



# Film Adaptation and Its Discontents: From Gone with the Wind to The Passion of the Christ

*Thomas Leitch*

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Most books on film adaptation—the relation between films and their literary sources—focus on a series of close one-to-one comparisons between specific films and canonical novels. This volume identifies and investigates a far wider array of problems posed by the process of adaptation.

Beginning with an examination of why adaptation study has so often supported the institution of literature rather than fostering the practice of literacy, Thomas Leitch considers how the creators of short silent films attempted to give them the weight of literature, what sorts of fidelity are possible in an adaptation of sacred scripture, what it means for an adaptation to pose as an introduction to, rather than a transcription of, a literary classic, and why and how some films have sought impossibly close fidelity to their sources.

After examining the surprisingly divergent fidelity claims made by three different kinds of canonical adaptations, Leitch's analysis moves beyond literary sources to consider why a small number of adapters have risen to the status of auteurs and how illustrated books, comic strips, video games, and true stories have been adapted to the screen. The range of films studied, from silent Shakespeare to Sherlock Holmes to *The Lord of the Rings*, is as broad as the problems that come under review.

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