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Research Paper Abstract
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From the Page to the Screen: Graphic Novel Adaptations

I would like to focus my research paper on the popular phenomenon of adapting graphic novels to film and television. My paper will have three major sections. The first will be a discussion of adapting comics to cartoon television series; the second will be a discussion of adapting comics to live action motion pictures; and the third section will be a discussion of adapting Japanese manga to anime series'.

Within these three categories, I will go into the advantages and disadvantages of the comic book genre versus the three aforementioned mediums for adaptation. I will first discuss graphic novels and cartoons. As for the advantages of adapting to cartoons, I will discuss how doing so can promote a series and/or characters to a new and wider audience, and I will also mention how cartoon adaptations can revive a comic series that may have fallen to the wayside and thus contribute to its continuance. As to the disadvantages of adapting to cartoons, I will discuss the censorship inherent in children's television, the potential oversimplification of art quality, the severe alteration of story plots to make them work better for half hour television time slots, and the limits that voice acting can impose on a reader's interpretation of a character. I still have some more research to do, but I will cite examples of actual graphic novel series adapted to cartoons to support these statements, particularly the comic series *Static* (adapted into the cartoon show *Static Shock*) for the former set of reasons and the comic series *Batman* (adapted into *Batman: The Animated Series*) for the latter.

Graphic novels in cinema will be my next area of discussion, as stated. As for positives, I will talk about how movies based on comics promote comic series to a significantly wider audience than even television, and how the development of films overtime continues the popularity of a graphic novel into new generations. As for the negative aspects of live action film adaptations, I will discuss how a movie limits the time span to tell a story derived from a graphic novel, how an actor's personal interpretation of a character can differ distinctly from the interpretations of that character that individual readers of the comic may develop, and how the effects of the conventions of cinema can overwhelm the effects of the conventions of the graphic novel in a movie (methods of closure, continuity, unity, etc.). I am still looking into ideal examples to support this segment of my paper.

The final form of adaptation that I will address will be the adaptation of Japanese manga to anime. Before beginning my presentation, I will make an argument for why Japanese manga and anime are different than American comics and cartoons by mentioning several distinctive ways in which these sets diverge. After much consideration, I have determined that the adaptation of manga to anime has more good points than bad, such as the tendency for art to remain high quality, a significantly lessened degree of censorship, a wider audience (the shows are often dubbed into multiple languages), and voice acting that is taken much more seriously than in America. The primary negative point, as with cartoons, is that stories can be changed to make them better suited to television. One example I will cite as to the benefits of changing manga to anime will be a series called *NANA*, and one I will cite as to the negative aspects will be the popular series *Sailor Moon*.

I have not chosen a specific conclusion yet for my researches into positives and negatives about graphic novel adaptations to other media, but I am considering several potential points for this paper to come to. One of these is the suggestion that anime is the superior medium to film or American cartoons because it embodies the most benefits and the least disadvantages. I am seriously considering following this thesis and, if my paper ends up too long, just doing a comparison between American cartoon adaptations and Japanese anime adaptations. Another potential conclusion is that despite its best efforts, adaptations cannot help but add their own twists and interpretations to the graphic novel series from which they derive. A final potential conclusion is that the purpose of the adaptation in general is to remove the dual nature of the graphic novel (which features a symbiotic relationship between pictures and words) by placing it distinctly in the realm of the visual, thus forcing the work to seem more 'professional.' For this conclusion I would rely on articles we have read on the history of comics being mocked for combining words and pictures, and the tendency for society to encourage a separation between written and pictorial art forms.

To back up my paper, I will also try to find articles on the process of adaptation to support my own observations on the subject, as well as articles in support of or against the process of adaptation that I can concur with or challenge as I see fit. I will also look into finding more examples of actual graphic novels to back up my points, and I will research further the examples I already have.