

Rethinking
the
NOVEL/FILM
DEBATE

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To George Bluestone,
forerunner and mentor,
with respect and gratitude

film represents. While Bazin claims that the novel is thereby "multiplied" and delivered to a wider audience and that novel and film engage in a "dialectic" that precludes film from substituting for the novel or from sharing its identity, the process reduces the novel to a piece of the world that film represents.⁷⁹ Like the texts written, waved, torn, burned, and hallowed by silent film characters, this model of literary cinema emphasizes the constructedness of the novel and its status as a cultural artifact while implying the broader, more naturalistic, encompassing, omniscient representational powers of the film. The next chapter probes various ways in which theories, rhetoric, and practices of literary film adaptation consider novels and films as the content of each other or otherwise split form from content to further representational rivalries between them.

5 Literary Cinema and the Form/Content Debate

Recent scholars conclude that adaptation studies lag deplorably behind the critical times. Formal scholars lament their lack of critical rigor and unruly subjective impressionism; cultural studies scholars charge that they promote outmoded theories like high art humanism and New Criticism and foster a retrograde entrenchment of the literary canon against the rising tide of popular culture.¹ But surveying the criticism over the whole of the twentieth century into the twenty-first, one finds that adaptation studies have always been excoriated as outmoded and lagging behind the critical times—by New Critics, as well as by their high art humanist predecessors. *Babbitt*, as we have seen, lambasted adaptation as a nineteenth-century "confusion of the arts" in 1910; Wellek and Warren dismissed adaptation as a theoretical impossibility in 1942.² Film scholar Béla Balázs decreed all adaptations inartistic in 1952 and Blue-stone adduced in 1957 that film would not "discover its central principles" until "the current vogue of adaptation . . . has run its course."³

Adaptation has been the bad boy of interart criticism and decreed inartistic art for over a century now, not only because it blurs categorizations of the arts, muddying their virginal purity in the first half of the twentieth century and precluding their independence in the second half, but also because it commits two central heresies against mainstream twentieth-century aesthetic and semiotic theories. First, it suggests that words and images may be translatable after all. When most scholars assert that words and images do not translate, what remains to transfer between a novel and a film in adaptation? In the answer most commonly posed to this question lies adaptation's second heresy: that form separates from content—that the characters, plots, themes, and rhetoric of a novel distill to content apart from form and transfer into the form of film.

From Walter Pater,⁴ to Ferdinand Saussure,⁵ to New Critics and structuralists, scholars remain adamant that form does not and cannot separate from content. The dogma remains constant, despite many other changes in semiotic theory. And while poststructuralist semiotics have exploded form/content binarisms, they have done so by debunking and ghosting content altogether, rendering claims that content passes between forms in adaptation even more heretical than in prior theories. Indeed, post-structuralist semiotics have fused form and content in such a way that content evaporates altogether in favor of pure form.

Word/image and form/content dogmas thus conspire to render adaptation a theoretical impossibility. But if adaptation is theoretically impossible, it is culturally ubiquitous. The prevalence of adaptation affronts semiotic and aesthetic theory at every turn. It challenges New Criticism's denial of a paraphrasable core when screenwriting handbooks declare paraphrase the first stage of adaptation.⁶ It troubles the inviolable bond of structuralism's signifier and signified when words and images are decreed untranslatable as whole signs, leaving only some part of a novel's signs available for transfer in adaptation. It raises for poststructuralism the untenable specter of an original signified, to say nothing of the more localized signifieds to which both novels and films claim to refer.

Scholars thus find themselves at odds with filmmakers and audiences. They are pinned between concluding that adaptation has not occurred—only an illusion of it—or ascribing to the semiotic heresy that content can have a life apart from form. Novelist and (significantly for this discussion) semiotician Umberto Eco contends that adaptation does not and cannot occur: that it is merely a collective cultural hallucination. He insists that there is no relationship at all between his book, *The Name of the Rose*, and Jean-Jacques Annaud's film of it: they simply happen to share the same name.⁷ Yet Annaud and the public perceive the film to be an adaptation of Eco's novel, and Eco was handsomely paid for the film rights to this theoretical impossibility. Eco is in the minority: indeed, if every scholar shared his view, there would be no adaptation studies (sneering dismissals do not amount to "studies"). No scholar, however, has gone so far as to argue that older theories of form and content should be restored (or if one has, she or he remains unpublished). Most have sought to ameliorate or to sidestep the heresy, yet all slip into it in one way or another, generally through a rhetoric that runs counter to theoretical correctness. This tension between theoretical adherence and rhetorical heresy is to my mind a principal reason why adaptation studies appear always to lag behind the critical times. This chapter probes six mostly unofficial concepts of adaptation that split form from content in various ways to account for the

process of adaptation. These concepts, gleaned from critical theory and rhetoric, from filmmaker accounts of their work, and from interpretations of adaptations themselves, foster interdisciplinary rivalries and put pressure on the form/content dogma itself. They overlap as frequently as they conflict and are by no means presented here as ideal, prescriptive, or even empirically "true," but rather as concepts operative in practice and criticism, where novel/film rivalries bristle in the cracks and splits forced, forged, and reformed between form and content, as novels and films invade and occupy the splits in each other's signs. In some of these configurations, one medium is considered the content of the other; in others, both media gesture to a shared outer signified; in yet others, filmic and literary form and content merge to create a composite sign. Whether the novel is viewed as a monolithic signified to be faithfully represented by servile filmic signifiers, or as an incomplete sign requiring fuller representation by filmic signs, or whether novel and film vie to better represent a shared outer signified, interdisciplinary rivalry rages more furiously in adaptation than in any other branch of the novel/film debate. Because they have taken so many shapes in discourse, form and content must be understood variably in this discussion, ranging from whole art forms and their "themes" (contents) to pieces of signs (signifiers and signifieds).

Because of its preoccupation with that anthropomorphic version of form and content, the relationship between body and soul, *Wuthering Heights* provides an ideal case study for this discussion. Semioticians and aestheticians have for centuries drawn on body and soul analogies to explicate aesthetic and semiotic theories of form and content.⁸ Walter Pater, for example, discussing Flaubert's theory of expression in relationship to Blake, wrote:

One seems to detect the influence of a philosophic idea there, the idea of a natural economy, of some pre-existent adaptation, between a relative, somewhere in the world of thought, and its correlative, somewhere in the world of language—both alike, rather, somewhere in the mind of the artist, desiderative, expectant, inventive—meeting each other with the readiness of "soul and body reunited," in Blake's rapturous design.⁹

From assertions regarding the shared soul of two bodies (Cathy cries: "Whatever our souls are made of, [Heathcliff's] and mine are the same"), to perplexities of how the dead inhere in the living (Heathcliff's "I cannot live without my soul!" leads to ghost chasing alternating with necrophilia), to the perception that Cathy's spirit looks out through the embodied eyes of her relatives, perplexities regarding body/soul relations permeate

Wuthering Heights, offering not only fictive epitomes but also conceptual paradigms for the form/content issues of adaptation.¹⁰ The various ways in which Heathcliff tries to connect with Cathy after her death provide templates for the various ways in which films seek to connect with novels in adaptation in terms of form and content.

The Psychic Concept of Adaptation

The persistent critical ghosting of content in the twentieth century is largely responsible for a psychic concept of adaptation that understands what passes from book to film as "the spirit of the text." This concept is everywhere in adaptation rhetoric—academic, practitioner, and lay. Screenwriting handbook author Linda Seger replaces the form/content dichotomy with a form/spirit one: "The adapter looks for the balance between preserving the spirit of the original and creating a new form."¹¹ Interdisciplinary scholar Christopher Orr adduces: "A good adaptation must be faithful to the spirit of its literary source."¹² Filmmaker Luis Buñuel claims that his film of *Wuthering Heights*, *Abismos de Pasión*, "Most importantly . . . tries to remain true to the *spirit* of Emily Brontë's novel" (his emphasis).¹³

The spirit of a text is commonly equated with the spirit or personality of the author. Pater writes: "There are some to whom nothing has any real interest, or real meaning, except as operative in a given person; and it is they who best appreciate the quality of soul in literary art. They seem to know a person, in a book, and make way by intuition."¹⁴ Algernon Swinburne maintains a fusion of textual and authorial identities, insisting that *Wuthering Heights* "is what it is because the author was what she was; this is the main and central fact to be remembered."¹⁵

In *Wuthering Heights*, the idea that written words can have a spirit and that this spirit is that of the author unfolds in Lockwood's dream of Cathy. Her graffiti and marginalia evoke her authorial identity didactically in the repeated inscription of her name. Eventually, reading these names produces for Lockwood "an impression which personified itself when I had no longer my imagination under control" and the spirit of Cathy (the author) appears to Lockwood (the reader) (26).

Twentieth-century critics tend to represent this authorial spirit in less mystical ways: the authorial soul or personality becomes authorial intent, imagination, or style. Reviewer Howard Thompson's assessment that a 1951 film of *A Christmas Carol* "may be exactly what Dickens had in mind" is considered by academic critic Lester J. Keyser as synonymous with being true to "the spirit of Dickens."¹⁶ Peter Kosminsky's 1992 film

of *Wuthering Heights* opens with Emily Brontë (played by an uncredited Sinéad O'Connor) wandering the moors and beginning to "imagine" her novel:

First I found the place. I wondered who had lived there; what their lives were like. Something whispered to my mind and I began to write. My pen creates stories of a world that might have been, a world of my imagining. And here is one I'm going to tell. But take care not to smile at any part of it.¹⁷

In this episode, the last stage in the chain of literary film adaptation—the film—dramatizes the first—pretextual authorial imagination and inspiration. Such a preface touts the film as more comprehensive of the novel's origins than the novel itself and authenticates the film with a dramatized incarnation of the author caught in the very act of inspiration.

Critics in search of more tangible literary manifestations locate the spirit of the text in authorial style.¹⁸ Christopher Orr finds authorial spirit in "the manner in which the narrator communicates to the reader or viewer."¹⁹ But a strain of mystification remains in the concept of authorial style, which always retains an element of *je ne sais quoi*. Pater maintains that although authorial spirit may manifest itself in style, it can never be fully contained or expressed by style: "it is still a characteristic of soul, in this sense of the word, that it does but suggest what can never be uttered, not as being different from, or more obscure than, what actually gets said, but as containing that plenary substance of which there is only one phase or facet in what is there expressed."²⁰

The psychic concept of adaptation, however, does not simply advance an infusion of filmic form with authorial literary spirit: it posits a process of psychic connection in which the spirit of a text passes from author to novel to reader-filmmaker to film to viewer. The notion that a text has a spirit to which readers connect psychically finds recent roots in the early nineteenth century, most prominently in the writings of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel:

. . . art cannot merely work for sensuous perception. It must deliver itself to the inward life, which coalesces with its object simply as though this were none other than itself, in other words, to the intimacy of soul, to the heart, the emotional life, which as the medium of spirit itself essentially strives after freedom, and seeks and possesses its reconciliation only in the inner chamber of the spirit.

In Hegel's account, although the spirit "needs an external vehicle of expression," ultimately, form is "unessential and transient."²¹ Similarly, the

psychic concept of adaptation figures what transfers from novel to film as spirit and the task of adaptation as capturing that spirit and conveying it through changing mediums and forms to an audience. The term "medium" thus functions in two senses of the word—of persons in touch with spirits and of print and audiovisual mediums. Although the various mediums are indispensable to the operation of the psychic model, they can and must be dispensed with as the spirit passes from one to the other. The form changes; the spirit remains constant. The spirit of the text thus maintains a life beyond form that is neither constrained by nor dependent on form. Indeed, film critic André Bazin highlights a fidelity to "the spirit rather than the letter" that is "compatible with complete indifference from the original."²²

The psychic concept of adaptation can be diagrammed as follows, the parentheses indicating the dispensable and dropped forms that allow for psychic connection:

THE NOVEL'S SPIRIT → (THE NOVEL'S FORM) →
(READER-FILMMAKER RESPONSE) → (FILM) → VIEWER RESPONSE

The spirit of a text originates and ends in formless consciousness as pre-textual spirit (generally figured as authorial intent, personality, imagination) and as posttextual response in the film viewer. Orr astutely recognizes that a model beginning with author intent and ending in reader response must elide the two, though they appear at opposite ends of a communications sequence: "The spirit of a verbal or filmic text is a function of both its discourse (the manner in which the narrator communicates to the reader or viewer) and its narrativity (the processes through which the reader/viewer constructs the meaning of the text)" (73).

The authorial spirit appeared frequently in Victorian discussions of paintings of poetry, hovering over and monitoring the adaptation of poem to painting and haunting the audiences of these adaptations. In 1854, John Ruskin fended off criticism that Charles Robert Leslie's painting was unfaithful to Pope's *The Rape of the Lock*, countering that it was, in fact, "admirable as a reading of Pope . . . [so faithful that] it seemed to me as if the spirit of the poet had risen beside the painter as he worked, and guided every touch of the pencil."²³ *The Examiner* review of this painting extended the psychic connection to reader-viewers, asserting that "the more thoroughly a man has entered into the refined *spirit* of Pope's mock-heroic, the more fully will he perceive the tact and skill with which Mr. Leslie has translated it into the painter's language."²⁴ Here, an authorial spirit lingers in the reader of the poem, preparing the viewer to receive the same spirit incarnate in the painting. In a similar but less

approving vein, the ending of the film *Jekyll and Hyde . . . Together Again* (1980) depicts the decaying corpse of Robert Louis Stevenson rolling in his grave, moaning, "Ruined! My book ruined!" Here, the author joins the viewer in condemning the unfaithful adaptation.

Central to literary film rivalries, fidelity to the spirit of a text is typically accompanied by an insistence on the necessity of *infidelity* to its letter or form. Author Irvine Welsh, whose novel *Trainspotting* was adapted to film in 1996, maintains: "you can't have a faithful interpretation of something; you can maybe have it in spirit, but it's going to change as it moves into a different medium."²⁵ (Here too, the psychic concept of adaptation finds precursors in the illustration debate. In 1903, Rose D. Sketchley favored an "idea of illustration, as a personal interpretation of the spirit of the text" over a more literal illustration of its words, which she rejected as too "matter-of-fact." In 1971, Jean Mitry cast film adaptations that adhere to the letter of novels as "mere illustrations," preferring those that pursue the novel's spirit as an "inspiration" of their own form.²⁶)

In *Wuthering Heights*, Heathcliff cannot decide whether to embrace Cathy's corpse, her dead form, or to pursue her elusive spirit. First, he turns to her corpse, vowing, "I'll have her in my arms again!" But as he moves to open her coffin, he senses her spirit in a different location: "I knew no living thing in flesh and blood was by—but . . . I felt that Cathy was there, not under me, but on the earth." He abandons the dead body and pursues the spirit: "Her presence was with me; it remained while I re-filled the grave, and led me home" (289–90). Heathcliff cannot have both body and spirit: he must abandon the body to follow the spirit. Similarly, the psychic concept of adaptation argues, to be true to the spirit of a text, an adaptation must leave behind the literary corpse.

This psychic ghosting of what passes between novel and film in adaptation inevitably allows a host of personal, filmic, and cultural agendas to be projected onto the novel and identified as its spirit. This must be one of the main reasons for the psychic concept's ongoing popularity, even as it is debunked elsewhere. The authority of the literary author is essential to validating these agendas and projections. The author has been slow to die in adaptation criticism and commercial promotions even as she or he lies moldering under other discourses, because she or he represents an "author-ity" on which both novel and film advocates call to assert the priority of their medium. For most of the twentieth century, psychic theories placed adaptation criticism under the auspices of literary rather than film scholarship: literary scholars policed and judged whether a film had captured the authorial spirit. The 1912 *Bioscope* "Special Review [of the Vitagraph *Vanity Fair*] by the Eminent Thackeray Biographer," Lewis

Melville, clearly indicates his role as literary guardian: "An editor of Thackeray's works cannot but be a stickler for the strictly accurate presentation of the great man's masterpiece." The review protests additions and changes to the novel as "inexcusable . . . in direct defiance of the text," but offers "pardon under the plea of 'dramatic license' for omissions and condensations." He concludes that "many will disapprove of this tampering with a masterpiece," but adds, "there will be few who will not agree that . . . it is a singularly interesting picture."²⁷ Three rather than two forms come under judgment here: the novel (a "masterpiece"), the adaptation (some parts "inexcusable," others pardoned "under the plea of 'dramatic license'"), and the film ("a singularly interesting picture"). The novel is unilaterally praised; the film, moderately complimented, while adaptation once again emerges as the bad boy, the rake of the interart triad, partly scolded, partly pardoned.

Nelly's speech to Heathcliff regarding his neglect of Bible reading can be extracted almost without modification to voice what many a literary critic has said to many a literary film adapter:

You must have forgotten the contents of the book, and you may not have space to search it now. Could it be hurtful to send for some one—some minister of any denomination, it does not matter which, to explain it, and show you how very far you have erred from its precepts, and how unfit you will be for its heaven, unless a change takes place . . . ? (333)

Substitute "critic of any theoretical school" for "minister of any denomination" and "critical and public favor" for "its heaven" and the rest can remain intact.

Literary critics as well as editors are called on to authorize or condemn adaptations. Indeed, it is difficult to locate an essay on adaptation that does not cite literary critics as authorities on what a novel "means" and then test the adaptation against these interpretations. Brian McFarlane, for instance, summarizes an essay by Q. D. Leavis on *Great Expectations*, concluding: "This seems to me an accurate account of one of the novel's great strengths, and it offers a challenge to the would-be-faithful filmmaker."²⁸ In this and other accounts, the textual "spirit" is defined and mediated by literary critics.

Less frequently, film reviewers have argued, contrarily, that a film adaptation corrects the errors of literary criticism. A 1939 *New York Times* review of MGM's *Wuthering Heights*, for instance, claims that the film interprets the novel more accurately than Charlotte Brontë: "Charlotte Brontë, in her preface to her sister's novel, said Heathcliff never loved

Cathy . . . But Heathcliff is no demon and he loved Cathy, in the film as in the novel."²⁹

In the 1990s a number of film and television makers appropriated the canonical literary author to authorize their adaptations. They did so through a new titling trend that makes the author's name part of the film title, as in *Bram Stoker's Dracula* (1992), *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein* (1994), *Emily Brontë's Wuthering Heights* (used for both 1992 film and 1998 television versions), *William Shakespeare's Hamlet* (1996), *William Shakespeare's Romeo + Juliet* (1996), and *William Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1999).³⁰ The expanded titles of promotions, reviews, and posters extend the possessive construction, making directors and production companies the authors' keepers rather than editors and literary critics, as in "Francis Ford Coppola's *Bram Stoker's Dracula*," "Kenneth Branagh's *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein*," "Peter Kosminsky's *Emily Brontë's Wuthering Heights*," and Baz Luhrmann's *William Shakespeare's Romeo + Juliet*. These redoubled possessives assert not only the film's authentication by the literary author, but also the director's or production company's ownership of that authorial authenticating power. The film *auteur* now authors the literary author at the same time s/he is authorized by him/her.

These titles and their accompanying promotions present the films as "the authoritative screen versions" of the texts, just as new editions of novels announce themselves "authoritative texts" in attempts to justify yet another edition. The Norton edition of *Wuthering Heights*, for instance, bears the subtitle "authoritative text, backgrounds, criticism," and its preface proudly announces that it has restored the original 1847 edition, asserting that Charlotte Brontë had "assumed privileges" in editing the 1850 edition "that now seem unwarranted."³¹ In a strikingly similar move, Russell Baker, in his introduction to the first U.S. television broadcast of LWT's *Emily Brontë's Wuthering Heights*, confidently asserts that it "finishes the story just as Emily Brontë wrote it," while earlier films had not.³²

The makers of "authoritative" editions and adaptations frequently invoke authorial spirit to authorize their work. Quite strikingly, Kenneth Branagh claims to understand the spirit of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* not only in opposition to earlier filmic interpretations of the novel, but also to the novel's own manifestations of this spirit:

We have all grown so accustomed to all those screen versions of 'Frankenstein' that we have forgotten that Mary Shelley had something entirely different in mind . . . Elizabeth is only talked about in the book, and I felt that had to be changed. It seemed ridiculous that she would

not question what he was up to, and I felt we had to have her voice in our story. Considering how times have changed in attitudes toward women's roles in films, it would not seem right to have her in the story just as a love interest. Mary Shelley was a strong woman who I'm sure questioned Percy Shelley, and I'm convinced she intended Elizabeth to be a strong character.³³

Here, Branagh claims to have fulfilled an authorial intent that the author herself had failed to realize. But in the slippery shift from "times have changed" to "I'm convinced [Mary Shelley] intended," it is clear that "authorial intent" elides with contemporary readings. The film's promotions prove truer than its title: it is indeed "Kenneth Branagh's Mary Shelley" more than it is "Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*."

Intriguingly, Branagh's film shares an identical title with Harold Bloom's volume of critical essays, *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein*, a volume in which feminist contributions feature prominently.³⁴ Like these critics, Branagh cuts and pastes episodes from the novel into a feminist binder, adding feminist scenes where literary critics have added feminist critical commentaries. Just as critical articles select and explicate passages to shape a new narrative, so too the London Weekend Television adaptation that claims to be *Emily Brontë's Wuthering Heights* selects, cuts, pastes, and juxtaposes pieces of the novel into a late-twentieth-century feminist critical narrative. It does so, however, wordlessly through editing, sound, and *mise-en-scène*. Shots of a delirious Cathy (Orla Brady) screaming on a bed as she has her hair forcibly cut interpolate with shots of a stunned, mute Isabella (Flora Montgomery), also in bed, as Heathcliff (Robert Cavanah) brutally consummates their marriage. The intercutting begins slowly, so that the episodes appear parallel, rather than integrally connected. Increasingly, however, the image editing grows more rapid, and the sound editing carries the noises of one location into the scenes of the other, until events, locations, and characters intertwine. As Heathcliff approaches Isabella, a piercing scream rings out and the camera cuts to a bed panel. But as the camera rises from the panel to reveal the room, we see that neither the bed nor the scream belong to Isabella at *Wuthering Heights*, but rather to Cathy screaming in her bed at Thrushcross Grange. The scream does double duty here, figuratively voicing the anguish of the mute Isabella as well Cathy's audible hysteria, conjoining them ideologically as each suffers physical coercion from her husband. Edgar (Crispin Bonham-Carter) holds down a thrashing Cathy as the doctor cuts her hair to fight her fever. The fever, Cathy tells Nelly, has arisen in response to Edgar's insistence on his marital prerogative, so that the cutting is a further attack on her self-assertion. Women's hair is conventionally

associated with femininity, sexuality, and soul, connecting through film editing to the forcible rupture of Isabella's single strand of virginity. In both cases, romantic fantasies shatter in the very location where Isabella and television audiences have come to expect a fulfillment of them: the marital bedroom.

Here and elsewhere the psychic concept of adaptation opens up representational spaces in the name of authorial spirit or intent where new spirits or intents enter, just as Cathy's pantheistic spirit allows it to enter many forms for Heathcliff—even those that differ radically from her own bodily form. Indeed, Heathcliff declares that Hareton's "startling likeness to Catherine"—their similar forms—is the least "potent to arrest [his] imagination." Instead, "In every cloud, in every tree—filling the air at night, and caught by glimpses in every object by day, I am surrounded with her image!... The entire world is a dreadful collection of memoranda that she did exist, and that I have lost her!" (324). In the same way, the amorphous pantheistic "spirit" of a text allows it to inhabit many forms that do not remotely resemble its own.

The Ventriloquist Concept of Adaptation

The ventriloquist concept of adaptation differs from the psychic concept in that it pays no lip service to authorial spirit: rather, it blatantly empties out the novel's signs and fills them with filmic spirits. If Cathy's and Heathcliff's sense of two bodies sharing a single soul epitomizes the psychic concept, Heathcliff's necrophilia with Cathy's corpse epitomizes the ventriloquist concept of adaptation. It represents what passes from novel to film in adaptation as a dead corpse rather than a living spirit. The adaptation, like a ventriloquist, props up the dead novel, throwing its voice onto the silent corpse. As he digs up her coffin, Heathcliff knows that Cathy's corpse will be cold and unresponsive when he touches it. But he uses deliberate fantasy to offset this reality: "If she be cold, I'll think it is this north wind that chills me; and if she be motionless, it is sleep" (289, original emphasis). Here, the ventriloquist concept dovetails as well as contrasts with the psychic concept: when Heathcliff abandons Cathy's corpse to pursue her ghost, the ghost conveniently leads him to his own home—to his own domain, to his own territory and occupations.

Nelly, the chief narrator of Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*, is one who sees "nothing" where others see spirits. She believes them to be "phantoms from thinking" based on responses to local folklore (336–37). Like Nelly, many adaptation critics argue that the spirit of a text is reducible to

