

English 498: Adapting Texts

Star Wars Case Study Assignment

Length and Due Dates

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

Posting Due: Wednesday, May 17, by 10:00 p.m.

Essay Due: Monday, May 22, by noon via E-Submit

Assignment

For your final case study, you will address texts that receive minimal scholarly attention: novel and comic book adaptations of *Star Wars*. Your goal is to examine the analytical possibilities and limitations of adaptation theory. Focusing on an approach to studying adaptation (for example contextual, intertextual, reader-response) or the ideas of one writer, make an argument about the extent to which adaptation theory illuminates the relationship between the film and your selected novel or comic book. How does theory provide insights into what the novel or comic book does with the film? Which aspects of the adaptation does theory ignore?

Guidelines

- 1) I’ve posed a specific task and questions to guide your analysis. However, you will have to select an approach or theorist and develop an argument. Effective essays will explore **both** the possibilities and limitations of theory through the lens of a single adaptation.
- 2) Your audience has likely not read your chosen novel or comic book. Therefore, your essay may include a four-to five-sentence summary of the text. When summarizing, focus on the plot points and characters you will discuss in the essay.
- 3) Although your essay evaluates adaptation theory, analysis of your selected novel or comic book will comprise the bulk of your evidence. If, for example, you argue that McFarlane’s notion of adaptation proper explains a comic book’s use of drawing style to represent psychological dimensions of character, you will have to describe the images, explain how they function and tie your discussion to McFarlane’s ideas.
- 4) If you write about a *Star Wars* comic book, you may include image scans in your essay. Note that the illustrations should serve a purpose—you **must** analyze them within the body of the text.
- 5) As you develop your argument, don’t forget the discussion of *Star Wars* adaptations in class and on the posting board. A review of class notes, postings and your peers’ commentary on your ideas will help you to ask key questions and shape your analysis.
- 6) During our discussion of sample essays, we touched on the difficulty of writing conclusions. One strategy is considering why your selected theorist or approach doesn’t account for particular aspects of *Star Wars* adaptations. Is the theory too bound in film, for example? Another technique is suggesting new approaches to address the limitations you outline.
- 7) 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.

Grading

Grades for the case study will be calculated on a 40-point scale, according to the attached criteria. 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.