

Thomas LEITCH, editor. *The Oxford Handbook of Adaptation Studies*. Oxford UP, 2017. ISBN: 9780199331000. 762 pp.

DOI: 10.29162/ANAFORA.v4i2.15

The Oxford Handbook of Adaptation Studies (2017) is a massive volume in more ways than one. Weighing over 2lbs (1.3 kg), it contains forty articles on various aspects of adaptation written by a catalogue of star names in the very ambitious attempt to cover all aspects of adaptation studies. Offering specific suggestions pertinent to all ways of scholarly interaction with adaptation, that is, how to adapt texts, and how to subsequently teach, read, and write about adaptation, *The Oxford Handbook of Adaptation Studies*, paradoxically, at the same time reveals the adaptation's mutability and versatility, and wants to fix its every aspect. Moreover, rather than being ground-breaking in its entirety, much of it represents a summary of knowledge available so far in other publications.

The *Handbook* consists of seven parts: Foundations of Adaptation Study, Adapting the Classics, Adapting the Commons, Adaptation and Genre, Adaptation and Intertextuality, Adaptation Across Disciplines, and Professing Adaptation, which makes it difficult to provide a more detailed overview of each one.

Section One, "Foundations of Adaptation Study" gathers views from scholars such as Timothy Corrigan, who writes the first piece on "Defining Adaptation;" Dennis Cutchins, who contributes on Bakhtin, homosexuality, and adaptation; David T. Johnson (former editor of *Literature/ Film Quarterly*) contributes a piece on Bakhtin and Adaptation, while Dennis Perry (like Cutchins, a member of Brigham Young University) writes on *Frankenstein*.

In Section Three, "Adapting the Commons," the contributors include Robert Stam, Lucia Krämer, Constantine Verevis, and Eckart Voigts, all tackling transtextuality, sequels, prequels, parody, mashups, and various performative aspects of adaptation. All subsequent chapters include essays from contributors such as Linda Hutcheon, Richard Hand, Dan Hassler-Forest, and I.Q. Hunter (part 4), Kate Newell, Laurence Raw, and Kyle Meikle (part 5), and Peter Lev, Kamilla Elliott, and Leitch himself in the last part on professing adaptation.

For anyone starting out on studying adaptation, the book brings together the major names in what may seem as one convenient package. However, its sheer

size (large octavo) and page count (762 pages) precludes anyone being able to carry it with any ease in a school or university satchel, and hinders reading as it must be spread out on a desk or carrel. Its price (£112.50) means that only university libraries will be able to buy it. Surely, a cheaper edition will be issued in the future in paperback, but even then the price might be prohibitively high. In other words, it is a reference book, to be consulted for whatever essays readers require, but not to be bought for the home. In fact, putting all the articles online for individual purchase might be a better way to go about it.

Namely, the book's contents are precisely what one might expect – a series of position papers with each writer summing up their area of interest. There are some fascinating contradictions – David Johnson's emphasis on fidelity is flatly contradicted by Laurence Raw, who foresees a future online where translation and adaptation might work in harmony together. However, to appreciate them, readers have to commit themselves to reading the entire work, which is at best a difficult task.

Richard CASS