

# ENGLISH 498: ADAPTING TEXTS

## *GHOST WORLD* CASE STUDY ASSIGNMENT

### LENGTH AND DUE DATES

**Length:** 4 pages, formatted as described in the “Essays” portion of the syllabus

**Proposal Due:** Wednesday, April 5<sup>th</sup>, by 10:00 p.m. via EPost

**Essay Due:** Monday, April 10<sup>th</sup>, by noon via E-Submit

### ASSIGNMENT

The *Ghost World* case study focuses on the critical dialogue between adaptation and source text. Select an element from Clowes’s *Ghost World*—an event, theme, character, motif, narrative technique, or drawing style. Analyze how the element appears in either Terry Zwigoff’s *Ghost World* or Aimee Mann’s “Ghost World.” How does the adaptation’s treatment of your selected element offer an interpretation, critique, or response to the graphic novel? Your discussion must draw on adaptation theory. Consider how Stam’s and/or Elliott’s notions of adaptation help you to explain how and why the adaptation presents your chosen element in a particular manner.

### GUIDELINES

- 1) Although I have outlined the components you must include in the case study, you will need to pose a specific argument about the relationship between adaptation and source text. Moreover, you will need to develop your argument in a focused manner. You will not be able to address all instances of your chosen element. Analyze in depth the moments that most effectively illustrate your claim.
- 2) Remember to address adaptation theory as you formulate and support your argument. While the goal of the essay is not to prove that a particular theory is “best,” our theoretical readings will help you shape your thesis and analyze aspects of the adaptation. For example, Stam’s discussion of how adaptations critically rework sources may help you shape a claim regarding Mann’s choice to narrate her song in the first-person or Zwigoff’s expansion of one of the novel’s male roles.
- 3) You are writing to an audience who has already read the comic, viewed the film, or listened to the song. Therefore, your essay should not summarize the texts’ contents. Instead, any references—quotations, scene descriptions, and explanations of plot movement or patterns of lyric repetition—should support your analysis.
- 4) As you develop your argument, don’t forget the discussion of *Ghost World* on the posting board and the feedback you received on your proposal. A review of the postings and your peers’ commentary on your ideas will help you to ask key questions and shape your analysis.
- 5) If you’re having difficulty devising an approach to the essay, or if you want to discuss ideas-in-progress, email me or come to my office hours in Padelford A-305.

## PROPOSAL

The proposal assignment allows you to develop a tentative thesis, pose arguments related to this thesis, identify potential evidence and consider organizational strategies for your case study. In completing the proposal, you will produce a roadmap to guide your writing process.

The proposal should include the following components:

- ❖ A tentative title for the case study.
- ❖ The name of the adaptation you will analyze.
- ❖ The element you plan to address.
- ❖ A tentative thesis: What argument do you plan to make about the adaptation's treatment of your selected element?
- ❖ A discussion of how you will develop and support your argument. This discussion should include:
  - Supporting claims: What points will you need to make in order to develop your thesis? List each point you plan to make and explain its relation to the thesis in one or two sentences.
  - Evidence: What evidence will you use to support each of your points? Describe the scenes, dialogue, images, lyrics or patterns of sound you plan to analyze. Be specific in your descriptions. Also, briefly explain why the particular evidence you have selected supports your point. In other words, what is the connection between your point and your evidence?
- ❖ A list of any questions you have regarding your ideas-in-progress.

## GRADING

Grades for the case study will be calculated on a 40-point scale. Essays are due at the time indicated; work submitted after the due date and time will be considered late. Late essays will receive a 10-point deduction per day late, including weekends and holidays. I will make exceptions to the lateness policy only in cases of documented illness or family emergency.