When the film was finally released the Catholics were still livid with the depiction (even without express mentioning, it's still pretty clear the Magisterium is the church,) and book fans & secularist organizations were angry about the dilution of the book's anti-religious elements (Thorpe, 2007). While trying to make everyone happy, they managed to upset twice as many people as before.

## **Complete Overhaul**

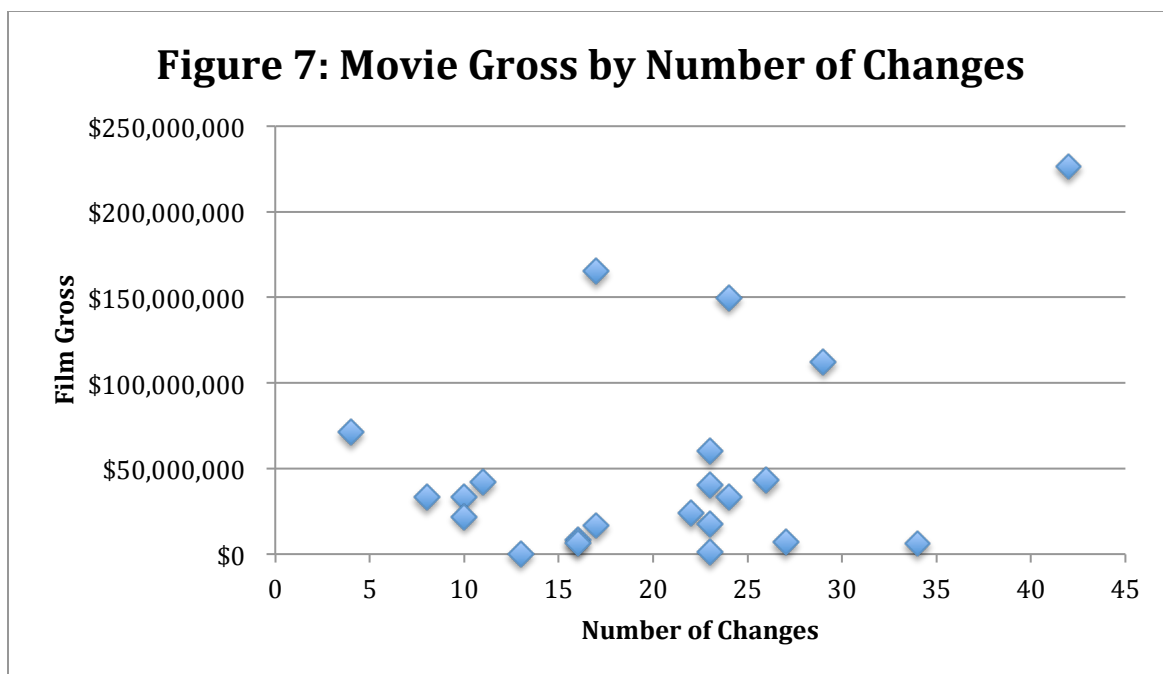
On a rare occasion, a screenwriter will take a work and use it as an adaptive framework. They take the title and enough of the original to capitalize on the book's popularity, but then perform a complete overhaul of every element of the story until the finished product looks nothing at all like the original. Such was the case for one adaptation in my sample, *Blood and Chocolate*. While the film remained about a werewolf named Vivian in love with a human named Adrian, pretty much everything else about the story changed, from ages to plot events to Vivian's core choice of Blood (werewolf) or Chocolate (human). Book author Annette Curtis Klause, once signing over rights to the novel, was not kept informed of the changes happening to her story. As she comically said in an interview during production "The producers don't even keep me up to date--I find my information on the Web" (Smith, 2006).

## Putting it Together

Now that we've established what kinds of changes these film adaptations make, we must determine if they are at all influential on the film as a whole. The first step is to calculate all the changes into totals for each film, which I have displayed in Figure 6. The average number of changes for my sample set was 20.



So what do all these changes mean when it comes to actual film success? First, one must determine the standards for success. Many would consider a successful film one that performs well at the box office. I wanted to find out if there is a correlation between film revenue and the amount of changes made from the book. See Figure 7 for a visual representation.

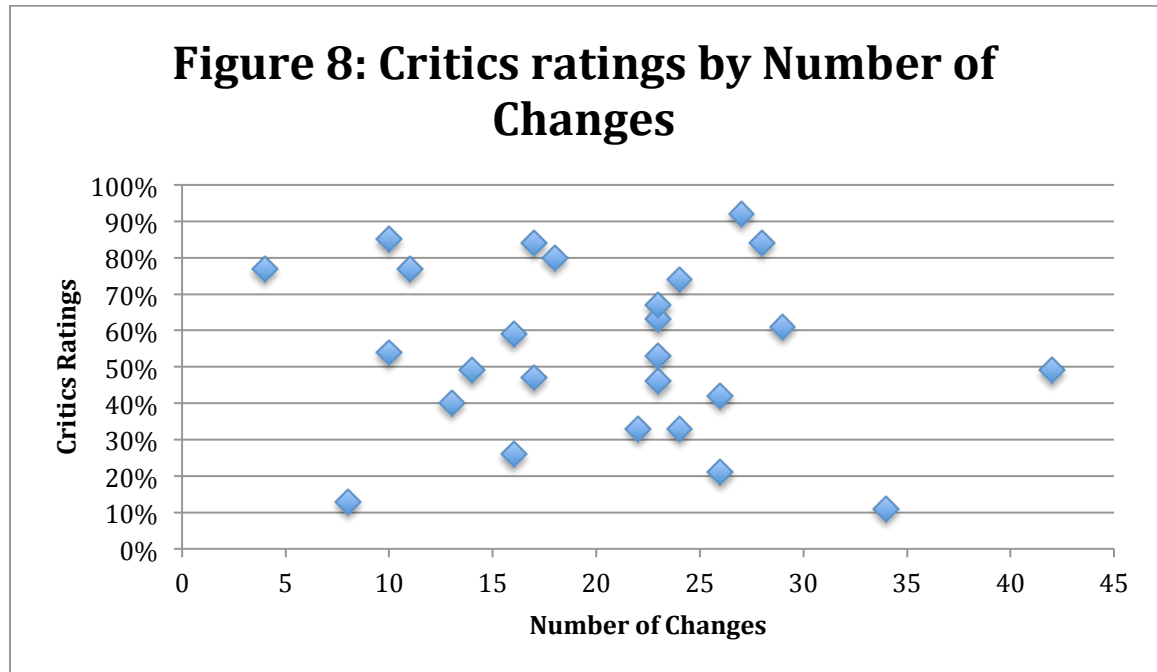


*For this data, Harry Potter, The Hunger Games, and Twilight, and The Golden Compass are outliers and not shown on the graph, as their revenues far exceed those of the other films.*

The P Value for a revenue-by-changes fit is 0.51, so there is no presumption against the null hypothesis. It turns out that there is no clear correlation between the amount of changes an adaptation makes and its total revenue. My hypothesis was incorrect.

Revenue, however, is not the only way to measure success. Many feel that a film's cinematic quality is more important. I also looked up the Rotten Tomato rating for each film, a score based on the percentage of film critics from reputable publications that graded the film favorably. The higher the percentage, the more

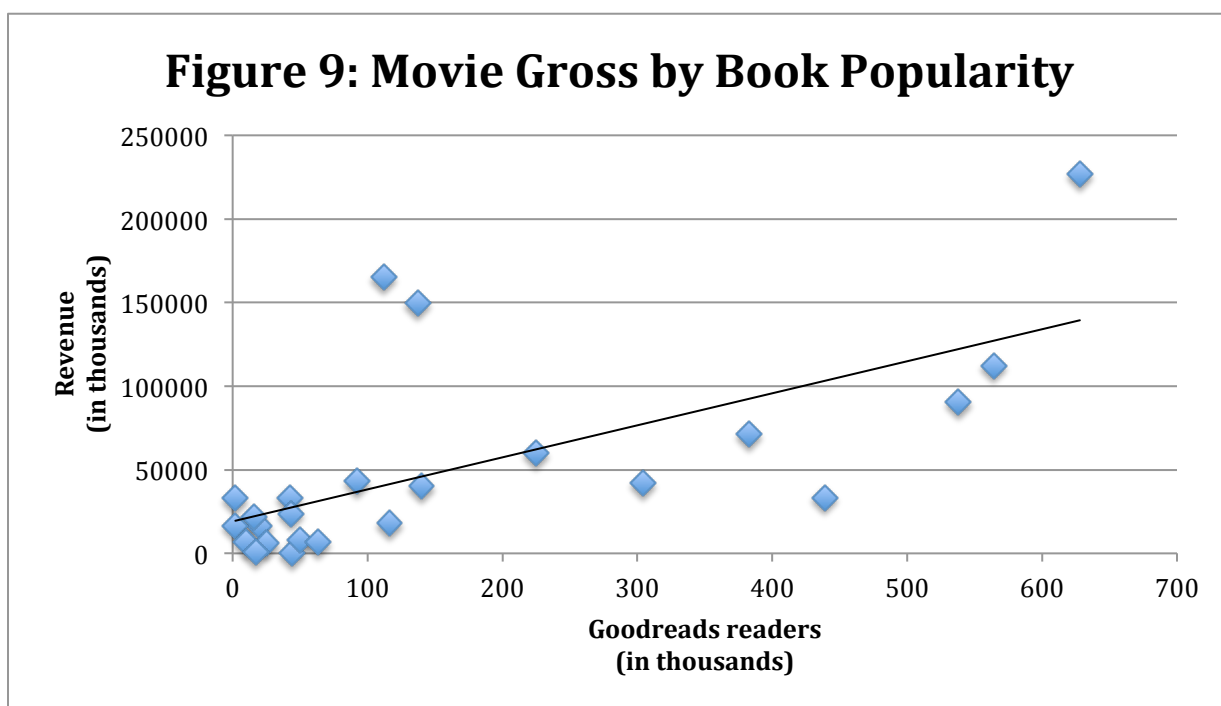
critics gave the film a good review. Do the number of changes impact a critic's reviews? Data is displayed below in Figure 8.



The P Value for Critic ratings by number of changes is 0.48, so there is no presumption against the null hypothesis. There is unlikely to be a relationship between ratings and the number of changes. Adaptations with large amounts of changes from the source material are just as likely to receive positive ratings as negative. My hypothesis was once again incorrect.

In light of the lack of correlation, it now seems naïve to think that book changes are the dominant force in film revenue. What other factors make the movie financially viable? Could a movie be financially successful just because the book it was based on was popular? Unfortunately, statistics for book sales are not released to the general public. One can, however, make some base assumptions using data

from popular literary websites like Goodreads. Goodreads, visited by nearly 14 million people every month, allows users to indicate what books they have read. By compiling this data, I can get a rough estimate of approximately how popular a book is. Granted, there are drawbacks to using Goodreads data, as they have a skewed gender user ratio (70% female) and racial usage (80% Caucasian,) but of available data, it's the closest to what I need. I have graphed the data of book popularity and contrasted it to the total international movie gross (Figure 9).



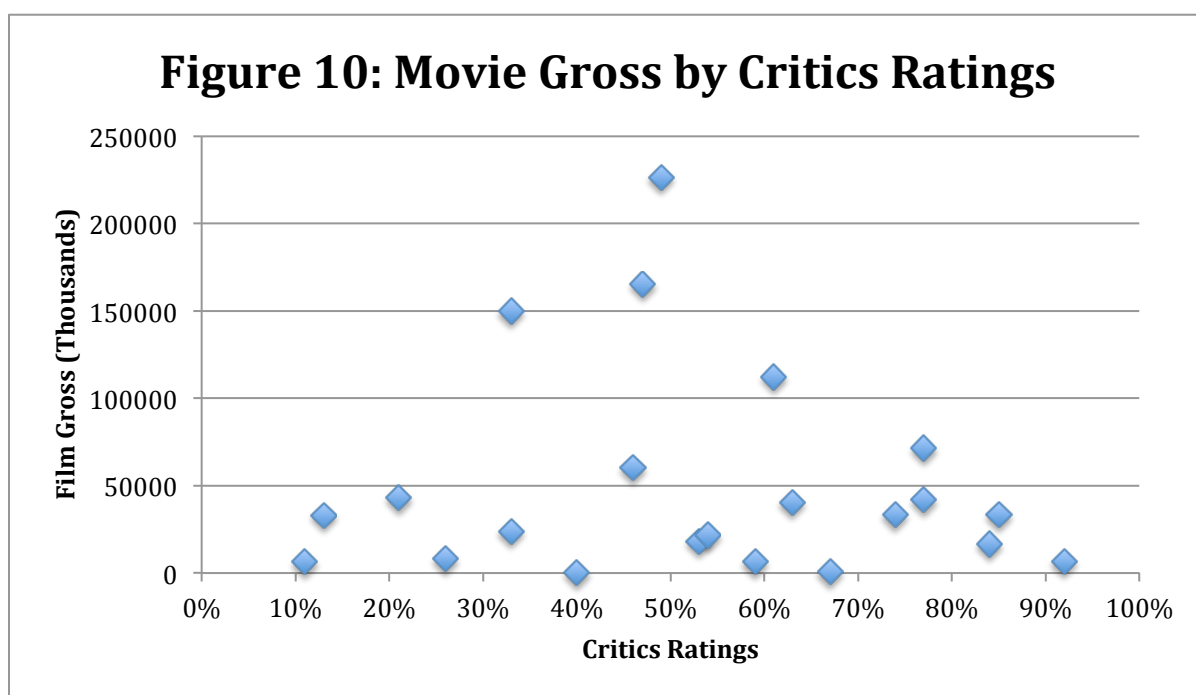
*For this data, Harry Potter, The Hunger Games, Twilight, and The Golden Compass are outliers and not included on the graph, as their revenues far exceed the rest.*

When fitting adaptation revenue by total book popularity, there is a P Value of less than 0.0001, meaning we can safely reject the null hypothesis. There is a clear correlation shown between a book's popularity and how much its adaptation makes



at the theaters. This supports the idea that an extremely popular book, regardless of adaptational or cinematic quality, will still perform well at the box office because of its loyal fans.

Does this mean, then, that the film's cinematic quality has no affect whatsoever on its earnings? Out of curiosity, I compared the cinematic ratings to each film's overall gross in Figure 10.



*Once again, Harry Potter, Hunger Games, Twilight, and Golden Compass are outliers.*

*They are not represented in this graph.*

The P value of a film gross by ratings fit is 0.22, so there is no presumption against the null hypothesis. It is unlikely that there is any correlation between box office earnings and critic's scores.

## Conclusion

My study has concluded that the amount of changes from the original in a film adaptation of a YA novel has no effect on either the adaptation's total financial success or its critical reviews. In fact, the only thing I found to have any correlation is the popularity of the original novel and the amount of money the film adaptation of that novel earns. It goes to show that while audiences may complain about the changes to their favorite character or plot event, the changes don't actually stop them from spending money on the film. Possibly because they may not find out about the changes until after they've already purchased the tickets and seen the film!

I would welcome further studies in this new and culturally relevant area. It would be interesting for a researcher to interview or survey teens and young adults to get their perspectives on film adaptations of their favorite YA books. Topics covered could include what changes they noticed in the story, whether they liked the changes, which they liked best (the film or the book) and why they felt that way. This could then be contrasted with my previous data on amount of changes, motivation behind the changes, and industry statistics. The field of YA literary adaptations is rapidly growing, and if studios want to cash in on the trend, they need to do their homework of what works and what doesn't.

## Bibliography

Atkinson, C. (2012). *Chiller Theater: Movie Attendance Sinks to 1995 Level*. Retrieved from <http://nypost.com/2012/07/24/chiller-theater-movie-attendance-sinks-to-1995-level/>

Brazeale, R. (2011). *Interview with Jeanne DuPrau*. Retrieved from <http://lillypadgraphics.wordpress.com/2011/01/12/interview-with-jeanne-duprau-mon-81709/>

Buchanan, K. (2012). *Hunger Games Director Gary Ross on the Film's Shaky Camera and the Franchise's Future*. Retrieved from <http://www.vulture.com/2012/03/hunger-games-director-gary-ross-on-the-films-shaky-camera-and-the-franchises-future.html>

Canavese, P. (2006). *Alex Pettyfer and Anthony Horowitz- Stormbreaker*. Retrieved from <http://grouchoreviews.com/interviews/181>

Clark, N. (2013). *"Ender's Game" director Gavin Hood on why he changed Ender's age*. Retrieved from <http://herocomplex.latimes.com/movies/enders-game-gavin-hood-changed-age/#/0>

Fox, K. (2009). *Whatever: A History of Teen Movies*. Retrieved from <http://www.theguardian.com/film/2009/mar/22/teen-movies-history-superbad>

Goldberg, S. (2012). *"Hunger Games" and Hollywood's racial casting issue*. Retrieved from <http://www.cnn.com/2012/03/28/showbiz/movies/hunger-games-black-actors/>

Grossman, L. (2009). *12 Minutes 49 Seconds with Chris Weitz*. Retrieved from <http://techland.time.com/2009/07/28/12-minutes-49-seconds-with-chris-weitz-director-of-new-moon/>

Hill, L. (2011). *Beastly is Ghastly*. Retrieved from [http://www.vulture.com/2011/03/movie\\_review\\_beastly\\_is\\_ghastl.html](http://www.vulture.com/2011/03/movie_review_beastly_is_ghastl.html)

IMDb. (2014). *All Time Worldwide Box Office Grosses*. Retrieved from <http://boxofficemojo.com/alltime/world/>

Jones, C. (2011). *Film Review: Beastly*. Retrieved from <http://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/whats-on/film-tv/film-review-beastly-3378082>

- Kelly, K. (2008). *Peter Sollett Interview, Nick and Norah's Infinite Playlist, Toronto 2008*. Retrieved from <http://web.archive.org/web/20091128181904/http://blog.spout.com/2008/09/18/peter-sollett-interview-nick-norahs-infinite-playlist-toronto-2008/>
- Lamoureux, J. (2013). *Hypable Exclusive Interview: Kami Garcia and Margaret Stohl*. Retrieved from <http://www.hypable.com/2013/02/13/hypable-exclusive-interview-kami-garcia-and-margaret-stohl/>
- McGrath, C. (2007). *Unholy Production with a Fairy-Tale Ending*. Retrieved from [http://www.nytimes.com/2007/12/02/movies/02mcgr.html?\\_r=4&oref=slogin&](http://www.nytimes.com/2007/12/02/movies/02mcgr.html?_r=4&oref=slogin&)
- May, T. (2013). *Over 60 Upcoming Young Adult Book-to-Movie Adaptations*. Retrieved from <http://www.bigbookstinyvoices.com/2013/03/16/60-upcoming-young-adult-book-to-movie-adaptations/>
- Meyer, S. (2014). *Fickle Fish Films*. Retrieved from <http://ficklefishfilms.com/about-us/>
- Motion Picture Association of America. (2014). *Film Ratings*. Retrieved from <http://www.mpa.org/film-ratings/>
- Motion Picture Association of America. (2013). *Theatrical Market Statistics 2013*.
- Nemiroff, P. (2010). *Interview: Chris Colombus and the Cast of Percy Jackson*. Retrieved from <http://www.cinemablend.com/new/Interview-Chris-Columbus-And-The-Cast-Of-Percy-Jackson-16977.html>
- Neumyer, S. (2013). *Stephen Chbosky talks "The Perks of Being a Wallflower."* Retrieved from <http://www.ifc.com/fix/2013/02/stephen-chbosky-talks-the-perks-of-being-a-wallflower>
- O'Hara, H. (n.d.). *Christopher Columbus Remembers Harry Potter*. Retrieved from <http://www.empireonline.com/interviews/interview.asp?IID=1310>
- Owen, M. (2003). Developing a Love of Reading: Why Young Adult Literature is Important. *Orana*, 39(1).
- Publishers Weekly. (2012). *New Study: 55% of YA Books Bought by Adults*. Retrieved from <http://www.publishersweekly.com/pw/by-topic/childrens/childrens-industry-news/article/53937-new-study-55-of-ya-books-bought-by-adults.html>
- Pullman, P. (2007). *A message from Phillip Pullman to his Dark Materials fans*. Retrieved from <http://www.hisdarkmaterials.org/news/a-message-from-philip-pullman-to-his-dark-materials-fans>
- Rabinovitch, D. (2004). *Author of the Month: Meg Cabot*. Retrieved from <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2004/oct/27/booksforchildrenandteenagers>

- Readers Read. (2002). *Interview with Meg Cabot*. Retrieved from <http://www.readersread.com/features/megcabot.htm>
- Robson, M. (2009). *How Teenagers Consume Media*. Retrieved from <http://www.theguardian.com/business/2009/jul/13/teenage-media-habits-morgan-stanley>
- Russell, J. (2003). *Louis Sachar Holes Interview*. Retrieved from [http://www.bbc.co.uk/films/2003/10/17/louis\\_sachar\\_holes\\_interview.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/films/2003/10/17/louis_sachar_holes_interview.shtml)
- Screen Actors Guild. (2014). *State Statutes*. Retrieved from <http://www.sagaftra.org/content/state-statutes>
- Sims, A. (2012). *Suzanne Collins discusses "Hunger Games" book to film differences*. Retrieved from <http://www.hypable.com/2012/02/08/suzanne-collins-discusses-hunger-games-book-to-film-differences-cutting-avox-back-story-career-pack-size-more/>
- Smith, C. L. (2006). *Author Update: Annette Curtis Klause*. Retrieved from <http://cynthialeitichsmith.blogspot.com/2006/01/author-update-annette-curtis-klause.html>
- Strickland, A. (2013). *Young adult books from page to screen*. Retrieved from <http://www.cnn.com/2013/10/22/living/young-adult-book-movie-adaptations/>
- Thorpe, V. (2007). *Religion row hits Pullman epic*. Retrieved from <http://www.theguardian.com/uk/2007/oct/14/religion.books>
- Tobias, S. (2010). *Ryan Fleck and Anna Boden*. Retrieved from <http://www.avclub.com/article/ryan-fleck-and-anna-boden-46124>
- Twentieth Century Fox. (2006). *Flicka*. Retrieved from <http://www.visualhollywood.com/movies/flicka/notes.pdf>
- West, K. (2013). *Tim Tharp talks the adaptation process of his novel, "The Spectacular Now"*. Retrieved from [http://www.pagetopremiere.com/2013/08/tim-tharp-talks-his-book-the-spectacular-now-making-its-way-to-the-big-screen-shailenewoodley-miles\\_teller/](http://www.pagetopremiere.com/2013/08/tim-tharp-talks-his-book-the-spectacular-now-making-its-way-to-the-big-screen-shailenewoodley-miles_teller/)

## Appendix A: All Film Adaptations from 2000 to 2014

Book Title (Movie Title, if different)	Book Release Year	Movie Release Year	Series Number
<b>Angus, Thongs, and Full Frontal Snogging</b> <i>(Angus, Thongs, and Perfect Snogging)</i>	1999	2008	
<b>Beastly</b>	2007	2011	
<b>Beautiful Creatures</b>	2012	2013	
<b>Blood and Chocolate</b>	1997	2007	
<b>City of Bones</b>	2007	2013	
<b>City of Ember</b>	2003	2008	
<b>Confessions of a Teenage Drama Queen</b>	1999	2004	
<b>Derby Girl</b> <i>(Whip It)</i>	2007	2007	
<b>Divergent</b>	2011	2014	
<b>Ender's Game</b>	1985	2013	
<b>Eragon</b>	2003	2006	
<b>Fallen</b>	2009	2014	
<b>Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone</b>	1997	2001	1
<b>Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets</b>	1998	2002	2
<b>Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban</b>	1999	2004	3
<b>Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire</b>	2000	2005	4
<b>Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix</b>	2003	2007	5
<b>Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince</b>	2005	2009	6
<b>Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows</b> <i>(Part 1)</i>	2007	2010	7
<b>Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows</b> <i>Part 2</i>	N/A	2011	8
<b>Holes</b>	1998	2003	
<b>Hoot</b>	2002	2006	
<b>How I Live Now</b>	2004	2013	
<b>I am Number Four</b>	2010	2011	
<b>If I Stay</b>	2009	2014	
<b>Inkheart</b>	2003	2008	
<b>It's Kind of a Funny Story</b>	2006	2010	
<b>My Friend Flicka</b> <i>(Flicka)</i>	1941	2006	
<b>Nick and Norah's Infinite Playlist</b>	2006	2008	
<b>Revenge of the Witch</b> <i>(The Seventh Son)</i>	2004	2014	

<b>Soul Surfer</b>	2006	2011	
<b>Speak</b>	1999	2004	
<b>Stormbreaker (<i>Alex Rider: Stormbreaker</i>)</b>	2000	2006	
<b>The Book Thief</b>	2006	2014	
<b>The Boy in the Striped Pajamas</b>	2006	2008	
<b>The Fault in Our Stars</b>	2012	2014	
<b>The Geography Club</b>	2003	2013	
<b>The Giver</b>	1993	2014	
<b>The Golden Compass</b>	1995	2007	
<b>The Hunger Games</b>	2008	2012	1
<b>Catching Fire</b>	2009	2013	2
<b>Mockingjay (<i>Part 1</i>)</b>	2010	2014	3
<b>The Lightning Thief (<i>Percy Jackson and The Olympians: The Lightning Thief</i>)</b>	2005	2010	1
<b>The Sea of Monsters (<i>Percy Jackson: Sea of Monsters</i>)</b>	2006	2013	2
<b>The Maze Runner</b>	2009	2014	
<b>The Perks of Being a Wallflower</b>	1999	2012	
<b>The Princess Diaries</b>	2000	2002	
<b>The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants</b>	2001	2005	1
<b><i>The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants 2</i></b>	Multiple	2008	
<b>The Spectacular Now</b>	2008	2013	
<b>The Thief Lord</b>	2000	2006	
<b><i>The Vampire's Assistant</i></b>	Multiple	2009	
<b>Tiger Eyes</b>	1981	2012	
<b>Tomorrow, When the War Began</b>	1995	2010	
<b>Twilight</b>	2005	2008	1
<b>New Moon</b>	2006	2009	2
<b>Eclipse</b>	2007	2010	3
<b>Breaking Dawn (<i>Part 1</i>)</b>	2008	2011	4
<b><i>Breaking Dawn Part 2</i></b>	N/A	2012	5
<b>Vampire Academy</b>	2007	2014	
<b>Why We Broke Up</b>	2011	2014	