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"Sit Still, Look Pretty to Survive": An Analysis of The Hunger Games Trilogy

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“SIT STILL, LOOK PRETTY TO SURVIVE”:
AN ANALYSIS OF *THE HUNGER GAMES TRILOGY*

A Thesis Submitted
in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Designation
University Honors

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May 2024

This Study by: Bryleigh De Jong

Entitled: "SIT STILL, LOOK PRETTY TO SURVIVE": AN ANALYSIS OF *THE HUNGER*
GAMES TRILOGY

has been approved as meeting the thesis or project requirement for the Designation University
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Abstract

In this thesis, it emphasizes that the analysis of this topic was done through an extensive literature review. Throughout the research process, academic and scholarly articles were reviewed and quoted from previous studies. From previous literature, results express the idea of varying ideals and needs for the “perfect” film adaptation; additionally how the people researched the workers within the film and seeing the differences involving work with the script and actors. Screenwriting theory was also taken into account through previous research.

At the end of a decade, a literary trilogy became a new pop culture phenomenon, *The Hunger Games*. The theme of appearance frequently stood out on page, however, was it truly translated on screen? Film adaptation theory explains the road to adapting a piece of literature to film is a process. All of those involved in the creation of cinema impact how we, as audience members, see said media. Consider the professions of the script writers, the directors ideals versus the thoughts of the author, the question of involving the original writer, creativity of the adapted world, and the audience's reactions, all affect the success of the film. Appearance was a recurring theme that shaped how the main character viewed her world and how she viewed the worlds of the antagonists, side characters, and symbols within the narrative. Survival in Panem was impossible without consideration of appearance.

Introduction

The Hunger Games trilogy has had a cultural impact on all ages of readers for years since the publication in 2008 through Collins' writing of themes, characters, and reflection of society. Because of the popularity of the trilogy, films were created to excite and intrigue viewers of all varieties. However, audiences have different ideas and needs in what they want in a book to film adaptation. In recent years, researchers have become interested in the study of how film adaptations have influenced popular culture and ideals of society. Film adaptation theory has grown throughout time with the popularity of book to film with their influence that has on readers and bringing the world to life through film.

Recent studies have focused on the process of adaptation. This follows focusing on behind-the-scenes where they show a fair amount of information about the move from the source material to the target and serve to develop the media power relations between the literary and the film (Mousavi 2). There is a great amount of dedication for people creating an adapted film. When the original writer of the piece of literature is involved with the film production process, the film is better perceived or received than without them.

Another side idea of adapted films is the audiences. There are two types of audiences who watch the anticipated adaptation: the audience who has read the books and the audience who has not. People have varying ideals for what they actually want the film to be for them. Each audience has a goal and expects it; however, each audience has different wants and the film depends on how the production team created the film (Murray 146). The audience either approves or disapproves of what they watch.

Like most ideas of film-making, the goal is to create a product to sell and make a profit. This is the main purpose, however, the addition of themes and ideas lead people to connecting with a piece of media. Screenwriting studies is another factor film adaptation theorists study because usually professional screenwriters are hired to create the script for the adaptation instead of the original writer of the work. Screenplays and screenwriting have been commonly referred to as functional devices such as blueprints to guide the filming process (Sherry). The success of the film depends on how the audience receives the product, or film, as a work in two different views and the process of the production team creating the adapted film.

However, previous studies have failed to address specifically how *The Hunger Games* and their themes were translated from the books to the films. The theme of appearance has been a very important idea throughout the entire trilogy and focusing on that lens allows people see how impactful this specific theme is to readers and viewers alike. This current research explores the theme of appearance not just as an idea, but as how people present themselves throughout life. Past research articles and theories were considered and main ideas were taken into account about how film adaptation theory and other related theories impacted the adaptation of *The Hunger Games* trilogy and film series. Diving into the idea of appearance as a theme for the series, my research addresses the following questions:

Research Questions to Be Answered

How has the theme, appearance, within The Hunger Games been translated from literature to film? What are the similarities and differences?

Literature Review

Film Adaptation Theory

First off, film adaptation has been going since the birth of motion pictures. Books and film are both forms of creation. Looking deeply into the word “film adaptation,” it is a “Marriage of Media” which was coined by Thomas Leitch. There are many studies on film adaptation but researching further into “adaptation theory,” it is “the systematic study of films based on literary sources, is one of the oldest areas in film studies” (Leitch 1). Film adaptation has been important for creating any film adapted from a book as its original source.

Ever since the creation of the film, they have been adapting books to the big screen, two different mediums. Leitch expresses how literature adaptation is a marriage between the two mediums and how there needs to be a co-existence, however, “we neglect to remember that film adaptation is the combination of two mediums” (Snyder 144). Audiences love all types of entertainment like film and books. When there are enthusiasts of a certain genre like *Hunger Games*, they would automatically compare the book to the film.

People do not realize that films have a limited amount of time given. Books can be as long as they want to be. On the other hand, films can only hold people’s attention for so long. This leads audiences to create an idea of the film being the face of the franchise creating the “novel, if it was adapted for film, tended to play the more submissive role to the film’s dominance in this ‘marriage’. The film takes from the novel and often doesn’t give anything back, and in so doing, the two don’t make a marriage.” (Snyder 144). This ‘marriage of media’

exposes the relationship between the two, but a rift has separated them because of the isolation of adaptation studies from film studies.

Adaptation of a book has a need to entertain the audience and make the book invisible. Compared to *The Hunger Games*, most creators and writers of adapted films do not want people to find a need to compare. The film content creators try to fit “whatever pleasures viewers may have felt as they watched it; its most important manifestation was justification for the vindictive moral outrage with which its newly empowered audience could condemn a hostile culture” by taking the anticipation of a film to overlap the actual film is a common strategy (Leitch 62). This also involuntarily “isolated adaptation studies from film studies, aligning it more closely with the programs in literary studies from which so many of its early practitioners had come” to navigate viewers from the original source (Leitch 5).

Over the years and further into the study of film, it has drifted more towards the norm of politically critiquing film after film, whereas the more right side scholars find adaptation championing the old values of “universalist humanism” (Leitch 5). Though the rift had been formed for some time, the divide widened when the theory and practice of adaptation theories became a principle when people were still actively researching them. Looking further into film adaptation theory, the idea of adaptation can be defined as being very narrow and broad (Mousavi). Adaptation implies change and movement whether referring to popular strategies of adaptation in the entertainment industry or to the broader cultural processes of transformation and adjustment. It involves a medium or perfect in-between phase of unsettlement where it can change from an old standpoint to progress into a new one.

Gillian Roberts, the author of *Race, Nation and Cultural Power in Film Adaptation*, is a professor of Contemporary Literature and Culture at the University of Nottingham in her focus

on Canadian literature and culture and film adaptation. Her focus at the start of this work is how every person has a different story to how they were first introduced to the original text. Some have read the book at a young age and had been in love with the story since then, while others had their first exposure to the source through film which “inverted what ‘original’ means in their experiences as a viewer and reader” (Roberts 3). The audiences also come to adaptations through a variety of routes: “whether they are already invested in the source text; they’ve read a review; they’ve had a word-of-mouth recommendation; they’ve watched an awards ceremony and the films are still playing or about to play in a local cinema or – increasingly – via a streaming service to which they subscribe” (Roberts 3).

People who are in the film industry have a love and fascination over the subject. They have spent their life’s work creating the perfect shots and story lines. Since film experts are the ones who create films, they are the ones who criticize it the most. Theorists and researchers had created a “defensive language applied to these studies [that] seems protective, overprotective, of film” (Snyder 143). Most scholarly writing based on film adaptation studies has been done by film experts or film theorists showing why they are wanting to keep it in the realm of media, not others believing they could critique how an adapted film compares to the next.

Specifically looking into the film *The Passion of the Christ*, finding the line between fiction and religion adaptation had to be made. Christianity has the Bible, the Jewish people have the Torah, and Muslims have the Quran. Adapting a religious book where people have beliefs and values is a whole different story than *The Hunger Games*. Mel Gibson adapted the Bible in his film where it had controversy raising “...what does it mean to make a film that is faithful to the Gospels?” (Leitch 49). Looking into the side of religion is a whole different side of the story on literature adaptation. There is a need for respect when talking about adapting an impactful

story for Christianity and any other religion. Literature adaptors need to take the respect they have over religious adaptations into the world of fictional adaptations. Respect towards the author, the creator of a story, has the right to the movie in the adaptation.

Audience Studies

The industry is a whole different world where creators have to figure out what is desirable or profitable because in the end, their goal is to gain money. However, this makes people of film production focus on what they believe the audience would want to make money instead of following the original source which is actually what audiences want. The industry treats the “media as a set of objects and, accordingly, objectivises media technologies or media content as ‘products,’ while ‘[t]he aesthetic dimension of new media resides in the processes—the ways of doing, the recombination of relations, the figural dismantling of action—that constitute the abstraction of the social” (Rossiter 105). When focusing on how to translate a book into a film, the industry wants to sell a product, the movie, while the creative side wants to work on accuracy and the processes whether it being every element from the book or some creative liberties when creating a fictional world on screen. Do outside sources such as the internet and the environment affect the people creating and viewing the film? People discuss and have their own opinions over an adaptation but others can contribute to others thoughts on certain details from the film. It also depends on how educated the audience is over the original text.

This idea of adapting pieces of literature into film is not recent but “new adaptations of already-cinematized classic novels offer easily graspable examples of such promotional materials as, in this case, there usually is a need to justify the investment in a new adaptation” (Mousavi).

Whether the adaptation is “accurate” or “acceptable” is up to interpretation from the audience and how the whole production of the film is completed. When thinking of the original, it is always going to be based off of that because the “original provides a mass of potentials while also limiting the scope for maneuvering in what and how the story world is going to be visualized” (Mousavi). The idea of an adaptation is to bring in audiences of already existing fans of the original piece “with certain degrees of attachment to the source who would expect, receive, evaluate, and like or dislike the adaptation” (Mousavi). However, the point of the adaptation is to bring a world on the big screen through new worlds, different point of views, visuals, and additional themes. This is all up towards the production of the adaptation and even Mousavi stated that the authorial crew is considered the first audience if the media should follow through or not. However, whether it is received well by audiences or not is the question all studios wonder.

The ideals of adaptation from literature to cinema have varied throughout the years; however, people, especially audiences, always want a film to be a certain way. Even when audiences are not the ones creating the film, they have high hopes on the quality and accuracy of the adapted film. There are two types of audiences who enter the movie theater to watch the adapted film: ones who have read the book and those who have not. Each has different needs and expectations for the film. Those who have read the book beforehand, anticipate the film to be accurate to the original source and be true. On the other hand, those who have not read the book are there to be entertained. When creating an adaptation, you are already in a position to satisfy the two different audiences but also create a decent movie.

Audiences are actively being thought of by film producers and creators throughout the process of an adapted film to predict the success. This shows that they are in the mindset of

creation for profit. The system of adaptation in producing and sharing a printed work where “adaptation can no longer be considered merely a serendipitous but unlikely afterthought for a minority of already successful books” (Murray 26). When, in reality, “the possibility of multipurpose any particular content package across myriad simultaneous media formats has come to underpin the structural logic of the media industries and is consciously anticipated...” (Murray 26). Unfortunately, the responsibility of the original film at first is the author of the text as a spokesperson for the film. All of the spotlight was moved from the actors and creators to the author of the original text to test the credibility of the adaptation.

Though the world is strongly written by the author, “the book is a temporary state (liquid) for the content to later be expanded upon in film or other types of adaptation” and later on given the direction of a “professional” screenwriter (Murray 41). On page 114, Murray referenced a quote by the BBC2’s live broadcast coverage of a 1983 Booker dinner: “I don’t think the two media mix, without the intervention of trained adapters, screenwriters etc. In TV terms they lacked any unity. . . . The whole effect was cheapening and a concession to “showbiz”; it detracted from the Prize’s concern with literary merit.” They only focus on the clout and attention an adaption can have of people who have an attachment to the original form of the book. Abuse this nostalgia to gain more in profit or bring out the popularity of the original series or text. An example of this would be the *Percy Jackson* series that has recently been adapted to a television series with the original author highly involved in the project. The author was a creative spokesperson for the show through their own social media promotion and was highly involved throughout the process. Much like other adaptations, the *Percy Jackson* series was judged and picked at every possible scene from characters appearances to not having the exact same lines.

However, audiences judge whether the adapted film is “faithful” to the original than the idea of where the audiences have knowledge of. Though an adaptation may be accurate, it does not mean it is what audiences or viewers wanted. The adaptations that do resonate with the source text “geographically and/or temporally can be accounted for by some of these categorisations, but again, the acknowledged and/or intended proximity of the adaptation to the source text does not fully account for the nature of an adaptation” (Roberts 7). The source material as the raw form makes people dissect it and see if certain changes were worth the hassle or not what people wanted.

Production Studies

Production studies and analyzing behind-the-scenes allows people to understand the process of creating an adapted film. Levine’s research focuses on television history, theory, and criticism; gender, sexuality, and media; media industry and production studies; media audiences studies. Her research found how “the cultural studies bias toward analyses of texts and audiences over production [which] has existed to varying degrees throughout the field's studies of media” that influences people today across different industries (Levine 1). When people bring behind-the-scenes videos to audiences, they hope to grow viewership and a relationship with the audiences. They have created a text- and audience-centered bias through this and are trying to find how audiences will react to the translation from book to film. How accurate can they get while changing some aspects?

Screenwriting Studies

Screenwriting studies is a certain area of focus on how people actually decide to adapt from the original source, the book, into a screenplay for the film. The focus on adaptation studies is where it “traditionally favours analysis of fixed, canonical works over creative process, and is biased towards unified media such as the source novel, and the final adapted film, over the adapted screenplay that exists between them” (Sherry). When scholars research in adapted cinema, they forget to “integrate the screenwriter or debates of authorship found in screenwriting theory; there is little consideration of the even ‘lowlier’ form of the screenplay” (Sherry). Theorists spend too much studying the audiences and reactions that they never study the process of the adaptation through the screenplay and other important elements. The screenplay has been seen as a “functional device used to facilitate and guide film, and as a ‘blueprint’ or ‘template’” but never concrete or set in stone. Books flow and follow a storyline consistently to the page but film has other elements that are visual and change at any moment for adaptation (Sherry).

Continuing on with, screenplays are similar to theater plays but do not normally contain the same ideas of a theater script. The points of view are dramatically different by using the “first person character psychologies and complexity of language and emotion at which literature tends to excel” (Sherry). Contextually, the original has a specific point of view but films, they expand upon the world and views. It depends on whether makers decide to allow the text to take control or go away from the original in plot points. However, when looking at the “final shooting script, will be ‘closest’ in content to the film produced, the studying of such a document does not necessarily illuminate the ‘process’ of adaptation” (Sherry).

Facework Theory and Communication

According to Guerrero and McEwan, face is “a combination of the person who we believe ourselves to be and the identity performances that we believe would be supported and approved by social groups that are important to us” (33). When people are in public or have a need to keep face, they usually have to keep it in mind everyday. The focus is to keep a positive face where people keep a socially appropriate self-image of oneself that they want others to see (Guerrero 33). However, there are also times of negative face, “the idea that we all would like to make autonomous decisions regarding how we behave in the world” (Guerrero 33), where people are at their truest selves. Face-threats are “communicative actions that might harm someone’s positive or negative face” (Guerrero 24). If people were ever in face-threatening circumstances, they need to follow politeness strategies to maintain or correct their face around others. This is by doing other actions to take the focus away from the face threatening acts such as humor or ignoring the situation.

Lastly, the way of appearance through interpersonal communication is the idea of the crystallized self. Crystallized self “allows people to think of the different performances, or lines that we take, as different facets of self (Guerrero 37). Looking at this point of view, the self does not have an authentic center and not one specific facet of self that is more or less authentic than any of the other facets or pieces.

The textbook, *Interpersonal Encounters: Connecting Through Communication* by Laura K. Guerrero and Bree McEwan, explains interpersonal communication and interactions. Laura K. Guerrero is a professor and director of engagement and innovation at Hugh Downs School of Human Communication at Arizona State University. Guerrero’s research focuses on relation and

non verbal communication, emotion, and conflict with multiple published works over interpersonal communication. Bree McEwan is an associate professor in the Institute of Communication, Culture, and Information Technology at the University of Toronto-Mississauga where her research focuses on computer-mediated communication and interpersonal communication. Interpersonal communication has a strong effect on how an fictional character is translated into an actor portraying the character. The idea of interpersonal communication is “the exchange of nonverbal and verbal messages between people who have some level of personal or social connection with one another” and this is shown throughout the trilogy in both forms (Guerrero 2). No relationships are built without interpersonal communication but can be strengthened through this communication and shared experiences.

Decoding and encoding messages and nonverbal communication are huge parts in how viewers see the characters interacting throughout the film or how they perceive them on paper. Guerrero explains that “to encode a message, you need to take an idea or information and translate it into a code that you can use to communicate that message” (Guerrero 3). This can be a heavily used strategy by carefully planning Katniss’ next sentence or what they are going to say or can be spontaneous as a natural selection like laughing or yelling. To decode is to attend by “interpreting the words or behaviors of another person”; or by making sense of and attaching meaning to the messages produced by someone (Guerrero 5). Decoding can vary for interpretation by how clear it may be by the receiver. Whereas nonverbal communication “comprises non linguistic behaviors that are sent or received during the communication process” (Guerrero 10). Think more ‘nonlinguistic’ when you are nonverbal and see how even the expressions people give each other can be just as effective as verbal messages. However, nonverbals are assumed to be all messages that are not spoken but there is more than just not

speaking through this method of communicating. Nonverbal communication is known as “behaviors that are not directly related towards, whether spoken or unspoken” (Guerrero 10). Nonverbal communication is used everyday without realization and shows the importance of nonverbal communication, being verbal is not the only way people can show their emotions or thoughts. Facial expressions, written words, or body language are all forms of nonverbal communication people can effectively express themselves.

Methodology

The approach taken was rhetoric research through the analyzation of a piece of media or text, i.e. *The Hunger Games*, on the effect towards culture and the influence of the film adaptation of *The Hunger Games* trilogy has taken on different generations.

Results and Discussion

Again, Leitch expresses how literature adaptation is a marriage between the two mediums and how there needs to be a co-existence, however, “we neglect to remember that film adaptation is the combination of two mediums” (Snyder, 144). Audiences love all types of entertainment like film and books. When there are enthusiasts of a certain genre like *The Hunger Games*, they would automatically compare the book to the film. People do not realize that films have a limited amount of time given. Books can be as long as they want to be. On the other hand, films can only hold people’s attention for so long. This leads audiences to create an idea of the film being the face of the franchise creating the “novel, if it was adapted for film, tended to play the more submissive role to the film’s dominance in this ‘marriage’. The film takes from the novel and

often doesn't give anything back, and in so doing, the two don't make a marriage." (Snyder 144). This 'marriage of media' exposes the relationship between the two but a rift has separated them because of the isolation of adaptation studies from film studies.

Adaptation of a book has a need to entertain the audience and make the book invisible. They do not want people to find a need to compare. The film content creators made "the film's value as entertainment exceeded whatever pleasures viewers may have felt as they watched it; its most important manifestation was justification for the vindictive moral outrage with which its newly empowered audience could condemn a hostile culture" (Leitch 62) by taking the anticipation of a film to overlap the actual film is a common strategy. This also involuntarily "isolated adaptation studies from film studies, aligning it more closely with the programs in literary studies from which so many of its early practitioners had come" to navigate viewers from the original source (Leitch 5). "The further film studies drifted toward the left, mining film after film for political critique, the more firmly adaptation scholars dug in their heels on the right, championing the old-guard values of universalist humanism. At the same time, the rift widened between the theory and the practice of adaptation studies, which continued to take literary aesthetics as its touchstone and canonical works and authors as its organizing principle" (Leitch 5).

People who are in the film industry have a love and fascination over the subject. They have spent their life's work creating the perfect shots and story lines. Since film experts are the ones who create films, they are the ones who criticize it the most. However, "the majority of scholars writing on film adaptation studies seem to be film experts, film theorists. And the defensive language applied to these studies seems protective, overprotective, of film" (Snyder

143). Only people who are well-versed in the area of film criticism have researched the subject, not always the film director or experienced cinematography.

Appearance as a theme is the main focus of this study for *The Hunger Games* trilogy and how it was translated into the film series. Diving into the theme of appearance, the characters had to continuously be conscious of how they present themselves. Throughout the book trilogy, appearance was constantly considered as an essential factor when appealing to their audiences. In the plot of *The Hunger Games*, the main character, Katniss frequently observes and indicates the importance of appearing to not only make people in the Capitol, the city of the country, Panem, to like them as tributes but also earn their love to gain sponsorships. Both the book and film mention how sponsors provide the supplies that could mean either life or death with some matches or water (Collins).

Exploring the ways Katniss was using interpersonal communication skills shows how intentional she was at appearing a certain way to gain favor over the citizens of the Capitol. In the first book, Katniss describes the people of the Capitol and the city as “too much.” On page 59, Katniss looks over and expresses her first thoughts of the city and its people, “All the colors seem artificial, the pinks too deep, the greens too bright, the yellow painful to the eyes, like the flat round disks of hard candy we can never afford to buy at the tiny sweet shop in District 12” (Collins 59), directly stating her thoughts of the Capitol being a different place from where she grew up. She is being observant and understanding how the people work. She is adapting her interpersonal communication skills to start appealing to the audience. However, the film does not show her thoughts specifically over on the Capitol being “too much” but when the designers and crews start working with her, the film and movie shows there is a contrast in ideas for the people

in the Capitol loving pretty things with beauty standards and Katniss with the rest of her district focus on when their next meal would be.

Appearance is not just outward and physical but also presenting oneself through personality and characteristics. Katniss had to learn the ways of interacting with Capitol people to like her personality, not just her outward appearance. According to Laura Guerrero and Bree McEwan, interpersonal communication is “the exchange of nonverbal and verbal messages between people who have some level of personal or social connection with one another” (2). Everyone who talks with someone is utilizing the ability to communicate interpersonally. Katniss never talked much outside her family and close friend, Gale. She learned to use face which is “a combination of the person who we believe ourselves to be and the identity performances that we believe would be supported and approved by social groups that are important to us” (Goffman 1967). Face has been a very common form of communication and daily expression. Face is how people present themselves, whether intentional or not. There are two types of face: positive and negative face. The main character rarely utilized her negative face, “the idea that we all would like to make autonomous decisions regarding how we behave in the world” (Guerrero 34). This is where you are not acting socially acceptable or being intentional with presenting yourself, being open and your true self with no filter usually. Katniss was on the opposite side of the spectrum where she focused solely on a positive face which is the “socially appropriate self-image people wish to present to others” (Guerrero 33). She made sure every action she did was well thought out and executed.

The Hunger Games

Focusing on the first book, *The Hunger Games* shows the main characters, Katniss, facework often. Her positive face work was shown the clearest when she was preparing for the interview portion before the Games. On page 116, Haymitch is coaching Katniss on finding the right angle for her to take during her interview that every Capitol citizen would see. Haymitch says, “The impression you make tomorrow will decide exactly what I can get you in terms of sponsors.’...If you appeal to the crowd, either by being humorous or brutal or eccentric, you gain favor” (Collins 116). He is intentionally telling Katniss that she cannot be herself but rather a presentable, positive person to the masses and she was well aware of this from previously watching the Games. Katniss understood that tributes had to play into a role either be charming, likable, intimidating, or humorous to gain favor over the crowd and stand out for sponsors. In the film, however, the interview training session was not shown but only a quick moment between Katniss and her designer, Cina, about how to make the crowd like her. Cina then said, “Be yourself, that’s how I got to know you and like you (Collins 116)” where the film took away an important scene as a choice to keep up with the time of the film limit and needing to bring out the essential information. With film adaptation theory, the film stayed to the book while sacrificing smaller scenes to still be true to the original source material through actions and a simple sentence to ease Katniss and the audience. The idea was a great appearance appealing to sponsors causing a great likelihood of survival.

Following the process before the main character went into *The Hunger Games*, Katniss voiced her opinions within the text because it is from her point of view. There are specific details and thoughts not shown throughout the film. This is commonly mentioned in film adaptation

because not every film is there to stay in one point of view like a book or have internal dialogue to open to the audience. However, *The Hunger Games* stayed consistent with everything that happened to Katniss plus different shots of important outcomes from actions taken by the protagonist. The “Reaping Day” was the event that draws which two tributes will be forced into the Games. Though this is a sad day for most people full of stress and fear, they all dress nicely and clean themselves up for the occasion.

Every district citizen, no matter their rank or class had to dress a certain way to represent the district on live television. Madge, Katniss’ friend and the mayor’s daughter of District 12, usually wears “her drab school outfit has been replaced by an expensive white dress, and her blonde hair is done up with a pink ribbon. Reaping clothes,” this shows Katniss’ thoughts over the change in dress wear for the Reaping. Compared to film Madge is not a character addressed nor even mentioned even though she plays an important role as a friend to Katniss. The need to dress differently or better expresses the idea of the Reaping Day not being an ordinary day. Katniss believes “it *is* a pretty dress, but she would never be wearing it ordinarily” making this day special and having to dress nicely, not just the mayor’s daughter (Collins 12). Gale, her hunting friend, even tells her to “wear something pretty” supporting the norms of dressing nicely for that day (Collins 13). Though they do not describe Katniss’ thoughts about dressing nicely through dialogue, the camera focuses on her looking at her reflection with a solemn face, having the audience fully understand that this is not normal and she is not happy about the situation. However, both the book and film describe Katniss’ preparation for the Reaping. During the Reaping, every child from the ages of 12 to 18 appears nice for the cameras but their faces are blank.

When the Reaping starts, the mayor presents himself on stage to read what is read every year of their country's history and resolution from the war. They also mention the past victors of the Games from District 12 introducing Haymitch as a middle aged man who loves to drink. The past victor is clearly intoxicated and he makes a fool of himself; "the mayor looks distressed. Since all of this is being televised, right now District 12 is the laughingstock of Panem, and he knows it" (Collins 19). This shows how appearance is not just the physical appearance, but the characters' actions and personalities. Haymitch, though a winner of the Games, does not have a care for how he presents himself since he is not part of the arena anymore. However, the mayor and Haymitch represent the town so having a public figure stumbles off stage, this just furthers the idea how their district is less than the other districts. Being the lowest district is even more evidence that out of all the poor districts, District 12 is the "laughing stock"; not only through Haymitch but how they present themselves towards the rest of the country and their prospects as a district. This scene from the book is not in the film. They clearly show Haymitch as an avid drinker within the film stumbling on the train instead, not embarrassing the District as a whole. District 12 is already shown as a lesser than people as the worst district not by their supply they provide nor them being the last one but by only having produced two victors from the 73 years of the Games.

On the train, Katniss and Peeta, the other tribute from her district in the Games, essentially prove themselves to Haymitch as tributes. Both of them argue with their mentor because he was not planning to help them. However, Haymitch clearly states that he finally has fighters this year. Past years have not been impressive with appearance and skill within the Games. Haymitch, however, landed a punch to Peeta's cheek where they have this interaction: "no," says Haymitch, stopping him. "Let the bruise show. The audience will think you've mixed

it up with another tribute before you've even made it to the arena.' 'That's against the rules,' says Peeta. 'Only if they catch you. That bruise will say you fought, you weren't caught, even better,' says Haymitch (Collins 57). This further illustrates the importance of appearance, even the simple bruise on his face to show he is capable of fighting is an indicator of success in the arena. The scene was not specifically in the film where Haymitch hit Peeta but more pushed him down in a chair to stop Peeta from taking his drink. Still significant on Haymitch's dependence but not representing appearance. They mention that the tributes need to look pretty but tough, capable to fight and worth spending money on.

On the next page, Haymitch has Katniss and Peeta stand up for him to observe their appearance and builds. They are not "entirely hopeless" in Haymitch's dialogue leading to the future of stylists and being prepped for more televised events. The goal of the stylists is to make the tributes attractive. Look attractive to bring the sponsors in and keep them interested with their strength and skills. The significance of Katniss' statement encapsules how "*The Hunger Games* aren't a beauty contest, but the best-looking tributes always seem to pull more sponsors" (Collins 58). From the start, the "pretty tax" has already taken hold by making people stand out by either sheer strength and size or level of attractiveness. Again, this very statement was not in *The Hunger Games*, but it is insinuated by audiences on how looking pretty is a standard not an option.

A huge difference in scenes from the page to screen is when the train arrives at the Capitol. Peeta, in the film, plays them sitting all at the table including Haymitch. When they get to the station, it only shows a little of the Capitol with the train station and some buildings but it goes straight to Peeta getting up with Katniss and Haymitch watching him wave and smile at the citizens. Peeta even asks Katniss to join but she just keeps a straight, hateful face. Haymitch

added “better keep this knife, he knows what he is doing.” Beforehand, Haymitch explained to the two tributes, but also the audience, how sponsors were the lifeblood of surviving in the arena. In the film, Peeta seems more infatuated with the idea of the Capitol and waving to citizens shouting their excitement towards them. Instead the book explicitly has him wave and smile to people explaining to Katniss that “one of them may be rich” with a shrug of his shoulders (Collins 60). Appearance as a form of appearing perfect for the gawking crowd and putting on their positive faces.

When they are brought to their stylists, they are shoved in by being waxed, plucked, and cleaned by Katniss to become more “presentable” for Capitol standards. In the districts, there are no beauty standards like having hairless legs or uniform nails. Her stylists even seemed surprised with how much hair Katniss had because appearance was highly prioritized in the city than the districts. The film shows this scene of her getting prepped and focused on the waxing, especially the pain she experienced. They had an addition to the film by having one of the stylists talk to Katniss needing to be cleaned more before seeing her designer. They perfectly represented the need to look smooth and clean to be put on stage for everyone to see.

In the film, Cinna, the designer, did not specifically mention minimal makeup but the importance of costumes and the parade was the first introduction to all of the tributes and to gain the attention of sponsors. What film adaptation theory appreciates in this film is the time it took to show instead of say. The point of a film adapted from a book is to show a world and a story arch that readers enjoyed. *The Hunger Games* took the ideas of film adaptation by adapting with the author but also being true to source material through creativity such as showing Katniss’ distress over being ready for the Games. They had Katniss look at herself in the film to see her reaction of surprise to “look more attractive but utterly recognizable” (Collins 70) which they

took directly from the book through action, not dialogue. Later on, Katniss noticed the other tributes from the districts were “shooting us dirty looks, which confirms what I’ve suspected, we’ve literally outshone them all” (Collins 72). Again, the film did the exact scene from the book without needing to acknowledge it through words but acting and showing. Katniss and Peeta stood out and gained the favor of sponsors showing everyone knew about the need to favor their image.

After the interviews Peeta “confessed” his love for Katniss to gain the favor and a story for television. Something for the people to root for and support with their own money. This jumps them into the storyline of star-crossed lovers for the rest of the Games and always appearing to be in love. The plan by Haymitch and Peeta was strategically made, especially not involving Katniss at first to gain a genuine reaction. It is all for show to make her “‘look desirable!’ said by Haymitch. ‘And let’s face it, you can use all the help you can get in that department. You were about as romantic as dirt until he said he wanted you. Now they all do.’” Katniss does not have presentable skills for flirtation and appealing to the audience but with the help of Peeta wanting her makes everyone else want her. This scene was clearly shown in the film and even took direct quotes from Haymitch for the actor. The importance of this scene impacted the rest of the storyline and film.

In the Games, Katniss mostly focuses on herself and surviving at the start. However, there are a few moments when she notices cameras or remembers that people are watching her. In the film, they had an intentional scene of Katniss sitting in a tree hearing the camera move and noticing it showing the audience that people are watching from all different angles to see everything. When Katniss blows up the Careers food supply, she is injured and frightened “but I can’t let my fear show. Absolutely, positively, I am live on every screen in Panem” (Collins

223). Resisting the urge to express an emotion other than calm or confidence can lead people to not believe in her or her abilities. Even when Rue died, Katniss in the film hid for a moment to cry away from the cameras. Both media forms showed her desire of confronting the problem of Rue's death and purposefully the evil the Capitol made children do to each other. Again, in adaptation theory, they cannot take her internal dialogue and force it upon the audience; instead, they took the actress in showing true emotions and have the reception on the receiving side of Panem with their reactions. Not telling but showing.

When there was a rule change with two tributes winning from the same district made way, Katniss finally remembered her true goal of the Games. Their act of being “the star-crossed lovers...Peeta must have been playing that angle all along” showing intentionality on both ends (Collins 247). Appearance was upheld by keeping their love story alive and later leading to them both having the potential to survive together. Not only their act and appearance gave them a chance but the ability to survive. Katniss eventually finds Peeta injured and was reminded by him how they were supposed to be madly in love where she impulsively kissed him for the cameras. Haymitch later sends them a gift from sponsors with food telling Katniss “one kiss equals one pot of broth” (Collins 261). To keep up the act of the star-crossed lovers needing to survive together and get back home. Katniss throughout the book kept mentally reminding herself to keep up the story. In the film, the audience can see the shift of her being with Peeta at first to save him but playing into the role of star-crossed lovers. Appearing in love to live.

Catching Fire

Catching Fire is the sequel and has very similar scenes representing Katniss appearing attractive for the cameras. However, Peeta and her are stuck in the fantasy of lovers surviving the Games together. The third page of the sequel reminds readers of the important roles her prep team and designers contributed to help her win the Games. She stood out with her costumes and was beautified to maintain appearances. Even her friends and family at District 12 were roped into the ruse of “not the least bit willing to smile and play nice for the cameras” (Collins 12). They did not show this in the films because this was not pertaining to the current storyline and was unnecessary when they can just mention they are now “cousins” to maintain the image of lovers.

The difference at the start of this book is how Katniss sees herself and herself towards others. She is in a state of crystallized self as mentioned before in the literature review. The characters, mostly Katniss, when they are presenting themselves, have no true one personality but have specific ways they present or act around certain people, groups, or individuals. She is now in a spot where. Her core is not as true as once was before the Games had on her and her fellow tribute, Peeta.

The film directly took the first scene of Katniss and Peeta being together in the book. They are more cold towards each other away from the cameras. Whenever the cameras are on, they act in love towards the audience but their dynamic completely changes when they do not need to keep a positive face. Directly from the page, Haymitch says, “Brrr. You two have got a lot of warming up to do before showtime” showing the importance of keeping their ruse and staying alive. The Capitol expects lovebirds who won the Games, not acquaintances.

At her house, Katniss and the readers meet President Snow for the first time. However, audiences are aware of him beforehand in the film showing how important the antagonist is. Snow confronts Katniss with her scenario ““with the love-crazed schoolgirl bit. The people in the Capitol were quite convinced” (Collins 21). Snow threatens Katniss’ act and needs to convince the people of the districts with their “love”. The need to maintain the appearance of love and admiration for each other, being a perfect couple of victors. The president discussed to Katniss how her playing her role and appearing like the people want will help prevent an uprising. ““I know. I will. I’ll convince everyone in the districts that I wasn’t defying the Capitol, that I was crazy with love,” I say. President Snow rises and dabs his puffy lips with a napkin. ‘Aim higher in case you fall short.’ ‘What do you mean? How can I aim higher?’ I ask. ‘Convince *me*,’ he says” (Collins 29). Snow explains how the system is fragile but appearances are what truly matters. No intentions matter, just the aftermath from those said appearances. Katniss “didn’t mean” to inspire a rebellion, but she did, and she is blamed for it. The president calls her the “spark” that could explode their world and says that Cinna knew she had it in her. This scene was perfectly taken from book to film with direct quotation and actions by characters again, explaining the importance of this scene and ideas of appearance.

It is all performance for Katniss at first whereas Peeta “will perform well whether he knows what’s at stake or not” having confidence in the abilities of Peeta to keep up their appearance and convincing the president of their love (Collins 33). However, pretending to be in love has its price. In order for the strategy to continue to work, they have to keep up the charade for as long as the Capitol watches over them. Forever. Haymitch explains the gravity of her situation with Peeta and the Capitol. It is not just a fake relationship with her partner but with the city that is threatening her with death. ““You and Peeta, you’ll be mentors now, every year from

here on out. And every year they'll revisit the romance and broadcast the details of your private life, and you'll never, ever be able to do anything but live happily ever after with that boy” (Collins 42). This scene was also in the film just not to the full extent. “Never getting off the train” was a huge quote from the book and impacted their situation in both media.

After the press tour, Peeta and Katniss are engaged, keeping up with life on the train. When Gale is whipped, Katniss breaks in and gets hit in the face. Haymitch says, ““Oh, excellent,’ his hand locks under my chin, lifting it. ‘She’s got a photoshoot next week modeling wedding dresses. What am I supposed to tell her stylist?’” (Collins 107). Here Haymitch uses the importance of Katniss' appearance as an argument for why the new Head Peacekeeper should stop beating her. The way Haymitch explains it, it does not matter what Katniss has done or not done to deserve a beating. What matters is her presence at "a photo shoot next week" where she has to look the part "modeling wedding dresses." Of course, Haymitch is using appearances as an excuse to save Katniss, but in a way, her life does depend on her looking the part. There isn't much difference between the book and film but I enjoyed the details of Plutarch and Snow discussing the focus of Katniss' wedding to make it a way to have the districts to hate her. This is how movie adaptations should be used: show different points of views and the ideas of other people to build off of actual situations that take place in the book.

As a Games victor, Katniss is both more protected and more endangered than a normal person. People throughout Panem know what she looks like, and if she's "pointing an arrow" it's even more obvious who she is (Collins 140). Hunting by arrow is one of her defining skills as a victor. She is stuck in a world where everyone knows her and can't escape her survival instincts by maintaining appearance. Now Peeta and Katniss are back in the Games but from a different angle. This is a change by them as “star-crossed lovers from District 12, who suffered so much

and enjoyed so little the rewards of our victory, do not seek the fans' favor, grace them with our smiles, or catch their kisses" (Collins 212). From the normal appearance they did in the last Games. They already have the favor of the Capitol. Now show their fury towards the hate of putting their "beloved" victors back into the arena. The film directly quotes Cinna with the change in not looking at anyone with Katniss favoring it. Then showing the parade of them not giving the citizens what they want but doing what they want to stop the Games.

Later on, readers and viewers learn about Finnick, a past victor in this Games also. Outside the arena Finnick is defined by his extreme, almost unearthly beauty. He's a great-looking guy, but he isn't just that. At this moment, when Katniss thinks he "looks hideous," he still has his sense of humor, even though he's also shaken by the fact that he does not look his best. Even going as far as only seeing him as an object of desire and appearances kept him something special in the Capitol.

Peeta and Katniss always have to think of their audience. In what should be the most private times of anyone's life, finding love or facing death, they have to perform like actors on a stage. Peeta references "the baby signals that our time-out from the Games is over. That he knows the audience will be wondering why he hasn't used the most persuasive argument in his arsenal. That sponsors must be manipulated" (Collins 353). Everything has to be done with an eye to pleasing the public. Katniss is the embodiment of the revolution, which needs her in order to "live." Even though she does not strategize with them or even realize what the revolutionaries are capable of, she's more valuable to their movement than anyone else. She provides the focal point around which the rebels can gather and grow stronger.

Mockingjay

In the *Mockingjay*, the last book of the trilogy, Katniss is faced with the revolution and the end of a 75 long war. Even though she is not in the arena anymore, she is still forced into a role of representing the revolution and being what the people want. As a rebel, she is in a costume and recorded to fire up the other rebels. With Gale she is reminded “in his hands, I am again a mockingjay...’You’re going to be the best-dressed rebel in history,’ says Gale with a smile” (Collins 43). They considered how to show Katniss with grim but not disgusting people and other factors. They considered this both in the book and film. The last films of *The Hunger Games* are split into two parts from the last book to give it a definitive ending for viewers.

Katniss thinks at the beginning being the “mockingjay,” she would “get to look more like [herself]. But it seems a televised rebel has her own standards to live up to” (Collins 60). Reaffirming that appearances matter even outside the Capitol in a different position. Katniss starts filming to “...yell with all the anger I can muster, ‘*People of Panem, we fight, we dare, we end our hunger for justice!*’ There’s dead silence on the set. It goes on. And on. Finally, the intercom crackles and Haymitch’s acerbic laugh fills the studio. He contains himself just long enough to say, ‘And that, my friends, is how a revolution dies’” (Collins 72). She does better in action and cannot force her into something she is not able to do. Many Haymitch lines from the book are directly quoted from the book to the films. Very impactful and accurate lines about appearance showing his skills. This was a direct quote made in the film also.

At the end of the book, Katniss interacts with Snow and understands how even the new president wants to be like Snow and enact revenge. “I recall Bogg’s response when I admitted I hadn’t put much thought into Snow’s successor” in Katniss’ internal thoughts (Collins 360). ‘*If*

your immediate answer isn't Coin, then you're a threat. You're the face of the rebellion. You may have more influence than any other single person. Outwardly, the most you've ever done is tolerated her” how it is not just Katniss who is keeping up appearances and maintaining an act but also President Coin (Collins 361). She does not have to look pretty to appeal to audiences but with leadership and words to impact people.

Conclusion

Katniss within *The Hunger Games* trilogy has to maintain and fulfill her role as a star-crossed lover with Peeta. Starting as a girl from District 12 thrust into a fake relationship to being a rebel leader showed how appearances can change. However, every role has a part to play and are just as important as the others.

Coming from a small district, which was the laughing stock of the country, she has a great amount of work and room for improvement. Katniss inspires people and persuades others to believe what she did was not a facade. Every tribute has secrets and goals to complete when competing in the Games. Peeta was not meant to be a part of her storyline but found him being essential to keep a positive appearance for the citizens to admire.

The Games were not a beauty contest but the more attractive a tribute was, like Finnick, the more likely they would get favor. They need to stand out physically and personality. The mentors trained their tributes to be something that stands out for people to want to spend their money on a precious resource. The tributes do not win the Games, there are survivors. All had to keep their show of appearances even outside the arena.

From the start, the “pretty tax” has already taken hold by making people stand out by either sheer strength and size or level of attractiveness. Again, this very statement was not in *The Hunger Games* but it is insinuated by audiences on how looking pretty is a standard not an option. Intentionality was the one thing they always kept doing to maintain their appearance no matter how they looked or seemed to those watching.

In the book to film idea, the films are considered one of the most accurate film adaptations out there in mainstream media. However, it depends on how the production team works on the movie and what they want to present to others. Had to consider appearance and appeal to the audiences. The two audiences of the ones who had read the books and the ones who haven't. They all want something. Another side idea of adapted films is the audiences. There are two types of audiences who watch the anticipated adaptation: the audience who has read the books and the audience who has not. People have varying ideals for what they actually want the film to be for them. Each audience has a goal and expects it; however, each audience has different wants and the film depends on how the production team created the film. The audience either approves or disapproves of what they watch.

Again, communication and facework is a stand out for the characters and is a common use. From the theory of crystallized self with Katniss later on not having a true center to having to constantly be intentional of positive facework, leads to her path as a symbol to a Rebellion she did not want to be a part of. Appearances can be deceiving and Katniss plays it well even when she loses a part of herself with mental issues and post-traumatic stress disorder in the end. Katniss' positive facework and the work of others lead to their survival with pleasing the mass in the Capitol during and after the Games.

There is a need specifically for the side of adaptation theory in films today. Every other film created today is based on a book. Adaptation has become a norm and are usually the films that are highly regarded and rewarded. Analyzing film adaptation as a whole, not just in a certain theme, can help see where adapted films have been successful or have fallen short. There is also a lack of checking how the theme of appearance is shown today. If one film will allow more time and energy to be spent on more details and little aspects, it would allow for others to see how consumed the world is with the theme. Also, researching the effects the theme appearance has on audiences after viewing projects such as *The Hunger Games* would show the influence film and media culture has on the world today. When looking at all the films and whether their adaptation was accurate needs a lens of film adaptation and audiences wants. It might be possible to even collect quantitative data over people's opinions on the films compared to the books.

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