

Good example of essay on books into films worst combination

[Sport & Tourism](#), [Baseball](#)



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Introduction

The advantage that movies have over books is that everything in the movie can tell the story: the background music, the movements or he gestures of the actors, specific unanimated scenes, dialogue, monologue and so on. On the other hands, books have only the words they are made of to tell the story and sometimes graphical indications or drawings that explain the scenes which compose the narrative. The current essay analyzes four combinations of book-film storytelling narratives (“ The Natural”, “ World War Z”, “ Christine” and “ The Hobbit”), focusing on a particular book-film combination, chosen as the worst such combination for a college-student audience. Berry Levinson’s “ The Natural” movie adaptation of the eponymous book written by Bernard Malamud in 1952 follows a similar, although not identical plot until one point, when the movie takes a totally different turn compared to the novel. This makes “ The Natural” the worst combination of book and film storytelling narrative for the college-student audience from the stories studied this term.

Body

The book and the film based on Malamud's "The Natural" have the same theme: the challenges and hard times of a sportsman, trapped between his quest for a successful career and a faulty personality. In terms of storytelling, however, the movie literally transforms the initial plot narrated in the novel and changes the personal and professional development of the characters involved in the action. The book tells a story with a sad ending, focusing on Roy Hobbs, a promising baseball player, who passes through various situations and ends up throwing his last game for money, realizing in the end his decadence (Malamud 231). Unlike the book, the movie has a more commercial plot, enlightening the darkness that fell upon Hobbs, the main character, by changing several of his decisions that he makes. Like this, the director of the movie "The Natural", Barry Levinson takes a decaying baseball star from the dusty-darken pages of Malamud's novel and makes him an American hero, popular, virtuous and shiny. The only fact that the character of Roy Hobbs is played by Robert Redford, a very popular, handsome, desired actor of his time suggests the idea that the movie is set to a happy ending, aligned with the inspiring personality that Redford exerts through his physical qualities. The Roy Hobbs portrayed by Levinson is manly, attractive, has a perfect blond hair and a perfect white-teeth-smile, plus a mysterious look, making Robert Redford the perfect image of the American hero who overcomes his dark side and all the barriers life brings upon him to fulfill an American dream of being the best athlete and having a perfect life. While this is a positive outcome and highly motivational for college-audience, it makes the film nevertheless unauthentic and

commercial, because it compromises the real version of the story and the tragic quality that the book delivers.

In the book, as in the film, Hobbs is a baseball player who deals with personal flaws, while obsessing about becoming the best baseball player in the world, despite his rather advanced age. The movie describes in detail why later Hobbs considers this chance is ruined for him. Levinson narrates the incident with the mysterious lady who shot him 16 years earlier, when Hobbs was on his way to Chicago to try his chance for becoming the baseball pitchers for Chicago Cubs. The mysterious alluring woman that shot him in stomach committed suicide, leaving Roy with severe health problems that hindered his athletic performances. The book vaguely describes this aspect, but nevertheless, Roy's shooting scene does explain his personality shift from an optimistic, jovial young man into a grumpy, pessimistic adult baseball player, frustrated over his athletic situation, but still waiting for a miracle to happen. The moment from which the film starts to drift apart from the plot described in the book is when Roy ends up in hospital and the owner of the team he plays for, Knights, tries to bribe him to lose the game. While in the book Hobbs agrees after bargaining for a higher amount (\$35. 000 compared to the initial offer of \$25. 000), in the movie the athlete resists the bribe, although he would have needed the money. Nevertheless, an indication of accepting the bribe of the judge is given in the movie, when the judge gives Hobbs an envelope in his hospital bed. Hobbs' salary is very small compared to his talent and with the quality brought in for the team and he asks for a raise. This fact is described both in the movie and in the book. In the book Malamud (98) sets the judge to refuse Hobbs' salary increase

request. In the movie the conversation is different, as the judge makes the baseball player understand that he will be offered a raise if he will worsen his game, for the purpose of eliminating Pop Fisher, his trainer, in order to get his share of the team. So, because Hobbs does not agree to worsen his game, the judge places an envelope on his hospital bed, restating his offer. However, in the movie Roy returns the money before he entered the game (after getting out of the hospital), indicating that he will not sabotage his game. From this moment on, the movie develops totally different as compared to the book, because Roy Hobbs becomes the hero of his team, offering an amazing game, while in the book he intentionally misses, leading his team to a defeat. Another distinction in terms of content, which also influences the style of both the movie and the book, is the Iris/Memo presence and their influence upon the development of Hobbs character. In the book Hobbs is presented as having a relationship with Iris while he activates for the Knights. However, in the book Iris has a daughter, who also has a child, making Hobbs reluctant to the idea of maintaining an amorous relationship with a grandmother (Malamud 157). In the movie, however, Iris is presented even from the first scenes as Hobbs' home girlfriend, with whom he makes love before he went for Chicago. 16 years later she appears out of the sudden, wearing a white dress (unlike the red dress described in the book (Malamud 149)), telling Roy that she has a 16 years old boy, and that his father lives in New York. Later she announces him that he is the father. Iris' character possesses a strong symbolical value in the movie, being the returning love from his promising youth. She offers the chance of rebirth, by making Hobbs to regain his self-confidence and to continue to

fight for his dream of becoming the best baseball player in the world. Her white dress is a symbol of hope and of purity, which is a cinematic indication that Iris is the woman who is responsible for Hobbs' becoming a baseball hero, while in the book she receives less attention, not being sufficiently powerful for changing Hobbs' character. On the contrary, in the book Memo is the one that outlines the negative character of Hobbs, influencing him to accept the bribe from the judge and to lose the game, at the prospect of marrying with him and having the financial possibility that she needed for feeling comfortable (Malamud 167). In the book Hobbs is falling in love with her and proposes to marry her, while this aspect does not appear in the film. Levinson creates circularity in the movie by directing Memo to shoot at Hobbs, as she considered him responsible for the death of her boyfriend, Bump Baily, Hobbs' team colleague. The shooting scene was a repetition of the story with alluring woman shooting him 16 years earlier. But Memo missed and this translates the symbol of the second chance to play ball and to be the best baseball player there ever was (Levinson, "The Natural"). Therefore, "The Natural" is the worst combination of book and film storytelling from the book/film combinations studied, because the movie is drifting apart from the book's content, style and theme when Hobbs refuses to be bribed. Moreover, Levinson introduces symbolical effects and scenic representations meant to outline the fact that Hobbs received a second chance to be the best baseball player and that he maximizes that chance, becoming a happy man, unlike the sad, tragic character described by Malamud.

Comparable with "The Natural" book-film combo, "The Hobbit", written by J.

R. R. Tolkien and developed in 1977 into a movie animation with the same name (directed by Jules Bass and Arthur Rankin Jr.) is more soldered. As such, the action described in the book is followed in the animation, although there are some specific modifications to the plot and the graphical restoration of the scenes and characters described in the movie. As such, in the original plot of the book, the dwarves come in to Bilbo's house one by one, as the host constantly opens and closes the door after each one of them. However, in the animation, the dwarves come all at once, bursting into Bilbo's house. Unlike the book, the animation film does not mention the Arkenstone, although it constantly reminds of the treasure that Thorin and his men reclaim. Regarding the characters' graphic representation, the elves are designed as green and blond - haired with a German accent in the animation, although the book does not mention these traits. It does mention, however, that the elves were accustomed to "dance and sing upon the midsummer's eve" (Tolkien 53). In terms of style, however, Bass and Rankin Jr. manage to keep the old, mystic flavor and the childish-entertaining humor that Tolkien created. Also different in terms of narrative structure and style, "World War Z" the movie (directed by Marc Foster) sets the book with the same name written by Max Brooks in 2006 as just another American science-fiction - horror movie, wherein the Americans save the world. Both the movie and the book are describing a zombie plague, setting a serious tone on how to eliminate zombies, setting the same heroic and demagogic style on the planet's salvation at the hands of the skilled Americans. Unlike the book, in which the narration of the zombie plague occurs after the zombie war, the movie sets the narration during the zombie war. The start of epidemic occurs

in China in the book (Brooks 47), while in the movie the source of zombie plague is India. The book has more heroes, but the movie only shapes Brad Pitt's character (Gerry Lane, a former U. N investigator) as the single-hero figure. Yet another science-fiction – horror movie, “Christine” directed by John Carpenter in 1983 and written by Stephen King in 1983 tells the story of a car with an evil mind, changing the personality of his owner, Arnie. The narrative line follows a different narrative and symbolic path in the movie compared to the one presented in the book. As such, the episode of Buddy Repperton vandalizing Christine with his gang appears towards the middle of the book, but in the first scenes of the movie. Also, the malefic spirit of Christine is described in the book rather vaguely as either possessed of the spirit of Roland LeBay, the former owner of the car or as a jealous lover. In the movie, Carpenter confirms both theories, explaining Christine's character as both possessed by a malefic spirit and as a jealous and possessive lover. However, Christine's violent behavior and the chases over Arnie's colleagues that previously vandalized her described in the book are accurately boosted in the film.

Conclusion

In terms of style, content, narrative structure, plot, character development, themes or intent, movies' directors tend to reshape the original story of the book that they used for the adaptation of their movies. This aspect was visible in “Christine”, “World War Z” and “The Hobbit”, but it was most obvious in “The Natural”. This essay presented how these movies differ from their eponymous books, focusing on “The Natural” for showing how the

adaptation of characters and of the choices they make, using cinematic elements, can change a dusty-darken book into a shiny, American – dream movie. The essay showed that in the purpose of achieving commercial profits, books turned into movies are reshaped in order to correspond to the audiences' tastes. As the American audiences are permanently looking for an American hero to fulfill the American dream, “ The Natural” was adapted so that it would correspond to the expectations of the targeted audience. Moreover, having Robert Radford as the main actor requires nothing more than a happy ending movie, considering his physical charm, attitude and the lifestyle that he represents: of a successful and attractive man. This is an indication that people are expecting for happy-ending movies, because they imagine themselves in the shoes of the movies' characters, living their lives during the movie, and a sad, tragic ending would disappoint him. Therefore, movie directors are selling dreams and many times this means compromising the content, style, plot or structure of the books that they used for developing the film. “ The Natural” was chosen as the worst combination of book and film storytelling narrative for a college-student audience because the movie departs from the original script of the book, transforming a tragic and decaying baseball player into a sport hero and a successful individual.

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