

Sami Lehtiö

FROM *GROUNDHOG DAY* TO *GROUNDHOG DAY*:
An Adaptation Study of the Film and Musical

Faculty of Information Technology and Communication Sciences

MA Thesis

April 2022

ABSTRACT

Sami Lehtiö: From *Groundhog Day* to *Groundhog Day*: An Adaptation Study of the Film and Musical

MA Thesis

Tampere University

Master's Programme in English Language and Literature

April 2022

This thesis is an examination of the film *Groundhog Day* (1993) and its musical version *Groundhog Day the Musical* (2016) through the lens of adaptation theory. Basing its theoretical framework on Linda Hutcheon's seminal work *A Theory of Adaptation*, with its emphasis on adaptation as an active creative process, the thesis aims to trace differences between the film and the musical of *Groundhog Day* and examine the significance of key changes introduced in the process of adaptation.

Adaptation studies have moved from a fixation on fidelity, which values adaptations on their faithfulness to their sources, towards a view of adaptation *as adaptation*, which suggests that adaptations should be valued as creative and intertextual works, with the audience aware of the adaptation and its transformative effects on the original. Although adaptations are necessarily "palimpsestuous", announced revisitations of prior works, they can even be thought of as completely original works, if they succeed in establishing enough autonomy. *Groundhog Day the Musical* arguably succeeds, which suggests that although being clearly built upon its source text, its value is not dependent on the audience being familiar with the original film.

In *Groundhog Day the Musical*, the story has seen major changes from the film in character and theme development, thus better realising the potential of elements that were arguably underdeveloped in the original. The main character Phil Connors has seen a slight decrease in focus, in order to further develop love interest Rita and the role of the townsfolk. The women have been given increased prominence in the musical partly due to feminist criticisms of the original, illustrating the importance of being aware of how adaptation can be responsive to the different social and cultural contexts in which the source and the adaptation were produced.

Because *Groundhog Day* has drawn allusions to Friedrich Nietzsche's doctrine of eternal recurrence, the thesis also includes an analysis of existentialist philosophical themes that can be located in the story. The musical version retroactivates and builds on the existentialist themes that previously only existed in interpretations of the film, thus reinterpreting the story by giving these elements new prominence and highlighting how an adaptation can actively rewrite its source text.

The thesis also discusses how the adaptation of *Groundhog Day the Musical* introduces new elements through its use of distinctive conventions of the musical theater genre. The musical adaptation follows many traditions of musical theater, such as the "I want" number introducing the main character's primary motivation, and the "eleven o'clock" number at the story's emotional high point. It also deviates from some conventions, with its unusual utilisation of supporting characters, for example, eliciting stronger responses from the audience. As songs can be employed to intensify themes, the musical also adds to the emotional content of the story, while also maintaining the intelligence that characterised the film through clever lyric writing.

This thesis highlights the creative nature of adaptation and the many aspects that an adapter must consider when transferring a source text to a new medium or context. With the use of *Groundhog Day the Musical* as the basis of its analysis, the thesis examines how a musical theater adaptation of a film can be produced, while also illustrating how an adaptation can have value independent of its precursor texts.

Keywords: adaptation, musical theater, fidelity, autonomy, palimpsest, existentialism

The originality of this thesis has been checked using the Turnitin OriginalityCheck service.

TIIVISTELMÄ

Sami Lehtiö: From *Groundhog Day* to *Groundhog Day*: An Adaptation Study of the Film and Musical

Pro gradu -tutkielma

Tampereen yliopisto

Englannin kielen ja kirjallisuuden maisteriopinnot

Huhtikuu 2022

Tämä tutkielma tarkastelee elokuvaa *Groundhog Day* (1993) ja sen pohjalta tehtyä musikaalia *Groundhog Day the Musical* (2016) adaptaatioteoriaa hyödyntäen. Tutkielman teoreettisena pohjana toimii Linda Hutcheonin *A Theory of Adaptation*, jossa painotetaan adaptaatioprosessin luovuutta ja aktiivisuutta. Analyysin perimmäisenä tarkoituksena on tarkastella, miten elokuva- ja musikaaliversioissa esiintyvät erot pohjautuvat adaptaatioprosessin eri osiin ja vaiheisiin.

Adaptaatiotutkimuksessa tekstejä on kautta aikain arvosteltu sen mukaan, kuinka uskollisia (eng. fidelity) ne ovat lähdeteksteilleen, eli kuinka tarkasti ne noudattelevat alkuperäisiä versioitaan. Tästä pakkomielleestä ollaan kuitenkin siirrytty kohti uudenlaista näkökulmaa, jonka mukaan adaptaatioita kuuluisi tarkastella nimenomaan *adaptaatioina*, eräänlaisina intertekstuaalisina palimpsesteina. Vaikka lähdetekstit ovat väistämättä havaittavissa, adaptaatioita voidaan jopa pitää täysin alkuperäisinä teksteinä, jos niistä onnistutaan tekemään tarpeeksi autonomisia. Tutkielman tarkoitus on osoittaa, että *Groundhog Day the Musical* toimii esimerkkinä tästä uudesta ajattelutavasta.

Musikaaliversio täydentää elokuvassa vajavaiseksi jääneitä asioita, kuten hahmojen ja teemojen kehitystä. Huomion painopiste on osittain siirretty päähenkilö Phil Connorsista muihin hahmoihin. Tarinassa esiintyvien naisten rooleja on laajennettu myös osittain feministisistä syistä, mikä osoittaa, kuinka tärkeää on olla tietoinen lähdetekstin ja sen adaptaation tuottamisen aikaan vallinneista erilaisista sosiokulttuurisista konteksteista.

Groundhog Dayn on sanottu sisältävän Friedrich Nietzschen filosofian piirteitä, minkä vuoksi tutkielmassa tarkastellaan myös tarinassa esiintyviä eksistentialismiin viittaavia elementtejä. Koska tällaiset elementit ovat aikaisemmin olleet riippuvaisia siitä, miten elokuvaa on tulkittu, musikaaliversiossa niitä on painotettu, jotta niiden merkitys on saatu takautuvasti osaksi tarinaa. Tällä tavoin musikaaliversio osoittaa, kuinka adaptaatio voi uudelleentulkita ja jopa uudelleenkirjoittaa lähdetekstiään.

Tutkielmassa lisäksi tarkastellaan, kuinka musikaaliversio hyödyntää musiikkiteatterin erilaisia käytäntöjä tarinan eri elementtien ilmaisemisessa. Musikaali noudattaa useita traditioon pohjautuvia elementtejä, liittyen esimerkiksi kappaleiden tyyleihin ja niiden sijainteihin tarinan aikajanassa. Musiikilla on myös kyetty lisäämään tarinan tunteellista painoarvoa, ja elokuvalla tunnusomainen nokkeluus on saatu heijastettua kappaleiden sanoituksiin.

Tämän tutkielman tarkoitus on osoittaa adaptaatioprosessin luovuus ja tarkastella, minkälaisia erilaisia näkökulmia on otettava huomioon, kun lähdetekstiä sovitetaan uuteen ympäristöön tai kontekstiin. Tutkielman analyysin pohjana toimii *Groundhog Day the Musical*, jota tarkastelemalla voidaan osoittaa, kuinka elokuva voidaan adaptoida musikaaliksi ja millä tavoin adaptaatio voi olla riippumaton lähdeteksteistään.

Avainsanat: adaptaatio, musiikkiteatteri, uskollisuus, autonomia, palimpsesti, eksistentialismi

Tämän julkaisun alkuperäisyys on tarkastettu Turnitin OriginalityCheck -ohjelmalla.

Table of Contents

1. Introduction.....	1
1.1 Groundhog Day.....	3
1.2 <i>Groundhog Day</i>	4
2. Background.....	9
2.1 Fidelity.....	11
2.2 Philosophical Significance.....	14
2.3 Meta-Existentialism and Analysis.....	20
3. From <i>Groundhog Day</i> to <i>Groundhog Day</i>	26
3.1 Who? Why? – The Adapters.....	27
3.2 How? – The Audiences.....	31
3.3 Where? When? – The Contexts.....	32
3.4 What? – Forms.....	38
3.4.1 Composition and the Purpose of Songs.....	39
3.4.2 Townsfolk and Further Focal Point Shifts.....	47
3.4.3 Song Lyrics as an Adaptation Tool.....	50
3.4.4 Emotional Content and Lyrical Payoff.....	57
3.5 Courage.....	61
4. Conclusion.....	63
Bibliography.....	66

1. Introduction

This thesis is an examination of the 1993 film *Groundhog Day* and its 2016 musical adaptation *Groundhog Day the Musical*. It attempts to analyse the two works through the lens of adaptation theory, while also examining whether the musical version follows the conventions of musical theatre tradition. Its purpose is to identify and analyse differences between the two versions and consider reasons for the key changes introduced in the adaptation process. Through its analysis of the film and the musical, the thesis aims to show the many aspects that an adapter must consider, and to prove that adaptation is an active creative process. As adaptation studies itself has seen changes in the last few decades, with a move towards a more creative and intertextual understanding of the adapted texts coming to the forefront, the prevailing concepts in adaptation theory are also examined.

Film theorist Robert Stam stated already in 2005 that the major resurgence of adaptation theory in the last couple of decades should be evidence enough that adaptations should be viewed as more than just inferior versions of originals (Hutcheon, 2013: xiv-xv). This, in fact, is the starting point of Hutcheon and O’Flynn’s 2013 major work *A Theory of Adaptation*, which is also an important work for the present thesis. Interestingly, the first edition of the book, published in 2006, was already tackling this negative view of adaptation, and Hutcheon states that she has noticed an influx in theories discussing this change in point of view since the first edition (2013: xxvi). This so-called ‘fidelity debate’, the discourse about the phenomenon of adaptations being compared to their sources on how faithful they are to the originals, was current at the time of the first edition, but Hutcheon noted in the second edition that if the fidelity debate is on-going at all nowadays, it is usually more in connection with fan-culture loyalty than anything else (2013: xxvi).

Critic Thomas Leitch also argues that one of the major fallacies surrounding adaptation studies is that an adaptation should be regarded as somehow inferior to the original (2003: 154–55). *Groundhog Day* seems to back Leitch’s argument that adaptations need not be viewed as inferior,

when taking into account the success of the original film and how much people demonstrably have loved it, and comparing that to the success of its musical adaptation. “Groundhog Day” has become a trope (discussed in Section 1.2) and the film enjoys a reputation close to something of a cult classic. After a multitude of awards and vast critical acclaim, such as two Laurence Olivier awards (including Best New Musical) and seven Tony award nominations (including Best Musical, Best Book, Best Original Score, and Best Performance by an Actor in a Leading Role), it stands to reason that the musical has also been a success in the minds of the people. Ultimately, its Broadway production closed due to costs, after 176 performances (Riedel, 2017).

The musical seems to rebel against this school of thought which compares and evaluates the success of an adaptation based on how faithful it is to the original work, because it is markedly different from the film, as this thesis attempts to demonstrate. Tim Minchin, the composer and lyricist of the musical, seemingly attempted to create something independent of the original film. Minchin is on record as saying the film’s success relied on lead actor Bill Murray’s “bizarre charm” (Portwood, 2017), which is something the stage musical would obviously lack. He combated this issue in his own way, making the audience forget about Murray in the first minute: “The overture, it’s about 24 bars of fast, chaotic free jazz. So you know what you think this is gonna be, but now you’ve fucking forgotten all that” (Portwood, 2017).

In a way *Groundhog Day the Musical* follows a musical comedy tradition set years before by *The Producers* (2001), *Thoroughly Modern Millie* (2002), and *Hairspray* (2003), all three of which received heavy critical acclaim and were based on films dating back decades (Kenrick, 2008: 371–74). They had something else in common, as Kenrick continues:

The Producers, Thoroughly Modern Millie, Urinetown, and Hairspray succeeded by doing what great musical comedies have always done—approaching material in fresh and funny ways that no one has attempted before. (2008: 380)

This may explain the critical acclaim received by *Groundhog Day the Musical*. Though it may be closer to the truth to say that *Groundhog Day the film* took on something never attempted before –

as it crafts an existentially thoughtful story around a single day and recurring locations – transforming the story to the stage is by extension its own unique achievement. One of the most innovative ways in which the musical surprises the audience is how the main character Phil Connors manages to wake up in his bed time and time again as everything has been reset. As there can be no cuts (like in a film), the use of a revolving theatre stage helps in hiding many set pieces, and the company tends to move around the stage during crucial parts to let Andy Karl (playing Phil) traverse the stage unnoticed. The innovative use of set pieces in general is a salient feature in the musical. For example, a car chase scene with the police has partly been achieved by playing with top-down perspective, and partly by the use of a stationary car with set pieces moving around it. The car itself transforms seamlessly from a bar seat and table. These examples add to the creativity of the adaptation, and aid in its quest to gain autonomy (discussed further in Chapter 2).

The present thesis contends that the musical dances around what Hutcheon calls the knowing audience, meaning the audience is expected to be familiar with the source film. This assumption, though obviously not true for all audiences, is made because of the popularity of the film, which is still listed as the 221st best film of all time on IMDb.com (as of April 2022) and whose premise lives on as a trope. The musical introduces elements to discourage comparisons to the film, and embodies adaptation as “repetition without replication” (Hutcheon, 2013: 7), proving that adaptations can enhance a story without taking away from the original source text.

Although this thesis is more concerned with the composition of the story and how lyrics have been utilised, it is interesting to note that the idea of a time loop is also reflected in the music. Minchin set out to compose the music for *Groundhog Day the Musical* from the very beginning through the lens of repetition, with help from the simplest concept of musical theory: the octave. “I thought a lot musically in *Groundhog Day* about the idea that time is a circle. In his lifetime it’s literally a circle. We have a clock that goes round 12 hours and 12 hours and 12 hours, and interestingly, there’s 12 semitones in the Western scale” (Minchin, Facebook Live, May 30,

2017: 10:13–11:06). As Minchin plays the main theme from the “Overture” once, he stops and concludes: “You’re there, and it wants to go again” (ibid.). This means that the musical themes are set from the beginning to mirror the idea of the time loop, which, for a knowing audience at least, is the very idea of *Groundhog Day*.

The analysis in this thesis is divided into two main parts, as it will first study the advancements of adaptation studies and the philosophical significance of the *Groundhog Day* in Chapter 2, before examining the film and the musical through the lens of adaptation in Chapter 3, as it also attempts to trace some of the differences between the two versions and understand the reasoning behind the changes. For example, in order to achieve deeper character development, the narrative’s focus has been shifted from a purely main-character-driven film to a more balanced point of view in the musical, raising love interest Rita closer to second protagonist status. Themes, such as existentialism and death, have arguably been expanded upon. The women have been given increased prominence partly due to the advancements of modern feminism, while the emotional payoff of the story is better realised by increasing focus on the townsfolk. The thesis also examines what is involved in adapting a film for the musical stage, and even incorporates quantitative statistics to answer some of the questions of adaptation. The main structure for the analysis follows Linda Hutcheon’s *A Theory of Adaptation* (2013) and its question-based format, asking the *whats*, *whos*, *whys*, *whens* and *hows* of adaptation. The actual research questions the present thesis seeks to answer are the following:

- 1) What is the philosophical significance of *Groundhog Day*?
- 2) What methods of adapting to a musical stage are used in *Groundhog Day the Musical*?
- 3) In what ways is the musical adaptation of *Groundhog Day* different from the original?
- 4) How has songwriter Tim Minchin captured the themes and characters in terms of music and lyrics?

1.1 Groundhog Day

The term “Groundhog Day” did not originate from the film and it must first be established that Groundhog Day is a real festival celebrated in Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania, in the United States, every year on February 2nd. Don Yoder calls Punxsutawney a “prototypical middle-sized American town”, one of hundreds, a “front-porch and backyard-garden town with its rural and woodland surroundings” (2003: 9). According to Yoder, the festival has been celebrated there at least since 1886 (2003: 9). Yoder wrote the book on Groundhog Day, literally, publishing an examination of the festival in 2003. In it Yoder chronicles the evolution of the festival, stating that it was Clymer H. Freas, a city editor of the local newspaper *Punxsutawney Spirit* and founder of the Punxsutawney Groundhog Club, who first introduced the term ‘Groundhog Day’ (2003: 9). Yoder also credits Freas with inventing the language they call “Groundhogese” with which Phil the groundhog makes its prognostications, and selecting Gobbler’s Knob as the place for those prognostications, while also playing an important role in making Punxsutawney known as the ‘Weather Capital of the World’ (2003: 8–11). These aspects would later become the basis of the titular film, as weatherman Phil Connors travels to Gobbler’s Knob in Punxsutawney to report on Phil the Groundhog’s prognostication in Groundhogese. The small-town people, who are seemingly simple-minded, help in developing Phil’s character as self-absorbed, and it takes countless reiterations of Groundhog Days for him to see value in their celebrations. The date is also highly important to the film, as its premise rests on a blizzard which locks Phil in the town.

Originally, the date, February 2nd, likely had its roots in Christianity, as the website of the Punxsutawney Groundhog Club (Groundhogday.org) states that the festival has been connected to Candlemas Day, when Christians would bring candles to church in hopes to bless their end of winter (“Legend and Lore”). An animal was introduced later, but at the time it was a hedgehog which would make its prognostication in much the same way as Phil the Groundhog does today: by seeing his shadow (“Legend and Lore”). This predicted six more weeks of bad weather – or as it is

known in the film, six more weeks of winter.

1.2 *Groundhog Day*

At first glance, *Groundhog Day* (1993) might seem like your run-of-the-mill romantic comedy film: boy meets girl, girl does not care for the boy, boy persists, and the girl falls for him in the end. Indeed, this is the base premise of the film, and it makes it sound rather mundane, dull even. Yet the fact that this technically all happens in one day makes the film something quite extraordinary, because to arrive at that situation where the boy could indeed get the girl, his entire essence as a human being must have changed. This is based on logical and philosophical properties of the story, both of which will be analysed further later in this thesis.

Weatherman Phil Connors wakes up every day on February 2nd at 6:00 a.m. in his bed-and-breakfast hotel room in Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania, where he, with his producer Rita and cameraman Larry, is scheduled to do a news feature on Groundhog Day, a festival where a groundhog named Phil predicts whether or not it will be an early spring that year or six more weeks of winter. Thus, every day, Phil (the man) leaves the small hotel and goes to the festival to do the broadcast. In between he walks by a homeless man and meets an old acquaintance Ned Ryerson, who engages Phil in awkward conversation. These are the only things we might expect to happen every time Phil wakes up, because they happen on the way to Gobbler's Knob, where the festival is being held. We know that the festival day ends in a banquet, comprised of a dance and a bachelor auction, which we discover at the end of the story, but we obviously do not know how often Phil visits these jublations. We cannot even be sure that Phil leaves his room some days as we are not subjected to each and every Groundhog Day. However, most days he lunches or has drinks with Rita, in an effort to get to know the woman to one day seduce her, which he tries numerous times in the film and the musical without success. Phil uses his unique opportunity to repeat the day exactly as it happened to arrive at the exact same moments with Rita and slightly change his behaviour, and

by doing so gets a bit further along each time. At first, all of his inclinations are highly self-absorbed, and he manipulates everything and everyone for his personal gain. Phil only begins bettering himself when he realises that one day is not enough time to manipulate someone into loving you. He falls into deep depression and kills himself countless times, only to realise he is forever stuck in Punxsutawney. Gradually, he gets attached to the town and its folk, and learns that by making their lives better, he makes his own life better. He starts to take notice of the townsfolk and learns to save them from trouble, and practices new skills, such as the piano and ice-sculpting. These two skills also give us an approximation of how long Phil was stuck in his loop. The exact length of time is never mentioned in the story nor known even by the creators, but according to Danny Rubin, the original screenwriter of the film, the loop might have lasted for approximately ten years (2012: “How Long Did it Last?”). This would mean Phil lived through around three and a half thousand Groundhog Days. However, some say this is not enough time to learn the skills Phil learns in the story, and estimates go up to 34 years (Gallagher, 2021). That would be the equivalent of around twelve and a half thousand Groundhog Days.

By the end of the film, Phil has perfected the day, manages to help out the town in all the ways he can, and Rita sees him as a changed man – or, rather, different from her previous impressions, as she is not subjected to the change – and she subsequently falls for him. The film ends with Phil and Rita waking up together on February 3rd. Why Phil is released from the time loop is not explicitly explained, but the answer may lie in philosophy. This aspect is discussed further in the next chapter.

A part of why we know *Groundhog Day* has been such a significant film is that its name still carries on as a trope. This means that its premise is used as a recurring theme across all kinds of media. One can find it listed on the tvtropes.org website, explained as “A plot in which the character is caught in a time loop, doomed to repeat a period of time (often exactly one day) over and over, until something is corrected” (“*Groundhog Day*’ Loop”). Although the ending is not explicitly

explained in the film, something being corrected for the loop to end seems to be a widely-spread conclusion in popular media.

The trope's reach is, however, wider than one might first imagine. It can be invoked in popular media, as did comedian Nish Kumar, for example, when he "mentioned *Groundhog Day* four times" ("Dignity Intact" 38:42) during a task which involved dozens of failed attempts to kick a basketball into a basketball hoop during the British TV series *Taskmaster*. A search on academic publications reveals dozens of titles where the phrase "Groundhog Day" is also used simply as a term for repetition. Consider this title for an article by Christopher Bibbo: "Groundhog Day Again? You Be the Judge: Commentary on an Article by Carlos A. Higuera, MD, et al.: 'Synovial Fluid Cell Count for Diagnosis of Chronic Periprosthetic Hip Infection'" (Bibbo, 2017: e48). This is almost as far away from a romantic comedy as one can reasonably drift, and it is rather impossible to make the leap from a hip infection to *Groundhog Day*, film or musical, without any knowledge of the subject. Yet Bibbo sees a connection, which is one of repetition. It has little to do with the film or the musical, but everything to do with the trope which has taken its place in popular culture: 'Groundhog Day' can be almost anything that repeats itself.

If it is not enough to think that the film has enjoyed the sort of reputation of a cult classic, we might consider it through a more thoughtful perspective. As Danny Rubin explains in his 2012 ebook *How to Write Groundhog Day*, "The absolutely worst day of Phil's life took place under the exact same conditions as the absolutely best day of Phil's life. The best day and the worst day were the same day" (2012: "Reflections"). This brings us to a rather existential thought experiment. First, however, we should briefly explore what existentialism means, as it seems rather difficult to define. According to Rüdiger Safranski, even Jean-Paul Sartre, one of the leading characters of existentialist philosophy, once said, "Existentialism? I don't know what that is. My philosophy is a philosophy of existence" (2002: 357). Even if the term is in some dispute, we will take existentialist themes in the case of *Groundhog Day* to mean that we see Phil Connors battle with his own

existence, and by extension it makes us think of our own existence and our own lives in the face of our own attitudes and choices. This is already a rather profound thought for a romantic comedy whose only aim at the time of its conception was likely to entertain. However, that is not all. If by some divine intervention, Sartre has later continued that existentialism to him is to “Commit yourself, sweep mankind along with you, re-create yourself time and time again, solely through your actions” (2002: 357). The perfect summation of Phil Connors’ existence, as he ultimately commits, through countless recreations, to better himself through his own actions, and by doing so, betters the lives of mankind – or in this case the town of Punxsutawney, which we could say is to him and *Groundhog Day* the whole world. This is one of the reasons why *Groundhog Day* could be said to be philosophically significant, but there is more to discuss still. In Chapter 2 we delve deeper into this aspect.

2. Background

[A]rt is derived from other art; stories are born from other stories. (Hutcheon, 2013: 2)

Traditionally, adaptation has endured a two-pronged definition, as we use the word ‘adaptation’ both for the *product* and the *process*. Recently there have been suggestions of a third perspective, adaptation as *reception*. These three different aspects help introduce the plasticity of adaptation as a whole, while expressing the difficulty of establishing a single working definition.

As *product*, adaptation has battled against comparisons to translation as a heavily source-oriented approach, but also alongside translation against the notion that any recreation of a source text could ever achieve one-to-one likeness and inevitably includes change (Hutcheon, 2013: 16). Adaptation as *product* thus always restricts interpretation and analysis to the formal, and leaves out the perspectives of the adapters, for example. The adapters will almost certainly have personal motives and motivations and are also the ones to balance contexts of the source and the adaptation, and thus focusing only on the forms seems short-sighted. These individual and contextual aspects of the adaptation process are discussed more in Chapter 3.

Hutcheon states that recent developments in translation theory begin to resemble her vision of adaptation as well, involving “a transaction between texts and between languages” (2013: 16), as translation moves towards a vision of “inter-cultural and inter-temporal communication” (Bassnett, 2002: 9, quoted in Hutcheon, 2013: 16). Hutcheon dubs her view of adaptation as *product* a kind of “extensive, particular transcoding” (2013: 22), which can involve moving to a different medium or genre, or a change of context, for example (2013: 7–8). She continues,

As a creative and interpretive transposition of a recognizable other work or works, adaptation is a kind of extended palimpsest and, at the same time, often a transcoding into a different set of conventions. (2013: 33)

Adaptation being a creative endeavour is one of Hutcheon’s main points, as it is through creativity that an adaptation is to claim its autonomy over the original source text. Hutcheon states, however,

that adaptations are “haunted at all times by their adapted texts” (2013: 6), and calls them ‘palimpsestuous’. ‘Palimpsest’, according to *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, means that something has “diverse layers or aspects apparent beneath the surface” (“Palimpsest”). In essence, this implies that something has been erased and overwritten rather literally, so that the old text remains under, barely visible. This leads us to consider adaptations as rewritings where pieces of the original can sometimes be recognised. This is a reasonable starting point that will be expanded upon.

As *process*, an adaptation could mean expanding upon or subtracting from the original story, for example, or the interpretation of a story before recreating it in a new medium (Hutcheon, 2013: 18–20; Corrigan, 2017: 1). Adaptation can also offer new points of view or give voice to the silenced or marginalized (Sanders, 2006: 19). The process inevitably involves balancing between old and new, and Hutcheon even deems it a “double process of interpreting and then creating something new” (2013: 20).

As *reception*, adaptation takes into account the experience of the audience, something Hutcheon calls “an extended intertextual engagement with the adapted work” (2013: 8). This means that as an audience we are always both recognising similarities between the source and the adaptation, the adapted text “oscillating in our memories with what we are experiencing” (2013: 121). Obviously, this is mostly the case with knowing audiences, who are familiar with the source text or the referenced works. Unknowing audience, in turn, means that the audience is not familiar with the source text, or they might not be aware that they are watching an adaptation at all. Hutcheon states that a knowing audience should experience adaptations “as palimpsests through our memory of other works that resonate through repetition with variation” (2013: 8). Leitch also states that “each individual adaptation invokes many precursor texts besides the one whose title it usually borrows” (2003: 164). Adaptations should then be thought of as intertextual not only in terms of the source text, but also by taking into account all of the other adaptations and versions that might exist of the same text. In this manner there are inevitably many levels to knowing audiences.

These three definitions now drive an emerging interconnected perspective which Hutcheon deems “adaptation as *adaptation*”, saying it is no accident that we call both the *product* and the *process* by the same word (2013: 6–7). With this new way of thinking, Hutcheon combines adaptation as *product* and *process*, thus saying that an adaptation is always both, including the process of *reception*. Hutcheon means that adaptations should be valued as adaptations, especially if the audience is aware that they are viewing or reading an adaptation. In essence, she means that being aware of the differences between the adaptation and the source work does not take anything away from either version, and is its own unique experience. A knowing audience will also “inevitably fill in any gaps in the adaptation with information from the adapted text” (Hutcheon, 2013: 121). A knowing audience only familiar with the adapted version will also experience the oscillation with the source work, only in reverse (2013: xvii). Furthermore, due to the intertextuality of adaptation, a knowing audience familiar with the adaptation might even be unable to distance themselves from meanings added to the original source:

Now, for instance, that I *know* from the movie version of *The Lord of the Rings* what an orc looks like, I’ll never be able to recapture my first imagined version of it. Is this good or bad? (Hutcheon, 2004: 111, original emphasis)

Much in the way stated by Hutcheon in the quote above, this thesis later attempts to find evidence that *Groundhog Day the Musical* adds to and intensifies many themes from the film, thus instilling meaning into the story itself that could not be found in the source. However, the situation is not as straightforward as it might first seem, because most themes have their origins in the film even if they are arguably not present. This means that some themes, most notably existentialism, seem to have been retroactivated and thus written into the story itself. This aspect also yields an interesting spin on the idea of fidelity, which is examined in the next section.

2.1 Fidelity

Of all the ways to classify adaptations, surely the decision to classify them as more or less faithful to their putative sources, especially by critics who insist that Julia Kristeva, Mikhail Bakhtin and Robert Stam have persuaded them that there is no such thing as a single source for any adaptation, is one of the most fruitless. (Leitch, 2008: 64)

Some would probably say that adaptations, whatever the form, are never as good as the original work. In fact, this has been a long-standing issue discussed in adaptation studies, the debate focusing on something called ‘fidelity’, which bases the value of an adaptation on the resemblance to the original. Leitch argues that it is one of the fallacies of adaptation to regard the original as inherently superior (2003: 154–55). This stems from the new kind of appreciation for adaptations, which asks not for a perfect resemblance of the original work but something that lives on as an autonomous work. A part of why this change is welcome is because a different medium requires a markedly different means of production (Hutcheon, 2013: 43). Realistically, we should not expect any adaptation to solely be the original work in a new medium, but perhaps think of them even as completely original works. With an existing story and/or characters this is, to an extent, impossible, but the underlying idea is there: an adaptation is not a slave to its master — it is its own master.

As noted early on in this thesis, adaptation has battled a negative perception up until the last couple of decades, with an increase in adaptation-positive theory only lately coming to the forefront (Hutcheon, 2013: xxvi). Hutcheon places the start of this movement before the release of the first edition of her seminal work *A Theory of Adaptation* in 2006. What sets Hutcheon’s book apart is her use of diverse examples, ranging from graphic novels to operas and musicals (Leitch, 2008: 74), thus moving away from a prevailing literature to film point of view, which has empowered the debate around the ‘fidelity approach’ since at least the 1920s. This is when sound and therefore spoken dialogue were first introduced to film and comparisons of resemblance began (Cartmell, 2015). However, Leitch also observed some two years after Hutcheon’s book was released that despite the best efforts of adaptation theorists, “the field is still haunted by the notion that

adaptations ought to be faithful to their ostensible sourcetexts” (2008: 64). The fidelity debate has therefore occupied theorists for decades. Much of the debate has centered around film adaptations of earlier literary works. This begs the question, why is adaptation seen as negative in the first place? As Robert Stam explains in “Beyond Fidelity: The Dialogics of Adaptation”, the reason might be something called “axiomatic superiority” (2000: 58). This means that literature, as the older medium, will always be held in higher regard than visual mediums, but this also stems from *iconophobia*, meaning the visual is typically considered the lower type of artform, and *logophilia*, the reverence of words, prevalent, for example, in many religions with holy texts (2000: 58). The answer could partly also lie in people’s attitudes towards different types of media. Hutcheon states that it matters which type of art we are adapting:

[I]t does seem to be more or less acceptable to adapt *Romeo and Juliet* into a respected high art form, like an opera or a ballet, but not to make it into a movie, especially an updated one like Baz Luhrmann’s (1996) *William Shakespeare’s Romeo + Juliet*. If an adaptation is perceived as “lowering” a story (according to some imagined hierarchy of medium or genre), response is likely to be negative. (Hutcheon, 2013: 3)

Ironically, we know that many of Shakespeare’s plays were based on existing literature or stories from history and then performed through a visual medium (Alexandrowicz, 2015: 124), yet they have retained their high status through time. A possible explanation is that many people are unaware that Shakespeare was prone to adaptations, and because the written is all that remains from his day, Shakespeare’s works might simply be considered original literature and therefore exempt from the inferiority side of the debate. In this manner we could consider Shakespeare to elevate *film’s* respectability, rather than film lowering Shakespeare’s. This might also have something to do with what Hutcheon calls “cultural capital” (2013: 91), meaning an adaptation’s inherent value might fluctuate based on how highbrow its source or medium is. As we regard Shakespeare as highbrow, the lowbrow medium of film would benefit from his works’ inclusion. Whereas cinema might be considered lowbrow and opera highbrow, musical theatre is, according to David Savran, “middlebrow” (2011: 242), combining elements from popular culture with those of high culture, consistently exhibiting the mixing of “entertainment and art, the profane and the sacred, frivolous

and profound, erotic and intellectual” (2011: 242–43). Thus, based on this hierarchy, *Groundhog Day*’s musical adaptation could be seen as elevating its film counterpart.

George Raitt argues that there is good reason that adaptation studies cannot leave the notion of fidelity behind. He criticises Hutcheon’s view of the oscillating dichotomy of similarity and difference, saying they are not binary opposites, and rather suggests that difference may be found in sameness and equivalence (2010: 55). This means that differences can be observed between things that are considered to be two of the same thing, but also between things that are not the same but serve a similar purpose and are thus equivalent in that regard.

Fidelity has remained as something adaptation studies obsesses about, because it raises questions about authorship and autonomy (Leitch, 2003: 162–63). However, one of the conclusions Hutcheon reaches seems undisputable in the face of the fidelity debate. Her summation is that we should not hold adaptations accountable for their fidelity, but value them as the creative process they are:

“Perhaps one way to think about unsuccessful adaptations is not in terms of infidelity to a prior text, but in terms of a lack of creativity and skill to make the text one’s own and thus autonomous.” (2013: 20–21)

This implies that through creativity an adaptation could enjoy the reputation of an original work, even when considering that according to Hutcheon’s paradigm of adaptations *as adaptation* perfect autonomy seems impossible, as adaptations should be examined as “deliberate, announced, and extended revisitations of prior works” (2013: xvi). This suggests that an adaptation cannot ever be completely separated from its source even when autonomous, but it also raises questions about whether it can be perfectly palimpsestous if it is to achieve autonomy. In the case of *Groundhog Day*, it seems that it can, because the musical adaptation is similar to but has more depth than the film, and therefore does not need to invoke the film to fill gaps in the audience’s perceptions. It is a demonstrably creative and autonomous work, but one clearly built upon its source and thus palimpsestuous.

We shall return to adaptation in more detail in Chapter 3, but let us first consider why *Groundhog Day* has come to be such a significant film, and by extension, musical.

2.2 Philosophical Significance

It is a rather widely-spread conclusion that *Groundhog Day* employs within it a Nietzschean existentialist thought experiment, suggested by Michael Faust, for example, in his review of the film in *Philosophy Now* magazine (Faust, 2012). The film's screenwriter Danny Rubin, in turn, states that he "was getting letters from [. . .] philosophy professors who teach courses offering *Groundhog Day* for analysis and comparison with Nietzsche" (2012: "Reflections"). Sometimes Nietzsche's philosophical doctrine is even attributed as the genesis of *Groundhog Day*. However, the claim that the film was originally intended for this purpose can be easily disputed, as Rubin himself wrote in his ebook,

There are also things I did not know. For instance, I did not know that this movie was the perfect dramatic articulation of Friedrich Nietzsche's theory of eternal recurrence, as some have stated. I did not know that. (2012: "Introduction")

Rubin also explains that he had received notes and letters claiming the film represented Christian or Buddhist beliefs, or "*Kabbalah*, a Jewish mystic practice" (2012: "Reflections").

The passage from Nietzsche which *Groundhog Day* supposedly emulates speaks of something deemed 'the eternal recurrence of the same', which philosopher Martin Heidegger called the "fundamental doctrine in Nietzsche's philosophy" (1984: 6). Because its connection to the film is a rather widely-spread conclusion, it is worth examining further. The actual passage, originally published in German in *The Gay Science* in 1882, reads as follows:

The heaviest weight. – What if some day or night a demon were to steal into your loneliest loneliness and say to you: 'This life as you now live it and have lived it you will have to live once again and innumerable times again; and there will be nothing new in it, but every pain and every joy and every thought and sigh and everything unspeakably small or great in your life must return to you, all in the same succession and sequence – even this spider and this moonlight between the trees, and even this moment and I myself. The eternal hourglass of existence is turned over again and again, and you with it, speck of dust!' Would you not throw yourself down and gnash your teeth and curse the demon who spoke thus? Or have you once experienced a tremendous moment when you would have answered him: 'You are a god, and

never have I heard anything more divine?’ If this thought gained power over you, as you are it would transform and possibly crush you; the question in each and every thing, ‘Do you want this again and innumerable times again?’ would lie on your actions the heaviest weight! Or how well disposed would you have to become to yourself and to life to *long for nothing more fervently* than for this ultimate eternal confirmation and seal? (Nietzsche, 2001, pp. 194–5.)

It is not difficult to understand the connection one might make between Nietzsche’s doctrine and *Groundhog Day*’s premise. The two major differences one might find is that in Nietzsche’s case, the repetition encompasses one’s entire life as opposed to one day, and that Phil is able to make choices in his loop to better his own and the townfolk’s lives. Yet the fundamental similarity lies in the eternal return of the same. No matter what Phil does in the story – even if he *dies* – he will always wake up at 6:00 a.m. on February 2nd, Groundhog Day. The day is exactly similar to every other Groundhog Day he lives, the only difference being his own choices shaping the future up until the point when he wakes again at 6:00 a.m. in his hotel room.

It is important to note that Nietzsche’s idea of eternal recurrence is only a thought experiment, its purpose to provoke thought, rather than any actual proposal of the way the world works or any claim of an afterlife. We know this because we know that Nietzsche was a nihilist (Deleuze, 1983), and opposed to anything otherworldly. As explained in the *The Internet Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*,

The movement advocated a social arrangement based on rationalism and materialism as the sole source of knowledge and individual freedom as the highest goal. By rejecting man’s spiritual essence in favor of a solely materialistic one, nihilists denounced God and religious authority as antithetical to freedom. (“Nihilism”)

Nietzsche’s thought experiment of eternal recurrence could thus be considered the most materialistic way of looking at reincarnation. Reincarnation as such is not a novel idea, but the basis of it has been in the soul and that the details of life would still change each time, as you may be born as a different human or even a different life form (McClelland, 2010). To Nietzsche, here lies the pivotal point of the thought experiment. Only the most virtuous, life-loving, regret-free person would be happy to hear such a proposition where all moments of one’s life, triumphs and shortcomings, would repeat endlessly. What it essentially asks is, if you had to live your life an

infinite number of times over, would you consider that heaven or hell? For Phil Connors it would likely be certain hell, but that as a conclusion seems awfully simple. However, when worded slightly differently, we can draw firm connections to *Groundhog Day*, and its existential significance begins to unfold. Thus, let us consider it like this: How much would you have to learn to love life to be ready to endure all of it exactly as it happened over and over again?

In the beginning, Phil Connors is cynical, misogynistic, narcissistic and egotistical, and absolutely loathes small towns and their folk and jublations, of which Groundhog Day is one. He is full of himself as a celebrity and utterly convinced the festival he must report on is beneath him. However, by the end, he has fundamentally changed and learned to love the town and its people so much that his desire is to live there, with Rita, once they wake on February 3rd. How did he arrive at this transformation?

The answer might be depression. In the middle of the film, Phil demonstrably hits a low point, as he steals and kills Phil the Groundhog, and attempts (and succeeds) in suicide in a multitude of ways. It is depicted as if he has lost all hope and cares for nothing. However, like Nietzsche, perhaps the turning point for Phil is the “loneliest loneliness” (2001: 194), which Heidegger calls “the loneliness that induces the thought of thoughts” (1984: 34). This ‘thought of thoughts’ is arguably the realisation that Phil reaches after he comes to terms with his inevitable eternity, when he is utterly alone and defeated, with no other choice but to accept his fate. We, as the audience, see this in one of the more profound parts of the film, following Phil’s darkest moments. It begins when – after a countless number of repeated days, many unsuccessful attempts to court Rita, and many successful suicides – Phil tells Rita about his condition and surprises her by knowing everything about her and the townsfolk present. Rita is perplexed and amazed and they return to the hotel, where they finally enjoy a romantic evening together. Yet, at 6:00 a.m., Phil wakes up alone. This moment of heavy realisation is for Phil the point in the story where he begins to change his ways. In addition, there is a second heavy realisation at the end of the film, when Phil,

now trying his hardest to change the lives of the townsfolk, cannot succeed in saving the life of an old homeless man no matter what he does. This scene is followed only by the finale of the film, the final day, where many of Phil's good deeds are shown in succession, and he manages to get Rita to finally fall for him, and they wake up together the next day, February 3rd. These two turning points in the story add to its existentialist significance and elicit thoughtful introspection from the audience.

Gilles Deleuze mentions that the significance of Nietzsche's doctrine is often misunderstood (1983: xi), and therefore this thesis will not attempt to understand its philosophy any deeper than what it transparently represents. According to Martin Heidegger, Nietzsche himself would have wanted ten years to fully understand his own thought before releasing it to the public (1984: 13). The notion of eternal return is therefore much grander than what can be presented or discussed here, but its significance in provoking thought about the human character is more than enough for the current purpose. Even though Nietzsche's doctrine is one of exact repetition, which is not the case with Phil as he is able to make choices, the similarities between eternal return and *Groundhog Day* remain salient. Phil is stuck in an eternal recurrence of the same in a place he quite literally deems hell, and spirals to rock bottom mentally and psychologically, not being able to cope with that realisation.

Deleuze apparently disagrees that Nietzsche's doctrine is one of exact repetition of one's life, saying that "the eternal return is linked, not to a repetition of the same, but on the contrary, to a transmutation" (1983: xii). By this he means that change is possible, and each repetition would be different, better. This might be closer to the premise of *Groundhog Day*, but seems unsupported based on Nietzsche's writing in the passage quoted above.

Nevertheless, Phil, eventually, is released from his eternal recurrence. As mentioned earlier, the *Groundhog Day* trope claims that the time loop should end when something is corrected. However, in the same way that the beginning of the loop is not explained in the film, the ending is

left unexplained as well. The fact that in the film we are presented with most of the final day, when Phil is successful in every task he attempts, leads us to conclude that this is the corrected day, the perfect day. It was the best day of Phil's life, as we know from Rubin's words. Could we then ponder this ending through the words of Marcus Aurelius, who once said that "Perfection of character is this: to live each day as if it were your last, without frenzy, without apathy, without pretence" (2006: 69)? If we assume that the final day that we see in the film is the first time Phil manages to accomplish a perfect day, and then the day changes, we could take it to mean that Phil simultaneously reaches perfection of character, his profoundly changed self. This would mean that Phil has completely abandoned his self-aggrandising personality and does not help the townsfolk because he must, but because he can.

To explain how we know that Phil is not simply faking it and that he has actually changed as a person, we might take a look at the song "One Day" from *Groundhog Day the Musical*. The prevalent expansion of themes in the musical will be examined further from an adaptation perspective in Chapter 3 of this thesis, and at present it suffices to say that it is the contention of this thesis that the stories in the two versions are extremely similar, but the musical has added depth. Therefore, it can be claimed that any depth brought into the story, even though not explicitly stated in the film, has its motivations in the original. Thus, when Phil sings "One Day" in the musical, we are able to believe it is what his film counterpart also went through in his inner monologue. From here onwards, the lyrics of the musical are represented in the following manner, stating in square brackets which character is singing, with the numbers representing lines within a song.

[PHIL:]

35 One day is not enough, I've had enough
36 I'm not enough, I'm not your fictional man
37 I'm just me, I can't be more than I am
38 This is all that there is

"One Day" ends the first act, and Phil has yet to gain any advances in his courtship of Rita. He has gathered many details from Rita about her desirable mate and changed his behaviour accordingly,

but still has come up empty each time. He is losing faith that he will ever manage to successfully make her fall in love with him, conceding that it simply cannot be done in one day (line 35). There is no way to trick her into loving him, as he is who he is (l. 37).

These thoughts might be useful in explaining why Phil is finally released from his eternity, even though this is not explicitly mentioned in the story. He is finally at peace with all of his moral choices, and he has managed to transform his entire life by learning the true value of existence and love. As Rubin concludes, “The world changed because Phil changed. That means that the difference to us between a bad day and a good day may not be the day, but may be the way we approach the day” (2012: “Reflections”).

2.3 Meta-Existentialism and Analysis

In addition to the existential themes in the story itself as discussed above, an overarching theme in the musical adaptation is the existential metatheme of actors stuck playing parts in a play. Signs of this theme can be located throughout the musical, but it is explicitly evident in the song “Playing Nancy”, sung by supporting character Nancy Taylor. However, it also features in smaller parts in other songs, such as “Hope” and “Seeing You”, sung predominantly by Phil.

The reason why Michin has opted to include meta-existentialist themes in his lyric writing is likely motivated by the story’s prevalent connection to Nietzsche’s existentialist doctrine. As the theme of existentialism must be retroactivated and thus written “back” into the story, where it originally was not by design, the musical must make it clear to the audience that the writers are now aware of this symbolism. Because the existentialist themes are already imbedded within the story, as evidenced by the film, not making any changes would leave the musical’s awareness of this connection in ambiguity. This meta-existentialist theme proves that the musical is aware of the existentialism in a way that the film was not, while simultaneously developing it further.

The most relevant one for the present analysis is “Playing Nancy”, as the song has a clear

double meaning throughout. Beginning with the title itself, the most logical interpretation of the words implies that the actress is playing the part of Nancy. Therefore, the audience might begin listening to the song with a fourth-wall-breaking existential theme already in their minds. Once the song is heard, it becomes clear that the title also means that the character is singing of the role she calls 'Nancy' that she plays in society.

On the one hand the song is saying that the character Nancy Taylor is unlucky in love, always being the pretty girl, but not the one with whom to settle down. This is represented in the lyrics from the very beginning:

[NANCY TAYLOR:]

- 1 Well here I am again
- 2 The pretty but naïve one
- 3 The perky-breasted, giggly one-night stand
- 4 Is it my destiny to be
- 5 A brief diversion
- 6 Just a detour on the journey of some man?

She sings of being a “one-night stand” (l. 3) and a “detour on the journey of some man” (l. 6). These lines are rather explicitly spoken by Nancy Taylor, the fictional character. She is the one-night stand for Phil, and an obvious detour on the way to Phil’s actual romantic target, Rita. Therefore, the beginning of the song sets up a slight red herring, as it builds a premise only from the point of view of the character. If the audience knows the song is called “Playing Nancy”, they might be conflicted with this information when presented, which incidentally might aid in interpreting the song as a meta-existential piece. If the audience does not know the name of the song, the next lines might begin to guide them in this direction, but the realisation will come much later, as Nancy continues building up her view of society:

[NANCY TAYLOR:]

- 7 I'm not really one for askin'
- 8 I'll play whatever role I'm cast in
- 9 Will smile with perfect teeth
- 10 And grimace underneath
- 11 I learned back in my teens
- 12 There's no point in protestin'

13 If you look good in tight jeans
14 That's what they'll want you dressed in
15 Once you're known for low-cut tops
16 It's pretty hard to stop
17 It isn't easy to break free
18 Of playing Nancy

In this second paragraph Nancy continues by singing how she excels in being the type of woman that she is and that it is difficult to let go of that lifestyle. In this instance, the word ‘Nancy’ seems to become synonymous with this kind of woman. In a way, she is not being herself, but she is playing herself.

On the other hand, “Nancy” is also the name of the character that the real-life actress, in this case Rebecca Faulkenberry (who plays Nancy in the version discussed in this thesis), plays. As already noted, “Playing Nancy” therefore also alludes to the role of Nancy Taylor. This is where the meta-existential theme is in effect, as both the actress and the character can be said to ponder their existence simultaneously. It is hard not to interpret the song in this manner, as it seems to be Rebecca who literally sings about the role she plays (l. 3), later alluding also to the presumably up to eight shows a week that Broadway actors usually perform, by singing “So throughout the endless week / And all through the weekend / You will find me here / Playing Nancy” (lines 27–30, see below). In addition, the lines “But this world I chose to live in / Is mostly run by men” (l. 23–24) are likely criticising the real world in some capacity, but one does not really choose to live in the real world. The word choice of “chose to live in” (l. 23) rather sounds like the actress pondering her place within the entertainment industry, which we can reasonably expect to be male-dominated (Actor’s Equity Association, 2020; Verhoeven et al., 2020).

[NANCY TAYLOR:]
19 I don't really remember
20 I guess I chose to be here
21 I wasn't quite aware that
22 I was put here to be stared at
23 But this world I chose to live in
24 Is mostly run by men
25 So you take what you are given

26 Just to feel the love again
27 So throughout the endless week
28 And all through the weekend
29 You will find me here
30 Playing Nancy

If the words are taken to mean Nancy's own world view more generally, they could also be thought to build her agency, as it is put upon herself to change her situation, but she does not, because her life is probably still better when weighing the positives and negatives. It is important to note at this point that the actresses who play Nancy Taylor on stage are obviously not responsible for these thoughts, but the lyricist and/or the book writer. This means that the actresses are in a certain manner playing the part of a "semi-fictional" human playing the part of a fictional character. Therefore, we could say that the song is not about any specific actress, but *an* actress – one who is stuck playing a supporting role and never the main character.

Her two-fold struggle continues, as Nancy is saying that she is content in her role as a 'Nancy', while in the same instance the actress sings about being grateful for her role (l. 31–34).

Here again the theatrical vocabulary extends the double meaning:

[NANCY TAYLOR:]
31 And look, I know this person fits me
32 I'm pretty good at being pretty
33 And I'm grateful, I mean to say
34 There are worse roles you can play
35 And I'd rather be up dancing
36 Than sad against the wall
37 It's better to be leered at
38 Than not desired at all
39 Who am I to dream of better
40 To dream that one day I will be
41 Something more than just collateral
42 In someone else's battle
43 I will be
44 Something more than Nancy

However, towards the end of the song her point of view gains another interesting layer. Nancy wishes she was someone who could dream of a better life (l. 39–44), arguably saying that she cannot be one to attain something better. Who is she to be "Something more than Nancy" (l. 44)?

This is an important window to our Nietzschean thought experiment. We could argue that it is not that the character of Nancy is stuck in her role as ‘Nancy’, as a bridesmaid and never the bride, as that role in her life is not one that would repeat in any significant similarity. It might not even be that the actress is stuck in her supporting role – as we can go one layer deeper. We could argue that this rather means that the character of Nancy Taylor is stuck in her role as Nancy Taylor *within Groundhog Day*. No matter how many reiterations of the story we might perceive, the character of Nancy Taylor will always be a supporting character in the *story* of *Groundhog Day*. Therefore, the character, even if she remains hypothetical, will always repeat herself exactly as she is written, while the actress repeats her role as the character. The character therefore seems to be aware that whenever she is played, she is played in this way. Both the character and the actress are stuck in the loop that never ends, with no chance of being anything more. Nancy, then, seems to be aware of the actress playing her in a play, while also being self-aware of herself as a character in that play. “Playing Nancy” is thus a strong example of the meta-existential theme that could be argued to underlie *Groundhog Day the Musical*.

To say that the theme underlies the entire play, we should look at where it reappears in other parts of the musical as well. “Hope”, an ironically-titled song during which Phil hits his lowest point and kills himself multiple times, *hoping* to one day succeed and not wake up, also employs similar wording that strengthens the meta-existential theme of actors stuck in a play:

[PHIL:]
20 An ever-lasting farcical disaster
21 You play your part
22 You march the march
23 You don’t complain
24 You find a way
25 Another day
26 Surrounded by a cast of half-wit bastards
27 Grinning masks amidst the grey

Similar to Nancy Taylor, Phil speaks of “playing your part” (l. 21) but he is also “surrounded by a cast” (l. 26), which we can reasonably claim to allude to acting, and thus drawing sympathy from

the real-world audience by relating the character's struggles outside of the play. Lest we also forget that if these phrases are multi-layered by design, "half-wit bastards" (l. 26), which at face value references the simple-minded townsfolk, could possibly also allude to actors. Finally, "grinning masks amidst the grey" (l. 27) could be understood as a reference to the real-life audience, where smiling faces form a grey mass in the darkness of a theatre from the perspective of the actor on stage.

For a final example, "Seeing You", the finale of the show, employs similar language at least once. The song is the final reflection that Phil makes on February 3rd, the tomorrow.

[PHIL:]
9 A storm blew in
10 Overwhelmed me sometime late this morning
11 Think I ignored the warnings
12 I've spent a lifetime seeking signs, reading lines
13 Trying to forecast the future

In this instance, Phil sings in meteorological metaphors, rather obviously alluding to his job as a television weatherman. The "storm" (l. 9), referencing the blizzard which leaves Phil snowed in in Punxsutawney, alludes to his depression which eventually leads to his multiple suicides. This paves the way for him to continue, "reading lines / Trying to forecast the future" (lines 12–13), but this wording also includes the second meaning of an actor reading lines in a play, and arguably the struggle that actors face not knowing when and where they are going to land their next role. This in itself might not seem evidence enough, but knowing what we know from clearer examples in "Playing Nancy" and "Hope", this could reinforce the view that the meta-existentialism is underlying throughout the play. The characters singing the songs are almost self-aware, coming ever-so-close to realising that they are characters stuck in a play, and arguably Nancy Taylor is one who succeeds.

All of the examples above appear in the second act of the musical, which is where most of the theme-reinforcing happens. In fact, "Playing Nancy" is the first song of the second act, following only the "Entr'acte", when the company returns to the stage after the intermission, only

to leave Nancy to sing alone to commence the second act. This is an obvious turning point in the story that has up until then built up a rather one-sided and light-hearted premise of Phil's dismissive and narcissistic views of the town and the townsfolk. Illuminated solely by a pensive spotlight, Nancy cascades into deep thought, all the while completely revamping the audience's expectations of the supporting characters.

Lastly, it is important to highlight the fact that while existentialist themes could be said to exist in both the film and the musical, by design or not, this meta-existential theme, where the sentiment is multi-layered, is only present in the musical, making it one of the major ways in which the two works differ. In the next chapter a thorough analysis of the musical is presented through the lens of adaptation, and we will come to learn other differences between the film and the musical.

3. From *Groundhog Day* to *Groundhog Day*

As an art form of the now, theatre defies second-hand appreciation. Photographs, films, videos, and sound recordings can preserve elements of a performance, but nothing yet invented fully captures the excitement, the visceral impact of live theatre. (Kenrick, 2008: 12)

Groundhog Day the Musical is probably best categorised as an “integrated” book musical, which McMillin suggests means that “all elements of a show – plot, character, song, dance, orchestration, and setting – should blend together into a unity, a seamless whole” (McMillin, 2006: 1). In an integrated musical the focus is on story and character, and the purpose of the songs is to advance the plot or enhance character development (Coleman, 2017: 586). *Groundhog Day the Musical* employs both of these tactics. On the one hand, songs such as “Playing Nancy” could be said to be purely character-developing, as it adds to the depth of the character Nancy Taylor but does not have a plot-related significance, also evidenced by the fact that the entire thought experiment therein is not present in the film. On the other hand, the musical has songs literally titled “Day One”, “Day Two”, and “Day Three” that recount the events of the first three days Phil is stuck in the time loop, which should be considered plot-advancing. These are subjected to more analysis in Section 3.4.

Considering the existentialism as discussed in Chapter 2, however, there is a case to be made that *Groundhog Day the Musical* borrows elements from what is traditionally considered a ‘concept musical’. As Cohen and Rosenhaus explain:

In a concept musical, the songs stand outside the spoken scenes; they comment in some way, often with irony, upon the story that they interrupt. The show as a whole is usually arranged according to some overall concept or metaphor. (2006: 10)

Obviously, it is not factual to say that the purpose of the entire musical is to convey a concept, as the story is the main element of the musical. However, if we are to take it as fact that the existentialist themes underlie the entire musical, we could claim it resembles a concept musical in that regard. Furthermore, when taking, for example, “Playing Nancy” into account – which is a song that is superfluous to the plot and seems to comment on the role of the supporting character

and the role of women (discussed in further detail in Section 3.3) – we are able to see similarities to tactics employed by concept musicals.

The next subsections will attempt to analyse *Groundhog Day the Musical* through the lens of adaptation, loosely following the structure of Hutcheon's *A Theory of Adaptation* and utilising her question-answer format. The questions which appear together in Hutcheon's *A Theory of Adaptation* also appear together in this thesis and are therefore answered within the same subsection. The questions have been reordered to fit the structure of this thesis, as the forms (What?) are the most important for the present analysis, and therefore presented last and in greater detail.

3.1 Who? Why? – The Adapters

From the adapter's perspective, adaptation is an act of appropriating and salvaging, and this is always a double process of interpreting and then creating something new. (Hutcheon, 2013: 20)

Why would anyone undertake an adaptation? Firstly, Hutcheon claims that the recent (as of 2013) phenomenon of films being written into musicals, or “musicalized”, is clearly driven by money (2013: 5). This is because a film or a franchise can have a pre-existing fan base, and thus an adaptation is a safe bet to try to attract both old and new audiences (2013: 5, 87). In addition, putting on a musical is expensive, and a “Broadway musical has to survive in a commercial market” (2013: 87). An adaptation with a ready audience lessens the economic risk.

In the case of *Groundhog Day*, this economic view might well be accurate. The film could be regarded as a financial success, grossing over \$70.9 million in the United States according to IMDb.com, almost five times its estimated budget of \$14.6 million. When adjusted for inflation, the film would have even topped the coveted \$100-million mark after the year 2007. These metrics are enough for us to think that the film was a success, and therefore it is not outside the realm of possibility to think that money was the driving factor for the adaptation as well.

Kenrick claims that the essential elements of a great musical are brains, heart, and courage, meaning it needs to be “intelligent”, have “emotional content and appeal”, and “the guts to do something in a fresh, new way” (2008: 16). As discussed, *Groundhog Day* can be found full of themes, symbolism, and philosophy, and its reach as a trope is surprisingly broad. The existentialist ideas might tick the box for intelligent by themselves, but this aspect has also been emphasised by clever lyric writing (discussed more in Section 3.4.3). Tackling a story revolving around one day is arguably the fresh way to approach a musical, including the creativity needed for the innovative set design. With the use of music and deeper character development Rubin and Minchin also manage to add emotional appeal to the musical that might have eluded the film. This might be because, as a film, *Groundhog Day* mostly had one thing: potential. As noted in Chapter 2.2, writer Danny Rubin did not intend for a Nietzschean or Buddhist introspection to take place, and was himself surprised by the symbolism people had extracted from it. However, if one were to adapt *Groundhog Day* now, as Rubin and Minchin have done, they would inevitably be aware of all of this thematic symbolism, but it would exist in an external universe until written “back” – so to speak – into the text. In other words, even if we find symbolism in the film, it is arguably not there until we, as the audience, conjure it. This is arguably what Rubin and Minchin have attempted with the second iteration of *Groundhog Day*: fulfilling the *potential* of the original, transforming it into a more profound version of the story.

Another reason why someone might want to adapt a film into a different medium such as a musical is the cultural capital. As Hutcheon says, a way for an adaptation to seem more respectable is for it to be “upwardly mobile” (2013: 91). Thus, you can increase cultural capital with an upwardly mobile adaptation (2013: 91). Musical theatre being considered “middlebrow”, it should have the upper hand against cinema, which has traditionally been considered a lowbrow form of entertainment (Savran, 2011: 242). As opera is considered one of the highest forms of art (Hutcheon, 2013: 3), we could perhaps argue that a musical, being closely related to opera in terms

of music and singing, is a higher form of art than a regular play. This could help explain why *Groundhog Day* was remade as a musical and not simply a dialogue-based play. The other explanation is that the themes and symbolism are better suited to be emphasised by music (Cohen and Rosenhaus, 2006: 16). This might also explain why it was not remade as another film: it would not have elevated the story, as it would have likely remained a romantic comedy film.

Because an adaptation has to compete with the original on which it is based, a successful adaptation must enhance the story in some way not present in the original version. This can only be the case if the original is not already in its most suitable medium, and if a new version with songs and dances can add to it something better, or at least different. (Cohen and Rosenhaus 2006: 19)

Considering that many themes have been intensified in the musical adaptation, and the clever staging can maintain surprise from transitions better than a film with a mediating camera, *Groundhog Day* seems to have been enriched as a musical, suggesting that it was originally not in its most suitable form as a film. A musical adaptation has the capability to fulfill all of this potential.

Obviously, there are also personal or political motives. Not every adaptation is made to resemble the original, and they may also challenge it. Hutcheon states that the adapters “are just as likely to want to contest the aesthetic or political values of the adapted text as they are to pay homage” (2013: 20). Using this as guidance, we can perhaps locate bookwriter Danny Rubin’s personal motives for adapting *Groundhog Day*. As Rubin was also the original screenwriter of the film, he pays homage to himself in a way, and he has stated that the adaptation was a “second chance” (Schwartz, 2017) to make it right. This explains, for example, why many jokes are left untouched in the musical, as they were deemed to be already functional and not in need of revision. The story, then, has not been completely rewritten and is a kind of ‘palimpsest’, in essence a second chance to simply perfect everything. If we also take it as fact that the philosophical significance of the story has multiplied with time, that, too, might have created an urgency in Rubin to write it “back” into the story.

There is a case to be made, however, that Rubin already adapted *Groundhog Day* in its original form, and that argument was made in 1995 in the form of a lawsuit. Writer Leon Arden

claimed that *Groundhog Day* copied his 1981 novel *One Fine Day*, in which a man was living the same day over and over again (United States District Court, 1995). Ultimately, the case was dismissed, as the stories had no major themes or plot events in common, and there were not enough grounds to reasonably claim that *Groundhog Day* had copied *One Fine Day*. As also noted earlier, one of Thomas Leitch's fallacies is that an adaptation could ever correspond to a source one-to-one, because "each individual adaptation invokes many precursor texts besides the one whose title it usually borrows" (2003: 164). This means, for example, that even if a singular source text is adapted, the adaptation lives in an intertextual world with all of the other adaptations of that same text. If *Groundhog Day* had been considered to be based on *One Fine Day*, then also *Groundhog Day the Musical* would have invoked it in this intertextual manner. The complaint resulting in dismissal, however, means that this possibility can be rejected.

Alternatively, Leitch posits that an adaptation might be compared to an external interpretation of a source text, for example whether an adaptation follows "the distinctive world or style or tone associated with the author in general" (2003: 164). This thought circles back to the discussion about fidelity, and here Leitch makes interesting claim. Together with quoting McFarlane's analysis, Leitch comments that an ending David Lean wrote into his adaptation of Charles Dickens' novel *Great Expectations* completely rewrites the conclusion, but in a rather Dickensian style, making it "arguably more Dickensian than the uncharacteristically downbeat ending Dickens himself supplied" (2003: 164). Because Dickens' oeuvre has with time concocted a general view of the author's style of "genial satire, sentimental benevolence, comically grotesque minor characters, [and] happy endings" (2003: 164), we might perceive an expanded Dickensian world in something that he verifiably did not write and in fact goes against the original wording. This is of course complicated by the fact that Dickens later succumbed to write an alternate, less downbeat ending to *Great Expectations*, generating much discourse among theorists (Meckier, 1993). However, by using Leitch's original reasoning, it could potentially then also be claimed that,

in the case of *Groundhog Day*, by expanding on the themes that we can locate in the film but that have intensified over time, *Groundhog Day the Musical* is *more Groundhog Day* than the original film. This thought obviously makes an interesting addition to the discussion on fidelity in Chapter 2 of this thesis: if we could claim that the sameness and difference we oscillate between when viewing the adaptation are in parts the *same thing*, it makes a paradox of the whole fidelity argument. Furthermore, these thoughts rather make it possible that Rubin did not set out to *adapt Groundhog Day*, but to *re-create* it as the version of itself that it should have been, filling in the gaps that he may have perceived to exist after two decades of the story mulling over in his head.

3.2 How? – The Audiences

For an adaptation to be successful in its own right, it must be so for both knowing and unknowing audiences. (Hutcheon, 2013: 121)

We have already noted that when Hutcheon talks of adaptations *as adaptations*, what she essentially means is that we, as an audience, are aware – and should be aware – that we are experiencing an adaptation. In this sense, we are constantly oscillating between remembrance and surprise. If the audience is unaware that they are experiencing an adaptation or is unfamiliar with the source, they would consume it as they would any other work (Hutcheon, 2013: 120). Hutcheon states that an unknowing audience needs not become knowing, and an adaptation should work for both types of audiences to be considered successful (2013: 121), but also says that “there’s a kind of dialogic relationship that is really important” (MacArthur et al., 2009: 2), suggesting that it is better to be knowing. Knowing may also pertain to contexts, as, for example, a knowing stage audience’s expectations are distinct from those of a knowing film audience. The interpretations of differently knowing audiences are dependent on different information and therefore are likely not similar (Hutcheon, 2013: 124–25).

As mentioned early on in this thesis, composer and lyricist Tim Minchin told *Rolling Stone*

magazine that he set out to divert the knowing audience's expectations and to make them forget about the original film by beginning with 24 bars of chaotic free jazz (Portwood, 2017). To think of this in Hutcheon's terms, Minchin has arguably attempted to transform a knowing audience into an unknowing audience. This is, however, not a very reasonable claim, as the musical closely follows the story of the original, with most of the differences in the character development and reinforced themes. This is to say that while *Groundhog Day the Musical* does not seemingly attempt to stay faithful to the film in terms of absolute fidelity, it is not dissimilar, and features dialogue that matches the film word for word. It would inevitably fail in creating an unknowing audience from a knowing audience, but would succeed as the intertextual and palimpsestuous receptive process as described by Hutcheon. This is because Minchin arguably accomplishes something very substantial with his chaotic overture: the destruction of fidelity. We might think of this in contrast of what Leitch says about precursor texts in adaptation:

Dozens of adaptations that open with screens showing copies of the books on which they are based, from *A Christmas Carol* to *The Postman Always Rings Twice*, invoke not only their specific precursor texts but the aura of literature as such to confer a sense of authority. (2003: 165)

Leitch thus states that adaptations may invoke their source texts to gain instant credibility. Although *Groundhog Day the Musical* could not invoke a sense of authority from the film, it could have invoked the film from the very beginning, inevitably creating an atmosphere of comparison. However, what it does is specifically *not* invoke the original, essentially '*un-invokes*' it, in attempting to make the audience ready for something new; the point being that the knowing audience would not be prone to compare the two versions in terms of fidelity after experiencing the shock of the overture. Thus constructing the perfect building ground for an oscillating experience between the old and the new, sameness and difference, remembrance and surprise: one where the audience knows they are watching an adaptation, but an autonomous rendition of the story, and not simply a remake on stage.

3.3 Where? When? – The Contexts

An adaptation, like the work it adapts, is always framed in a context – a time and a place, a society and a culture; it does not exist in a vacuum. (Hutcheon, 2013: 142)

Groundhog Day was originally a very male-dominated film, and the roles of the women are markedly different in the musical. We will see later that the composition of the musical is different to the film, with one difference being in the allocation of time, which for the women has grown greatly in comparison to the women in the film. We have already seen that the supporting character Nancy Taylor has been given significantly more depth with her own solo performance. The townsfolk, in general, occupy a much larger role in the musical, which might partly be the reason why the women are also featured more, as we can at least regard Nancy as part of the town ensemble. Rita Hanson's role as the love interest has also changed, as she sees a great advancement in agency. Although Rita is an opinionated and cultured woman in both versions, the musical depicts in much greater detail what Rita wants of life and love. It is the main agenda in Rita's solo part within the song "One Day", for example, thus developing her character independently of her connection to Phil, rather than having nearly all of this exposition revealed through Phil's courting attempts, which is the case with the film.

These changes may have happened partly because the musical set out to expand characters in general, but when an adapter takes on a decades-old story, they are almost inevitably confronted with cultural or social changes that factor into their considerations. Such could be the case with *Groundhog Day the Musical*, as it was based on a 23-year-old film, and 1993, the year of the film's release, had not seen the effects of what came to be called third-wave feminism. It is said to have been sparked by Rebecca Walker in early 1992, but all of the relevant literature pertaining to the movement has been released after 1995 (Snyder, 2008: 177). According to IMDb.com, *Groundhog Day* was filmed between March 16th and June 10th in 1992. This means that during the production of the film, it is probable that no one had yet heard of third-wave feminism. Circling back to what was

noted of the thematic symbolism of the film in Section 3.1, someone attempting to adapt *Groundhog Day* in the mid-2010s would certainly be aware of this feministic progression and therefore should take it into consideration, even if it were writer Rubin himself. As Sanders explains, adaptations may give voice to the silenced or marginalized (2006: 19), and this would have been a prime opportunity for Rubin, whose female characters were lacking in agency, though not in abundance, in the original film. Both Rita Hanson and Nancy Taylor's entire characters could be said to revolve around being courted by Phil, and Nancy is later also courted by Larry the cameraman. The self-reflective "Playing Nancy" in the musical thus turns this situation on its head, giving Nancy much-needed depth and also adding to her agency, as she sings of the world she "chose to live in" (l. 23). The song is also arguably a feministic commentary on the character of Nancy as portrayed in the original film, as the tolerance of a rather sexually-objectified female character is much lower today. Consider, for example, the following lines from the song:

[NANCY TAYLOR:]
21 I wasn't quite aware that
22 I was put here to be stared at

These lines make it sound like Nancy herself has come to a realisation about objectification, as it is now much clearer that her character's role in the original story was simply to be pretty, which is something that the film would probably receive criticism for if released today. The character concedes that she cannot change her predicament any longer, as the story has already been written. This is simultaneously a commentary on the part of the (imagined) actress, who believes to be cast based on talent or merit and not simply because of her looks. Based on this reasoning, we might have expected Nancy to be completely disconnected from her pretty one-night stand status in the adaptation. The reason she is not, however, is likely because the story still needed to establish Phil as impudent and self-absorbed, which is easily accomplished by objectifying the women, especially since the advancements of modern feminism. Of course, it could be considered rather ironic that even though the writers seem to understand the problems of objectification the film had, the musical

only comments on the situation, rather than changing that part of the story in the adaptation process.

Rita's solo in "One Day" also comments on the indoctrination of women from an early age, raised to believe in princes and subjected to "ludicrous" (l. 5) body standards. Her song speaks of how she now, as a woman, rejects these indoctrinations, simultaneously building Rita's agency in the musical. However, they still haunt her, as she sings of how she has learned that any terrible man could turn out to be her prince-in-waiting:

[RITA HANSON:]
113 One day, some day
114 My prince will come
115 So the fairy tales said
116 Thirty years later it's still in my head
117 That if I screw a frog
118 I will wake in a four-poster bed

These thoughts might explain why there is a major focal point shift from an almost purely single-protagonist film to a much more multi-sided view in the musical, where the love interest character Rita has seen a notable increase in focus, arguably to almost equal, second protagonist, status. Hutcheon states that even a drastic change in focalisation is not abnormal in adaptations:

The separate units of the story (or the fabula) can also be transmediated—just as they can be summarized in digest versions or translated into another language (Hamon 1977: 264). But they may well change—often radically—in the process of adaptation, and not only (but most obviously) in terms of their plot ordering. Pacing can be transformed, time compressed or expanded. Shifts in the focalization or point of view of the adapted story may lead to major differences. (Hutcheon, 2013: 11)

To prove this hypothesis, both works have been transcribed and shall now be analysed. The first part of the analysis will deal with the number of speaking or singing lines. By simply calculating the number of words each character speaks or sings, we can arrive at a rudimentary conclusion about the focal point shift. In this section of the analysis, it is worthy to note that the musical transcript is likely not perfectly accurate, as it does not follow an official stageplay transcript and has been written only for the purposes of this thesis. It is not imperative to this analysis, however, that each and every word must be absolutely correct, as long as the number of words is generally accurate. In performance arts we can also reasonably expect some deviation between different days or shows

due to improvisation or human error in memorising lines. However, we are perfectly capable of doing this analysis to the closest ten words for each character, which should sufficiently reflect the reality between the two works.

The second part of this analysis considers the amount of time Phil is in focus. To prove that Phil dominates the musical less than the film, his screentime and stagetime is compared by simply timing his appearances to the nearest second. The problem with this approach is that in a stage play, even if a character has no speaking lines or is not technically – in film terms – “in the shot”, they might still have to stand in the scene, which would be visible to the audience. Hutcheon says that cinema, “with the aid of the mediating camera, can both direct and expand the possibilities of perception” (2013: 43). Thus, unlike with a film, there is nothing restricting the stage audience from focusing on things out of focus in the production. To tackle this, the calculations regarding the film were also done to show whether Phil had to be standing in the scene as opposed to being visible in the shot. Phil’s focus has also been taken into account in the calculations for the women to better understand the shift in their dependence on Phil.

Rita	WORDS SPOKEN / SUNG	WITHOUT PHIL
FILM	1640	38 s
MUSICAL	3060	8 min 32 s

Nancy	WORDS SPOKEN / SUNG	WITHOUT PHIL
FILM	100	46 s
MUSICAL	330	4 min 16 s

Phil	WORDS SPOKEN / SUNG	SCREEN-/STAGETIME (%)
FILM	4770	99 %
MUSICAL	5740	86 %

Table 1. The shifts in focus between Phil, Rita, and Nancy.

As seen in Table 1, all characters have seen increases in the number of their spoken or sung lines. This increase is much more considerable for Rita and Nancy, though, as it is for Phil, as the women have seen their numbers doubled or even tripled. When considering the collective lines spoken and sung by Phil and Rita, what previously was a 75–25 split in the film in favour of Phil has been turned into a 65–35 split in the musical. Although not equal by numbers, Rita has seen her role increase, as she appears in the film only once without Phil (for under a minute), while in the musical she sings solo or separated from Phil by a spotlight multiple times, seeing almost an eight-minute increase in focus. The finales in each act (“One Day” and “Seeing You”) also build to performances where Phil and Rita sing together simultaneously, which could be considered a sign of equality between the main characters. This could also be seen as a sign of compatibility, as their parts are fusing together as the story advances. Nancy’s focus is more than triple that of the film, although most of it comes in the form of her solo “Playing Nancy”.

Finally, when factoring in the longer runtime of the musical, which is roughly 1.44 times longer than the film, the expected number of Phil’s words in the musical is 6860, while Rita’s is only 2360. This means that the number of Phil’s words has diminished by over a thousand from the expected growth, while Rita’s has increased by 700 words over the expected number based on the musical’s runtime. Thus, even when considering that one character, Larry the cameraman, was all but deleted in the musical adaptation and presumably allocated mostly to Rita (who he almost exclusively appears alongside in the film), Phil’s role has arguably been cut down in order to further develop Rita.

Even with these changes made to the portrayal of the women, neither *Groundhog Day* nor *Groundhog Day the Musical* pass the Bechdel Test (or sometimes the Bechdel-Wallace Test), which considers the extent to which female characters have been utilised in fiction (Merriam-Webster, bechdeltest.com). To pass the test, a film should have two or more female characters who talk to each other about something other than a man. However, the test’s purpose is to highlight sexism in

writing stories, with its root in writers underrepresenting women or writing non-complex female characters. The women in *Groundhog Day*, namely Rita and Nancy, are better represented and more complex in the musical, even if their dialogue is still lacking in this regard.

3.4 What? – Forms

Since it takes longer to sing than to speak (much less read) a line of text, operas and musicals must necessarily distill, often radically, the narrative of a novel or play. This necessary compression means the trimming of expansive plot lines, the removal of much psychological analysis, and the loss of stylistic texture. Characters and events are omitted; colorful slang and expletives are deleted. (Hutcheon, 2004: 110)

With musical adaptations of non-musical films, such as is the case with *Groundhog Day*, music – be it instrumentals or singing parts – must be instilled into the story. According to Hutcheon’s quote above, this usually means that the story is the first to suffer, with less important story lines or characters eliminated, or the depth or significance becomes diminished. It is important to note, however, that here Hutcheon mentions only novels and plays, two artforms where brevity might not be on the same level as with film. A (theatrical) play and a musical might follow similar traditions and regulations regarding length, for example, which would necessarily mean that in a musical adaptation of a play the songs must replace parts of the story, and compression or trimming is bound to happen. If screenplays are included, *Groundhog Day* should be considered an anomaly in this regard. As seen with Nancy Taylor (and later in this Chapter with Ned Ryerson), supporting characters barely developed at all in the film have been anything but omitted, and in fact given much larger roles in the adaptation. Even when we consider that according to Hutcheon, expletives may be deleted, the musical adaptation takes the opposite route. There are no expletives in the film, but there are in the musical – although not abundant. However, it must be noted that the film is 97 minutes long and the musical is around 140 minutes. Even if singing would take more time, the extra 40 minutes allocated to the story would probably require elements not seen in the film to be included, especially when considering that *Groundhog Day the Musical* also relies heavily on

spoken dialogue, meaning that not all of the dialogue has been converted into song in the first place. This strengthens the argument that *Groundhog Day* was not in its ideal form as a film, as a musical's traditional runtime allows for a greater examination of characters and themes.

The next section attempts to locate the differences between the compositions of the two versions of *Groundhog Day*, especially focusing on allocation for different plot points in the story. It will take a look at where have the songs been implanted and which sections of the film have been expanded or diminished, and attempts to locate reasons behind these changes especially by consulting musical theatre tradition.

3.4.1 Composition and the Purpose of Songs

Without music, life would be a mistake. (Nietzsche, 1911: 6)

Even though one of the main arguments of the present thesis is that the musical adaptation of *Groundhog Day* is significantly different from the original film, the dialogue in the musical closely resembles that of the film, with a great percentage being near word-for-word borrowings. This makes some sense for Rubin, the writer of the film and the book of the musical, as he might have been hesitant to make changes to a working screenplay. This could partly prevent a knowing audience to confuse themselves with over-abundant oscillation, or perhaps allow an unknowing audience to experience parts of the story similarly to its original audience. It could also stem from the fact that the parts that have remained as dialogue in the musical consist heavily of jokes, reusing many that appeared in the film as is. However, the wording has been changed in some instances and in others there have been more layers added to a joke. The musical also adds dozens of small gags that did not appear in the film. The reason might be to ensure easy laughs from the audience throughout, helping the musical's classification as a comedy. Although a comedy by classification, *Groundhog Day* the film does not employ many actual jokes to elicit laughter, and this is something the adapters seem to have taken into account.

The entire first act of the musical resembles the first act of the film almost scene-for-scene. This is evident from Tables 2 and 3 below, which highlight the sameness between the scenes in the film and the musical. What is of note, however, is how the story has been allocated in terms of songs. As noted earlier, the two types of song we might expect to find in *Groundhog Day the Musical* are plot-advancing and character developing (Coleman, 2017: 586).

FILM	Scene no.	MUSICAL	SONG
Phil's weather forecast	1	Phil's weather forecast	
Drive to Punxsutawney	2	Drive to Punxsutawney	
			"There Will Be Sun"
Phil wakes on day 1, hotel room	3	Phil wakes on day 1, hotel room	"Day One"
At the bed-and-breakfast	4	At the bed-and-breakfast	
On way to Gobbler's Knob	5	On way to Gobbler's Knob	"Day One" cont.
Gobbler's Knob, broadcast	6	Gobbler's Knob, broadcast	
Groundhog's prognostication	7	Groundhog's prognostication	"Day One" cont.
End of broadcast	8	End of broadcast	
Trying to leave Punxsutawney	9	At the diner	"Day One" cont.
On the road, at the gas station	10	Trying to leave Punxsutawney	
At the bar	11	At the bar	"Day One" cont.
At the bed-and-breakfast	12		
Phil wakes on day 2, hotel room	13	Phil wakes on day 2, hotel room	"Day Two"
At the bed-and-breakfast	14	At the bed-and-breakfast	
On way to Gobbler's Knob	15	On way to Gobbler's Knob	"Day Two" cont.
Gobbler's Knob, broadcast	16	Gobbler's Knob, broadcast	
Groundhog's prognostication	17	At the diner	"Day Two" cont.
At the hotel room	18		
Phil wakes on day 3, hotel room	19	Phil wakes on day 3, hotel room	"Day Three"
At the bed-and-breakfast	20	At the bed-and-breakfast	"Day Three" cont.
On way to Gobbler's Knob	21	On way to Gobbler's Knob	"Day Three" cont.
Gobbler's Knob	22		
At the diner	23		

Table 2. Comparison of the composition of the first three days as portrayed in both the film and the musical.

Table 2 gives us an example of how the songs have been composed in the first act. "Day One" and

“Day Two” are interspersed with dialogue-based scenes with no accompaniment, while “Day Three” plays all the way through underneath the dialogue. The first three days are the only clear examples of separate days in both versions, as the further along the story goes, the vaguer the differences between the separate days also become. Notice the plot-advancing purpose of the songs. Out of all the songs in the first act, “There Will Be Sun” is the only example of a song completely superfluous to the story. Its only possible purpose regarding the plot is that it informs the audience of Phil and Larry’s arrival at Punxsutawney, but the more reasonable explanation is that it introduces us to the company. It could be considered part of the old musical tradition to open the show with a number with the whole company present (McMillin: 2006: 78–79), and thus it is not out of the ordinary that *Groundhog Day the Musical* would employ this tactic to set up this theme of townsfolk focus, instead of the plot. Although it is preceded by Phil’s weather forecast before he departs for Punxsutawney, “There Will Be Sun” is the first instance where singing occurs. By having the townsfolk sing the first song, the musical establishes them as a major part of the retelling. During the song, all of the members in the town ensemble step into the spotlight on the revolving stage. Thus, they are introduced noticeably before Rita, who appears only when Phil has made his way onto Gobbler’s Knob during “Day One”. Phil’s cameraman Larry has seen his part greatly diminished in the musical, and at the beginning of the musical features only in audio, and thus he, too, is introduced properly after the townsfolk. In contrast, Rita and Larry both appear in the film’s opening scenes, right after Phil has finished his weather forecast, and the three drive together to Punxsutawney. Although Phil drives with Larry in the musical as well, neither has been introduced in person before the townsfolk, as Phil’s appearance in the weather broadcast at the beginning occurs via television screens.

“Day One” could also be said to follow musical conventions regarding “I want” songs, which explain to the audience the main character’s desires and primary motivations early on in the story, such as “Something’s Coming” from iconic musical duo Bernstein and Sondheim’s *West Side*

Story or “The Wizard and I” from *Wicked* (Laird, 2011: 34, 43). In “The Wizard and I”, for example, which appears as the first solo performance of the musical, Elphaba explains her dreams of becoming a different and a better person. Much in the same way does Phil introduce himself with the first solo of *Groundhog Day the Musical* in “Day One”, but he explicitly expresses his contempt towards Punxsutawney and his desire to leave the town as soon as possible and never return. He belittles the small-town folk and criticises the town for having limited resources, saying that he would rather be “pretty much anywhere else” (l. 36). These thoughts resemble those that Phil provides in the beginning of the film version, but instead of Phil lamenting about the town mostly to Rita, in the musical he does it alone in his hotel room only to the benefit of the audience. As Rita has yet to be introduced in the musical, this “I want” number is a perfect opportunity for the audience to be acquainted with Phil, as Cohen and Rosenhaus explain, “When characters tell us what they want, they also tell us what kind of people they are” (2006: 66).

At the doctor's	24	Seen by all doctors and helpers	“Stuck”
At the psychiatrist's	25		
At the bar	26	At the bar	“Nobody Cares”
Driving with Gus and Ralph	27	Driving with Gus and Ralph	“Nobody Cares”
Stopped by police	28	Stopped by police	
Jailed	29	Jailed (off-stage)	
Phil wakes on day 4, hotel room	30	Phil wakes on day 4, hotel room	“Philandering”
At the bed-and-breakfast	31	At the bed-and-breakfast	“Philandering”
On way to Gobbler's Knob	32	On way to Gobbler's Knob	“Philandering”
At the diner	33	Gobbler's Knob	“Philandering”
Phil wakes on day 5, hotel room	34	Reset, Gobbler's Knob	“Philandering”
Gobbler's Knob	35	One-night stand with Nancy	“Philandering”
One-night stand with Nancy	36	Presumably day 6, at the bank	“Philandering”
Presumably day 6, at the bank	37	Gobbler's Knob, Rita's broadcast	“Philandering”
At the movie theatre	38	Many one-night stands (hotel)	“Philandering”
Presumably day 7, Gobbler's Knob broadcast	39		
At the diner	40	At the diner	“One Day”

At the bar	41	At the bar	
Reset, at the bar	42	Reset, at the bar	
Reset, at the bar	43	Reset, at the bar	“One Day”
At the bakery	44	At the restaurant	
At the restaurant	45	Reset, at the restaurant	
Reset, at the restaurant	46	Reset, at the restaurant	“One Day”
Outside	47	Outside	
Hotel room	48	Reset, outside	“One Day”
Reset, outside	49	Gobbler’s Knob broadcast	“One Day”
Slap, reset, eight times	50	Phil wakes on day n , hotel room	“One Day”
Outside, walking back to hotel	51		

Table 3. Comparison of the composition of the rest of Act I (in the musical).

As seen from Table 5, after the first three days, Phil seeks help for his condition, and sees a doctor and a psychiatrist in the film. At this point in the musical a song chronicles the entire process, but adds many layers to the situation. The song, “Stuck”, is the first instance in the musical where a plot point has been expanded with a song. In the film, this scene lasts one minute and 15 seconds, and features only two professionals to help Phil. The corresponding song is three minutes and 34 seconds long and features six helpers – thus has three times more allocation in terms of story. The reason might be that the scene had untapped potential in terms of humour. “Stuck” is a ‘comedy song’ that follows in the tradition of “Adelaide’s Lament” (*Guys and Dolls*) and “Gee, Officer Krupke” (*West Side Story*) and many others, as a song designed to make the audience laugh (Cohen and Rosenhaus 2006: 94–95). The helpers – a healer, a naturopath, a pharmacologist, a scientologist, an AA spokesperson, and a priest – offer Phil unhelpful advice and treatments, while singing that they have no clue about what they are doing. The song is full of small jokes not found in the film, and its primary role in the musical is rather clearly to add to the humour. There is a plot significance, though, to be considered. The musical wants to better convey that Phil has tried everything to release himself from the loop. The equivalent scene in the film happens during one

day, but we can reasonably expect Phil to have consulted the specialists in the musical over several days, even though they appear simultaneously.

The final remedy offered to Phil is alcohol, and thus the scene changes to the bar with habitual drunkards Gus and Ralph. The scene is slightly extended but similar to that in the film, and it has been given at least similar emphasis in terms of allocation. This is likely part of the reason why Gus and Ralph have been allocated their own song, even though it appears very soon after a rather large ensemble number in “Stuck”, and a larger portion of dialogue could perhaps be expected to come in between. The duo appear in the film for a continuous five minutes, which is a considerable amount; the only other supporting character with equivalent focus is Nancy, who also has her own song in the musical. Ned Ryerson could be regarded as having similar focus, but his parts are non-continuous. Gus and Ralph’s song “Nobody Cares” is a continuation of a joke which appears with almost the exact wording in both versions. In the film the exchange goes as follows:

PHIL:

What would you do if you were stuck in one place, and every day was exactly the same, and nothing that you did mattered?

RALPH:

That about sums it up for me.

In the musical, Ralph does not reply in these words, but Gus begins singing “Nobody Cares”, which recounts a typical day for the tandem, as they wake up and head to the bar and drink. The song is thus trifold in its meaning: it introduces two major supporting characters, advances the plot, and also emphasises Gus and Ralph’s connection to Phil. Their predicament is not dissimilar: they are stuck living in Punxsutawney and every day is exactly the same. This might later help Phil come to terms with living with his own predicament, as he realises that no matter what he does with his repeated day, enjoying it is up to him. During “Nobody Cares”, Phil realises that he can do whatever he wants with no consequences, including driving on the train tracks being chased by police. Another explanation for why Gus and Ralph are allocated such a long musical performance is that during the chase scene with the police, the film also has music. The film features background music

sparingly, and the chase is one of the few scenes to have its own suspenseful, chase-appropriate score, not dissimilar in purpose to that which plays within “Nobody Cares”.

The first act ends in “One Day”, a large ensemble performance. This follows a book musical tradition where a song concludes each act (Cohen and Rosenhaus, 2006: 10), but as *Groundhog Day the Musical* has songs throughout, we might reasonably expect a song to conclude an act. It is, however, customary in the musical tradition that the finale of an act builds up to an ensemble performance, a trick utilised especially by successful rock musicals, such as *Hair* (1968) and *Rent* (1996) (McMillin, 2006: 78–79). This is also prevalent in one of the most successful musicals of all time, *Les Misérables*, with “One Day More!” and the reprise of “Do You Hear the People Sing?” finishing Acts I and II, respectively, with large buildups to an ensemble finish. *Groundhog Day the Musical* is no exception in this regard. “One Day”, the end of Act I, moves from Rita’s solo performance to a part by Phil, finally ending with the whole company taking part. The end of Act II and the finale of the musical, “Seeing You”, also moves from an introspective Phil’s solo to a duet with Rita, the company joining as the song progresses. All of this suggests that, especially regarding the end of Act I, the adaptation has been aware of this tradition at least to some extent.

Minchin has managed to instill a great deal of exposition, character development, and emotional anticipation in “One Day”. In the song, not only does Phil sing of being trapped in his one day and laments why it had to be this specific one, he also sings how one day is not enough time to make someone fall in love with you. Rita, in turn, sings of “one day” in a potential future sense, hoping that one day her dream man will appear, but she will not be idly waiting for him. The townsfolk also feature prominently in the song, singing of the problems they face, hoping to one day correct them. Therefore, not only is there three separate meanings attached to this one phrase – at times sung simultaneously or in succession – the song also builds sympathy towards the townsfolk, leading to an emotional payoff later when Phil fixes the issues in their lives. Because of this meaning overlap, it could also be suggested that Phil reaches his profound change of character

only when his fixation with his “one day” takes the form of Rita’s or the townsfolk’s “one day”, culminating when that one day finally arrives.

As can be seen from Tables 2 and 3, the composition of the film and the musical is very similar in Act I, while story allocation has its differences, most notably in expanding the doctor’s visit to better portray Phil’s struggles to find a remedy. Act II is noticeably less straightforward, beginning with “Playing Nancy”, discussed in detail earlier in this thesis. Act II could be expected to begin with a large ensemble number, as in musicals such as *Phantom of the Opera* (with “Masquerade”), or *Anastasia* (with “Paris Holds the Key to Your Heart”). “Playing Nancy”, however, follows closer in the footsteps of “On My Own” from *Les Misérables*, for example, as both numbers begin the second act with a solemn solo by a female supporting character. In *Les Misérables* the song seems much more plot-motivated, however, as Nancy’s song is pure character development, as discussed in Chapter 2 and Section 3.3. This is highly unusual, as McMillin says that even in those rare occasions that a character-developing song seems to not have a plot-related significance, it is usually reiterated in the book, and there might be a sense of the plot having advanced (2008: 42). “Playing Nancy” seemingly has no plot-related significance. This means that as *Groundhog Day the Musical* has in many ways been adapted in the footsteps of other musicals, this type of sudden deviation from traditional expectations generates a stronger response from the audience than perhaps a musical that does not follow tradition at all. From an adaptation point of view, this is arguably one of the most effective ways to change the audience’s expectations of what Act II in *Groundhog Day the Musical* would be. As most of the thematic symbolism is found in Act II, meaning that, as a whole, it has much more depth than Act I, this type of change is appropriate. While Act I could be said to be very similar to the film in terms of plot and is also rather light-hearted, built upon jokes and Phil’s arrogance, Act II takes more liberties from the source to build its themes and is comparatively dark, as it deals with depression and death and introspection. Although the film is also written in acts, the changes between the acts are much less noticeable, as a

musical is traditionally constructed in two entirely separate acts with an intermission in between. Therefore, a drastic change in tone is much more pertinent to a musical, which is likely part of the reason it has been more heavily emphasised in the musical adaptation.

In musical tradition, the so-called “eleven o’clock” number appears as the musical’s penultimate song, which “heighten[s] the energy level or dramatic interest in the second act” (Laird, 2011: 34). Usually sung by the principal characters, its purpose is to build the show into an emotional climax before the finale, employed in many musicals by legendary writers Rodgers and Hammerstein and Stephen Sondheim, for example (Laird, 2011; Wells 2022). Getting its name from a time when shows started at around 8:30 p.m. and the emotional climax of a musical literally happened around eleven o’clock (Rimalower, 2014), some “eleven o’clock” numbers are energetic, such as “Revolting Children” from Minchin’s own *Matilda the Musical* (2010), and some are solemn, such as “Memory” from Andrew Lloyd Webber’s *Cats* (1981). Cohen and Rosenhaus also state that songs may be featured at “crucial points in the story – that is, at emotional high points” (2006: 10). These are the reasons why “Night Will Come”, sung by Ned Ryerson, appears as the “eleven o’clock” number during the most pivotal moment of Phil’s character arc. When he is unable to save the old homeless man, in both the film and the musical, Phil finally comes to terms with life and death, as he realises that life is fragile and that he cannot save everyone. Followed only by the final day, which releases Phil from the loop, this is arguably the most significant emotional high point in the story, heightened further still by Ned’s melancholic song about not taking life for granted. It is unusual that a minor character has been allocated such a climactic song, and it might be expected that Phil himself would have the song. The reason why Ned is the character singing it is subjected to more analysis in Section 3.4.4.

This section demonstrated that while the story is similar in the adaptation, certain parts have seen changes in allocation, and certain traditions in terms of composition have been followed while others arguably deviated from. The principal reasons for these changes come from accomplishing

more profound character development and narrative depth. However, one of the major differences between the two versions has only been alluded to and is yet to be analysed properly – that is, the role of the townsfolk.

3.4.2 Townsfolk and Further Focal Point Shifts

Apart from Nancy, Ned, Gus, and Ralph, there are many other named and unnamed members of the townsfolk, who in the musical appear as part of the company. Using the parameters as discussed in Section 3.3, the townsfolk (not including the characters listed) are in the film for a considerable 47 minutes; meaning that even if not in focus, they appear in many scenes in the background. This suggests that they must feature prominently in the background in the musical as well. However, in the musical, the focus on the townsfolk has noticeably increased, likely stemming from the fact that there is no mediating camera and the ‘background’ does not technically exist, as the onus is on the audience member themselves to focus on the relevant character at any given time. This does not explain, however, the extent to which the townsfolk have been elevated. They have a considerable amount of dialogue not present in the film, and during many dancing sequences portraying Phil’s journey to Gobbler’s Knob, the company surrounds Phil as if to push him out of focus, giving the townsfolk more prominence.

When considering the role of the townsfolk further, more evidence of the increased focus on them may be found. As already mentioned, “There Will Be Sun”, the opening song of the musical, introduces us to the townsfolk. Cohen and Rosenhaus note that traditionally “the audience is exposed as soon as possible not only to the main characters, but also to the central theme of the show and the central concept, if there is one” (2006: 30). This means that it can be claimed that the townsfolk are a central element in the musical, as they are technically introduced first, well before Rita, for example, and even before Phil physically takes the stage. The reason for the shift in focus is likely motivated by the story itself, as in the end of the story Phil has fallen in love with the town

and its folk, and decides he wants to stay. However, in the film, although we know that Phil falls in love with the townsfolk, the audience does not necessarily fall in love with them. The audience is only subjected to Phil's point of view, and thus lives the story through Phil, and not through their own emotional attachment. When Phil finally comes to help the town in every way he can, the audience only sees the resolution of each action. In the musical, the townsfolk and their individual problems are introduced separately, by the townsfolk themselves, meaning the audience comes to know which sort of things each of them desire. When their problems are rectified by Phil at the end, the audience sympathises with them much more, adding to the emotional content of the musical. Furthermore, "There Will Be Sun" also sets up the premise for the resolution of the story:

[TOWNSFOLK:]

9 Tomorrow spring will come and then
10 There will be blue skies, my friend
11 Bright eyes and laughter
12 Tomorrow there will be sun
13 But if not tomorrow, perhaps the day after

The townsfolk seem to live one day at a time, not concerned about when the sun will shine again, as they know it will come in due time. After countless Groundhog Days, Phil wakes up with Rita at the bed-and-breakfast on February 3rd. As they walk outside together, the sun is shining, and Phil's remark concludes the musical: "Look at that sun".

When examining the townsfolk even further, *Groundhog Day the Musical* could perhaps also be said to take inspiration from *Carousel* (1945), as the song "This Was a Real Nice Clambake" in that musical portrays the small-town folk contently celebrating a picnic:

[COMPANY:]

1 This was a real nice clambake,
2 We're mighty glad we came
3 The vittles we et
4 Were good, you bet
5 The company was the same
6 Our hearts are warm, our bellies are full
7 And we are feeling prime
8 This was a real nice clambake
9 And we all had a real good time

McMillin explains that *Carousel* perfected this kind of ensemble number, where “groups of fellow citizens get together and demonstrate through singing and dancing that a community spirit prevails” (2006: 81). This closely resembles what the townsfolk in *Groundhog Day the Musical* are singing during Groundhog Day, in “Day One”. This cheerfulness of the townsfolk is also emphasised when contrasted by Phil, as he sings his own version of the same verse, at times simultaneously on top:

[TOWNSFOLK:]	[PHIL:]
71 Punxsutawney	Punxsutawney
72 Is a little town	
73 With a heart as big as any town	
74 As any small town	There’s nothing more depressing than
75 In the USA	Small town, U.S.A
76 And there is no town greater than	And there is no town smaller than
77 Punxsutawney on Groundhog Day	Punxsutawney on Groundhog Day

As this happens in the beginning of the musical, literally during “Day One”, the premise is still being developed, and these verses help build both the townsfolk’s heightened role and Phil’s dismissive and narcissistic character. According to IBDb, the song is a combination of “Small Town, U.S.A” and “February 2nd/There Will Be Sun”. Phil’s contempt for the small town of Punxsutawney and the entire Groundhog Day celebration is the driving theme in “Small Town, U.S.A”, before it is, in turn, contrasted by Rita in “February 2nd” (sung on top of the company singing “There Will Be Sun”), as she ends her part with sympathy towards the townsfolk, saying “it’s a sweet town and / people are kind” (l. 7–8).

The townsfolk has thus seen a great increase in their importance to the story, most likely because the adaptation wanted to create a stronger emotional attachment for the audience, leading to a more satisfying payoff in the end. Simply put, it is arguably more believable in the musical adaptation that Phil would fall in love with the town and the townsfolk for their own sake.

3.4.3 Song Lyrics as an Adaptation Tool

Apart from showing us which sections of the original story have been diminished or expanded upon, the songs also help the audience understand different themes of the story. “Playing Nancy”

and “If I Had My Time Again” could even be considered through subjunctive dramaturgy. ‘Subjunctive dramaturgy’ is Zachary Dorsey’s term for when musical theatre takes advantage of the subjunctive mood to instill emotional content and strengthen audience attachment in a musical (2016: 195–198). This tactic is employed, for example, in “If I Were a Rich Man” from *Fiddler on the Roof* (1964), where Tevye, portrayed as a dreamer, has “hopefulness and doubt in [his] subjunctive, as well as confidence and vulnerability” (2016: 197). Much in the same way “If I Had My Time Again” portrays Rita as a dreamer, singing what she would do if she were to be bestowed with infinite time. This has also been contrasted in the song by Phil singing about the things that he has been doing with his infinite time. Dorsey argues that subjunctivity in theatre has existed since “audiences were willing to imaginatively ‘go there’ in pursuit of a story that they knew was not truly unfolding in reality in front of them” (2016: 199). The subjunctive helps establish doubt and dream, and the “what if” (2016: 199). In this manner, we could also consider “Playing Nancy” as subjunctive, as Nancy sings with the sentiment of “what if I were not Nancy” or even “what if the world was different” pertaining to the alluded sexism as discussed in Section 3.3.

The writing itself can thus have many different aspects that strengthen the perception of a character. The lyrics should also then reflect the intelligence of the characters, if it is pertinent to the story, as it is in *Groundhog Day the Musical*, where it is imperative that Rita is portrayed as intelligent, while Phil should be intelligent to the point that it is believable that he can seduce Rita. The language is one of the most useful tools in this regard. In *My Fair Lady* (1956), for example, Henry Higgins’ character speaks with correct grammar and an extensive vocabulary to portray his educatedness, while Eliza Doolittle’s speech is the opposite, showing a lack of education (Cohen and Rosenhaus, 2006: 87).

Furthermore, Gardner introduced the theory of multiple intelligences in the 1980s, establishing a framework for a multifaceted view of intelligence, according to which cognitive competence is comprised of different sets of abilities and talents (Gardner, 2006: 6). Based on the

theory, one of the components of intelligence is linguistic intelligence. Simply put, a high linguistic intelligence predicts a potent ability to use and understand language. Thus, when attempting to portray a character's intelligence through song lyrics, one might thus be driven to employ more complex language, as it should be perceived as an indicator of a character's cognitive acuity, especially when contrasted with characters who lack the same ability – which it is in *Groundhog Day the Musical*. Lyrics are perhaps the only tool available for a songwriter to convey such information. Gardner speaks also of musical intelligence (2006: 8–9), but this might not be something an adapter could employ, as the audience of a musical will expect the characters to sing, for example, not to convey how well they can sing, but to convey their thoughts and emotions. A high musical ability might then not have the same effect on an audience as the objectively more tangible aspect of language. Furthermore, Robert Sternberg claims that the broadness of one's vocabulary could be a great indicator of one's intelligence (1987: 90).

[I]f one wants a quick and not-too-dirty measure of a person's psychometrically measured intelligence, and thus has time to give just one brief test of it, vocabulary is generally the best predictor of overall score on a psychometric IQ test. (Sternberg, in McKeown and Curtis, 1987: 90)

Therefore, linguistic competence should be an effective tool for a lyricist to portray a character's intelligence, but naturally it might necessitate a contrasting character of lower linguistic prowess to establish the intellectual hierarchy. Primary examples from Phil's introductory part in "Day One" and Gus and Ralph's "Nobody Cares" give credence to this hypothesis. Consider the complexity of Phil's vocabulary in this stanza:

[PHIL:]
11 I mean, what's not to like in a quaint little place like this
12 Who doesn't dig a crocheted pillowcase like this?
13 Watercolors of bucolic vistas
14 Painted by octogenarian spinsters

The wording on lines 13 and 14, for example, illustrates Phil's supposed learnedness while also being an indicator of his pompousness, as his word choices are arguably over-complicated and easily substituted to more common words. This suggests linguistic acuity as he is in command of an

extensive vocabulary. This can be contrasted with Gus in “Nobody Cares”, where the less intelligent drunkard demonstrates a lack of vocabulary:

[GUS:]

- 1 I wake up hungover, I go to bed smashed
- 2 Like an alcoholic hamster
- 3 On one of them little wheely things

On line 3 it is evident that Gus cannot find the exact words to illustrate his point, and is thus presented as having an inadequate vocabulary, or at least having less command over his vocabulary.

The songs selected for this analysis are the introductory songs for each character or pair of characters in the case of Gus and Ralph, as they are used to build the audience’s first impressions of the characters and are thus the strongest indicators of the characters’ personality or intelligence. The songs thus are Phil’s solo parts within the song “Day One”, Rita’s solo parts within the song “One Day”, and Gus and Ralph’s designated song “Nobody Cares”. Although not the first lyrics sung by Rita, “One Day” is the first instance of a long solo part sung by the character, and its intention is specifically to develop the character.

To prove that there is evidence of lyricist Minchin using linguistic competence to create separation between the intellectual hierarchy of the characters in *Groundhog Day the Musical*, a complexity coefficient was devised by combining word and rhyming frequency and complexity. Word complexity here simply refers to the number of unique words uttered by a character in a particular song. The higher the number, the larger we can claim a character’s vocabulary is. Rhyme complexity, in turn, was calculated by comparing the number of unique rhymes within a song to the total number of lines. As Cohen and Rosenhaus note, “Sondheim has also observed that the more rhymes a song has, and the more elaborate and dense the rhymes, the more educated the character singing seems to be” (2006: 109). Unique rhymes were established by first locating all rhymes (together with the other poetic devices as listed below) within a song, and then removing the ones which repeat or use the same words as the two rhyming counterparts. Thus, rhymes which utilised the same word with the same semantic meaning (e.g. “One day, some day” on line 28 in Rita’s solo

within the song “One Day”) are thus not considered unique even in their first appearance, as it is not linguistically skillful to rhyme a word with the same word. Instances where a word reappears but with a different rhyming counterpart, however, were counted towards this total (e.g. “One day, they say” on line 36 in the same song). Even though ‘day’ is no longer a unique word or a unique rhyming component in the second instance, it can still be counted as a unique rhyme.

Traditionally, rhymes are considered to be located at the ends of the lines in a poem or song, with two words being said to rhyme if their main stressed vowel and the following consonants are similar but word-initial consonants are different (Fraser, 2017: 59). Fraser sets the parameters for different types of poetic devices as well, utilised in the forthcoming analysis:

- (1) Alliteration: *Consonant-Vowel-Consonant*. Great, *grow*.
- (2) Assonance. *Consonant-Vowel- Consonant*. Great, *fail*.
- (3) Consonance. *Consonant-Vowel-Consonant*. Great, *meat*.
- (4) Reverse rhyme. *Consonant-Vowel-Consonant*. Great, *graze*.
- (5) Pararhyme. *Consonant-Vowel-Consonant*. Great, *groat*.
- (6) Rhyme proper. *Consonant-Vowel-Consonant*. Great, *bait*.

(Fraser, 2017: 61)

Cohen and Rosenhaus claim that only one type of rhyme exists in musical theatre, the perfect rhyme, and all the other devices are called *identities* or *near-rhymes* (2006: 109–10). Their purposes, however, strongly overlap with the definitions given by Fraser. For the sake of simplicity, all of the above are referred to as rhymes in the analysis below.

These calculations resulted in two numbers. The first, unique words per line, shows us how many unique words, on average, appear on each line of the song. The second number, unique rhymes per line, is the same but with rhymes. By multiplying these together, the result is a single number which predicts how many absolutely unique elements appear on a per-line basis. This was dubbed the ‘complexity coefficient’, and it yields a rudimentary understanding of a character’s linguistic competence and the extent of their vocabulary. This coefficient was specifically created to

showcase the differences between the tandem of Gus and Ralph, and Rita, the two simplest characters against the most complex. Rita is also compared to Phil in this respect, to highlight the intellectual hierarchy between the two main characters, while the numbers could also be used to indicate their compatibility.

	LINES	WORDS (UNIQUE)	UNIQUE W/LINE	UNIQUE RHYMES	UNIQUE R/LINE	COMPLEXITY
Rita (“One Day”)	118	642 (47,0%)	2,56	85,3%	0,69	1,77
Phil (“Day One”)	71	441 (45,60%)	2,83	66,0%	0,60	1,71
Gus/Ralph (“Nobody Cares”)	88	520 (36,7%)	2,17	55,5%	0,34	0,74

Table 4. Complexity of language use by Rita, Phil, and Gus and Ralph.

Table 4 above shows the results of the calculations. Gus and Ralph exhibit much less complex language in terms of rhyming and vocabulary than do Rita and Phil in the songs selected for this analysis. This suggests that Gus and Ralph are deliberately written to sound uneducated. The duo also creates a contrast to Rita and Phil, which helps the audience perceive the main characters as intelligent. Rita uses the most unique elements and could therefore be considered the most linguistically competent and by extension intelligent. Almost half of all the words sung by Rita in her solo parts during “One Day” are unique, non-recurring words, suggesting a vast vocabulary. She also uses twice as many non-recurring rhymes as Gus and Ralph. Phil is not far behind Rita, however, and even uses the most unique words per line, but only 66 percent of his rhymes are unique. According to the complexity coefficient, which predicts the overall linguistic ability, Phil and Rita are very close to each other, which could surreptitiously suggest their compatibility. Even if not explicitly noticeable by the audience, this could help in making the story’s resolution believable — that is when Phil is finally successful in courting Rita and they fall in love. These songs

nevertheless grant a preliminary understanding of the intellectual hierarchy between the characters, with Rita portrayed as the most intelligent, and gives credence to the hypothesis that lyrics can be used to further establish a character's cleverness.

If we take rhyming to be a sign of intelligence in general, the above analysis arguably strengthens *Groundhog Day the Musical's* claim to the first of the Kenrick's three points of a great musical, intelligence, especially when taking into account the type of complex rhyme that Minchin employs. For the purposes of this analysis, a definition of a complex rhyme is now considered. A complex rhyme in this analysis is one which diverges from a simple end-of-the-line rhyme scheme, and one which does not employ the same word (unless semantically different) as two rhyming counterparts.

[RITA:]

16 While their knights spend their nights at a bar
17 Or at a ball with some harlot

The excerpt above is an example of a complex rhyme as per the parameters discussed above. Minchin rhymes the word "bar" (l. 16) with a reverse rhyme "harlot" (l. 17). However, by using the word "ball" (l. 17), Minchin uses alliteration to connect it to its rhyming counterpart "bar", but creates a disconnect within the line, as "ball" is at most an eye-rhyme and does not vocally rhyme with "harlot", with different consonant and vowel sounds employed by the words. In this manner he manages to keep the overall rhyme scheme intact but raise the complexity of the verse. Let us consider another example, from Phil's solo performance, "Hope":

[PHIL:]

21 A An **everlasting** farcical **disaster**
22 B You **play** your **part**
23 B You **march** the **march**
24 C You don't **complain**
25 C You find a **way**
26 C Another **day**
27 D Surrounded by a **cast** of **half-wit bastards**
28 C Grinning **masks** amidst the **grey**

29	C	Yet you stay sane
30	C	And through the pain
31	D	The frozen pane of glass
32	D	You strain to cast
33	E	Your gaze upon the path you have to tread
34	E	And in your head that leaden dread
35	F	The fucking roads have all been trod
36	F	And there's no way and there's no God
37	G	And god oh god this goddamn weather
38	G	Will last forever

The second verse from “Hope” as seen above helps further illustrate the complexity of the rhymes employed by lyricist Minchin. The rhyme scheme pertaining only to the endings of each line is marked as ABCD, et cetera. The words which are supposed to rhyme with each other are colour-coded to help illustrate the complexity of the rhyming scheme when taking all rhyming devices into account. Even though some recognisable rhyme schemes can be found, when considering only the endings of each line, Minchin uses the literary devices within lines as well. In this stanza there are 27 rhyming words, and, using the definition of complex rhyme as discussed above, as many as 18 of them can be considered complex, if we include “play your part” (l. 22) and “march the march” (l. 23) as complex. The former only uses the plosive at the beginning of the word to create a rather weak alliteration, and the latter utilises semantically similar words. Furthermore, as both are established expressions, it is not as simple to determine whether it is reasonable to split them in terms of rhyming in the first place. The more obvious complex rhymes include, for example, “An everlasting farcical disaster” (l. 21), where the assonance is only present within the line itself, and “Your gaze upon the path you have to dread” (l. 33), where two previously-introduced rhymes precede a line-concluding new rhyme for the overall scheme. The complex rhymes do not include, for example, “Another day” (l. 26), which is part of the previously introduced rhyme on lines 24 and 25, or the standard rhyming endings on lines 37–38. An interesting observation about this stanza is how far away some of the rhymes are from their rhyming counterparts, such as “glass” (l. 31), for example. Line 31 is the first time it is in rhyming position for its assonance counterpart on line 27, with a completely different rhyme appearing in between a noticeable four times. This

linguistic trickery is arguably a sign of clever writing, and thus it can be used to convey intelligence in a character and the musical as a whole. As *Groundhog Day* was already a rather intellectually-charged film, with its existentialist themes and supposed allusions to Nietzsche, this use of language is a tool available for the adapter to transfer that cleverness to the musical so that the songs are able to reflect the intellectuality of the story as a whole. This means that the songs are not solely emotionally-loaded, which could have potentially created a disconnect between the themes and the tones of the story.

3.4.4 Emotional Content and Lyrical Payoff

The musical's penultimate song "Night Will Come", the so-called "eleven o'clock" number, is another example of using lyrics to strengthen themes vaguely-included in the film to create depth in the characters and to deepen the meaning of the story in the musical. It is an example of additional emotional content brought to the musical, doing its part to satisfy Kenrick's three requisites of a great musical, the second of which is "emotional content" (2008: 16). The song is sung by Ned Ryerson, a minor character in the film, whose appearances and speaking lines only happen when he sees Phil on his way to Gobbler's Knob, and once at the banquet before the dance and the bachelor auction during the final day. Ned is an old school mate of Phil's, now selling insurance. These are all of the things we learn about Ned in the film. He is almost a pure comic relief character, with his own catchphrase "Bing!", while appearing in the film seemingly with the sole purpose to annoy Phil. When we first see Ned, it becomes clear that seeing him will be very inconvenient for Phil, because he engages Phil in awkward conversation that continues for an extended period of time, despite Phil's attempts to move along. We learn that one day Phil punches Ned so as not to waste time on the street, and we might reasonably assume this happens most days, as we see it being effective. In the end of the film, when Phil is coming to terms with his predicament and begins making amends with the townsfolk, he also turns the tables on Ned, suddenly showing affection for

him. Phil gives Ned a long hug, appearing overly-attached. However, it seems that Phil is purposefully extreme to drive Ned away by his own volition, and it works, as Ned hastily runs away.

Although it happens after Phil has already began changing his ways, we may disregard the fact that Phil appears purposefully sarcastic in his sudden attachment to Ned, as it does not happen on the final day, which releases Phil from the time loop. This is an important distinction to make, as it would be counterintuitive for the plot to depict Phil as not having fundamentally changed his ways at the very end, or otherwise it would leave Phil's release from the loop completely unexplained, and thus rather meaningless.

Ned appears in the film only six times, for a total of six minutes. Ned is seen on the street five times greeting Phil on his way to Gobbler's Knob. By the fourth interaction, we see Phil punch Ned. Ned returns on the final day, joyous as ever, as Phil has, off-camera, purchased an extensive selection of insurance policies from him. Obviously, this is the actual good deed from Phil, which compares with what he did for the other townsfolk during that same day. These six interactions are the extent to which the film takes Ned's character arc, and he does not appear in any other scenes even in the background.

In the musical, Ned naturally appears as part of the company. His role is the same: Phil and Ned greet briefly many times as Phil is on his way to Gobbler's Knob, and the musical has also retained some of the nuances of the interactions in the film, such as punching Ned to avoid the conversation. He uses the same catchphrase as the film, "Bing!", but he also has his own jingle to sell insurance (no line numbers as it is a part of a dialogical exchange in this instance):

NED:
You gotta love life
You gotta love life
You gotta love life
Insurance

This jingle is written in such a way that the final line becomes a punchline, as it is deliberately

emphasised in a humorous exchange between Phil and Ned. The jingle reappears in Ned's solo song "Night Will Come" (which alone signals that his character has been expanded), where it arguably becomes a major theme builder in the musical. The scene in the musical equivalent to the long hug scene in the film happens similarly when Phil has begun changing his ways. He punches Ned, but accidentally, claiming a bad habit, and apologising profusely. This exchange already seems much more sincere than the one in the film. Instead of the long hug, Phil finds out about Ned's family, and we learn that his wife has passed away. Not long after, we see Phil trying to save the old homeless man, and the mood changes noticeably, as Ned sings on top of this scene, his song a dark contemplation on death. Consider the following excerpt:

[NED:]
9 On and on and on, you stumble on
10 Towards the sinking sun
11 Turn a blind eye, fight or run
12 Rest assured, the night will come

Ned sings here of the inevitability of death, saying no matter what we do, "the night will come" (l. 12). This song overlays Phil's failing attempts to save the old man, one of the deciding moments in both the film and the musical, followed only by the final day, when Phil has arguably achieved true change of character. These two connecting storylines create an intense amount of additional emotion to a scene that was already highly emotional in the film. It greatly develops the depth of Ned, who up until this point has not been much more than a target for humour, and the melancholic song both in its lyrics and music heightens the emotional impact of the scene. This change in mood is further highlighted by the reappearance of Ned's insurance jingle. As the audience has become familiar with it through a couple of previous interactions, and lyricist Minchin can reasonably expect them to know its wording, he is able to subvert the audience's expectations with his lyrics in "Night Will Come", to strengthen Ned's character's underlying motivation. The jingle features as the last lines of Ned's solo, concluding as follows:

[NED:]
39 As for that, the rest is just a test of your endurance

40 You gotta love life
41 You gotta love life
42 You gotta love life

Minchin plants an expectation into the audience's mind on line 39, concluding strongly with the word 'endurance', a word which the audience is now expecting to rhyme with 'insurance', as in the jingle, with the punchline set up to appear on line 43. However, it never occurs, and the humorous jingle ending transforms into a thoughtful pondering about life, as we see Ned directly address Phil. This lyrical payoff, or perhaps anti-payoff, built up through many previous encounters with Ned throughout, is one of the strongest in the entire musical, and something that the film could never have achieved. Followed only by the final day, this scene gives credence to the idea that Phil's true change of character only happens after he fails to save the old homeless man, thus enjoying a newfound appreciation for life. However, only in the musical is it possible to attribute any of that appreciation to Ned. Furthermore, this might also help explain why Ned is perpetually joyful, in both the film and the musical, as he tries his best to enjoy his life even in the face of the darkness left by the departure of his wife.

It should further be highlighted that in the film Ned's character has nothing else but comic relief properties, simply being the target of jokes, and the depth and profoundness of the character are only present in the musical. The humour is, of course, a connecting factor between the two versions of Ned, considering the musical has retained Ned's original catchphrase, as well as other aspects of Phil and Ned's interaction, including Phil punching Ned, purposefully or accidentally. Phil himself also calls the punch a habit in the musical, which is one reason we may claim it is a daily occurrence – something we never learn in the film. "Night Will Come" is thus an exceptional example of how *Groundhog Day the Musical* elevates the significance of the story from that of the film. This juxtaposition between the humour and the darker profoundness could be said to create Hutcheon's oscillation effect between the familiar and the new as discussed earlier in Chapter 2, with the humour being the familiar and the contemplation creating the layer of difference. As we

also noted in Section 3.1, Thomas Leitch claimed regarding David Lean's rewrite of Charles Dickens that it is possible to adapt a story in a way which feels more suitable than the original, at least in terms of the writer's own pedigree (2003: 164). In turn, Hutcheon stated that we should not think of adaptations in terms of fidelity but the autonomy an adaptation can create for itself through creativity (2013: 20–21). These ideas combined are arguably the basis of *Groundhog Day the Musical*, where seemingly nothing has been lost in terms of themes from the original film, but much has been added, thus creating more depth in the story and the characters.

3.5 Courage

This thesis demonstrates that two of the most fundamental elements of a great musical (Kenrick, 2008: 16), intelligence and emotional content, can be found in *Groundhog Day the Musical* in abundance. The third, courage, is still perhaps up for debate. Kenrick explains courage as “the guts to do something in a fresh, new way” (2008: 16). The ambitious task of transforming a story based around one day, with multiple different locations and rapid changes of sets, to the stage seems rather unique in its own right, but there is a case to be made about Phil's integral significance. Perhaps the most daring aspect of *Groundhog Day* is one of its most fundamental: an unlikable main character. Cohen and Rosenhaus explain that, although there are exceptions, traditionally it is vital in musical theatre to introduce the main character and make the audience care about them quickly (2006: 30, 86). *Groundhog Day the Musical* rather makes Phil more unlikable as the first act progresses, and only in the second act is the perception overturned. Never is the audience's attachment to the character in jeopardy, however, because it is done with self-irony. The musical seems unique in that it can afford to play with this aspect, because of the many other themes compensating it. As Cohen and Rosenhaus explain,

If *Carousel*, *Brigadoon*, and *Kiss Me, Kate* still live sixty years later despite their dated qualities, it is because they deal with concerns like love, hate, greed, pomposity, and frustration – human feelings that are always with us. (Cohen and Rosenhaus, 2006: 19)

Groundhog Day the Musical ticks all of those boxes, and then some. It should have reasonably had

a longer tenure on Broadway than its 176 appearances. It seems believable then, that the production was simply too expensive to run. It was perhaps too ambitious. And that, too, takes courage.

4. Conclusion

Adaptation in its simplest form can be thought of as moving from one medium to another, but more recent developments have brought the discourse towards creative and active intertextuality, as some, like Linda Hutcheon, posit that they should be enjoyed *as adaptations*, the audience aware of the rewriting and its transformative effects on the original. However, instead of focusing on comparing an adaptation to its source in terms of fidelity, which measures how faithful an adaptation stays to its source, an adaptation should be examined as an intertextual palimpsest, where the original might be visible but only underneath this new version. Through constantly triggering the audience's perception of what has been changed and what has not, in other words oscillating between difference and likeness, an adaptation should then not aim for fidelity, but for autonomy. Autonomy can be achieved through creative choices that solidify an adaptation as its own original work and not simply a remake of the source. The process is always one of salvaging and appropriation, re-creation, and repetition with variation. *Groundhog Day*, itself a celebration of repetition with variation, has most notably been re-created as a musical, as the musical adaptation adds depth and character development to the story without damaging the original narrative. It does this through intelligent writing, compositional changes in terms of story allocation especially regarding the songs, and shifts in focus regarding the characters. It does not rely on the audience's prior experiences with the film to be successful, and in a sense attempts to distance itself from any comparison, thus making a case for its autonomy.

An adapter must take into account the different sociocultural contexts in which both versions, the original and the adaptation, were or are produced. In the case of *Groundhog Day*, the adapters seem to have been wary of the role of women in the story, on which the musical makes comments in both themes and lyrics. Some themes, such as existentialism, seem to have intensified over time since the release of the film, in no small part because the audience's interpretations have strengthened their significance in the story. This is evident from the film's connection to Nietzsche's

doctrine of eternal recurrence, which was not the original intention of writer Danny Rubin. This theme has arguably been retroactivated in the musical adaptation, in order for its significance to be written “back” into the story. Some themes seem to have been established for practical reasons, such as the increased focus on the townsfolk, as the story’s emotional payoff partly relies on the audience’s emotional attachment to the townsfolk, which was inadequate in the film version.

Someone adapting a film into a musical might be inclined to follow certain musical theater traditions, as *Groundhog Day the Musical* seems to have done, with the musical featuring many aspects employed also by musical theater greats Rodgers and Hammerstein, Bernstein and Sondheim, or Andrew Lloyd Webber, for example. These include the so-called “I want” number for the primary motivation for the main character, the “eleven o’clock” number at the emotional high point of the second act, the ensemble numbers at the ends of acts, and even arguably the so-called “Clambake” number aiming to emphasise townsfolk spirit.

With many themes to play around, *Groundhog Day* lends itself to adaptation in many ways, but perhaps only a musical could have built upon the themes alluded to in the original film. The film’s composition works well as a musical adaptation, with the story transferring to the stage with relatively minor changes, while the adaptation is also able to follow many aspects of musical tradition. One of the strongest advantages the musical has over its film counterpart is its ability to include songs that are multifaceted and can be used to connect many different themes, including character development. The musical could even be said to include subjunctive dramaturgy, using the subjunctive mood in its songs to emphasise uncertainty, hope, and dreaming within a character’s personal motivation. In addition to emotional content, the songs in *Groundhog Day the Musical* also manage to add to the intelligence of the musical, partly due to its awareness of contexts and partly due to the evident existentialist philosophical themes, but also due to the clever lyric writing which manages to portray the characters themselves as intelligent.

As this thesis has attempted to demonstrate, themes present in the musical might have only

been alluded to or not included in the film, and there have been multiple shifts in focus, resulting in deeper character development. Due to the intertextuality of adaptation, a knowing audience familiar with the musical might now attach these themes or meanings to the original film, even though they might not be perceivable or even present when it was first released. As every adaptation lives in an intertextual context, someone adapting *Groundhog Day* after the musical is therefore likely to adapt the intensified themes and shifts in focus, or at the very least be aware of them enough to have to balance them against the film.

Only a musical adaptation could have arguably managed to add depth and character development as effectively as *Groundhog Day the Musical* has done, while also arguably elevating the cultural capital of the story. As noted, the narrative works well as a musical, but the clever staging can maintain surprise from transitions better than a film, and many themes and emotional content could be intensified with the use of music. This suggests that *Groundhog Day* was not in its most suitable form as a film, and why it was adapted as a musical and not as a dialogic play or simply as another film.

Drawing on similar timeless themes as did long-time successes *Carousel*, *West Side Story*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Les Misérables*, and many others, *Groundhog Day the Musical* might have had its place in the same conversation, as it seems to possess many similar components as those utilised by all-time great musicals and lyricists and composers. It proves how difficult it is to stage a Broadway musical for extended periods of time. However, if the film can find success as an adaptation well over twenty years after its conception, maybe the musical could still one day find its time through restaging. As the company sings in “There Will Be Sun”, if it’s not tomorrow, then tomorrow, or tomorrow...

Bibliography

- Alexandrowicz, Conrad. "Dancing the Page: Reflections on Staging Poetic Text." *Studies in Theatre and Performance*, vol. 35, no. 2, 2015, pp. 120–39.
- Actors' Equity Association. "Diversity Report: 2016–2019 in Review." actorsequity.org/news/PR/DandIRReport2020/diversity-and-inclusion-report-2020. Accessed 15 Mar. 2021.
- Aurelius, Marcus. *Meditations*. Translated by Martin Hammond. Penguin Books, 2006.
- Bassnett, Susan. *Translation Studies*. Routledge, 2002.
- "Bechdel Test." *Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary*, Merriam-Webster, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/Bechdel%20Test>. Accessed 22 Apr. 2022.
- Bibbo, Christopher. "Groundhog Day Again? You Be the Judge: Commentary on an Article by Carlos A. Higuera, MD, et al." *The Journal of Bone and Joint Surgery*, vol. 99, no. 9, 2017, p. 48.
- Cartmell, Deborah. *Adaptations in the Sound Era: 1927–37*. Bloomsbury Academic, 2015.
- Cohen, Allen and Steven Rosenhaus. *Writing Musical Theater*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2006.
- Coleman, Bud. "New Horizons: The Musical at the Dawn of the Twenty-first Century". *The Cambridge Companion to the Musical*. Edited by William A. Everett and Paul R. Laird. Cambridge UP, 2017.
- Corrigan, Timothy. "Defining Adaptations." *The Oxford Handbook of Adaptation Studies*. Edited by Thomas Leitch. Oxford UP, 2017.
- Deleuze, Gilles. *Nietzsche and Philosophy*. Translated by Hugh Tomlinson. Continuum, 1983.
- "Dignity Intact." *Taskmaster*, created by Alex Horne, series 5, episode 1, Avalon Television, 2017.
- Dorsey, Zachary. "Big Possibility: *Moscow*, and Musical Theatre's Subjunctive Dramaturgy." *Studies in Musical Theatre*, vol. 10, no. 2, 2016, pp. 195–207.
- Everett, William and Laird, Paul (eds). *Cambridge Companion to the Musical*. Cambridge UP, 2017.

- Faust, Michael. Review of Groundhog Day. *Philosophy Now*, no 93, 2012.
philosophynow.org/issues/93/Groundhog_Day. Accessed 15 Mar. 2019.
- Fraser, G.S. *Metre, Rhyme and Free Verse*. Routledge, 2018.
- Gallagher, Simon. “Just How Many Days Does Bill Murray REALLY Spend Stuck Reliving Groundhog Day?” *WhatCulture.com*, 2 Feb. 2021. whatculture.com/film/just-how-many-days-does-bill-murray-really-spend-stuck-reliving-groundhog-day.
- Gardner, Howard. *Multiple Intelligences: New Horizons*. Basic Books, 2006.
- “Groundhog Day.” *Bechdel Test Movie List*, bechdeltest.com/view/114/groundhog_day. Accessed 22 Apr. 2022.
- Heidegger, Martin. *Nietzsche: Volume II, The Eternal Recurrence of the Same*. Translated by David Farrell Krell. Harper & Row, 1984.
- Hutcheon, Linda. *A Theory of Adaptation*. 2nd edition. With Siobhan O’Flynn. Routledge, 2013.
- . “On the Art of Adaptation.” *Daedalus*, vol. 133, no. 2, 2004, pp. 108–111.
- Kenrick, John. *Musical Theatre: A History*. Continuum, 2008.
- Laird, Paul. “Musical Styles and Song Conventions.” *The Oxford Handbook of the American Musical*. Edited by Raymond Knapp, Mitchell Morris, and Stacy Wolf. Oxford UP, 2011, pp. 33–44.
- Leitch, Thomas. “Adaptation Studies at a Crossroads.” *Adaptation*, vol. 1, no. 1, 2008, pp. 63–77.
- (ed.). *The Oxford Handbook of Adaptation Studies*. Oxford UP, 2017.
- . “Twelve Fallacies in Contemporary Adaptation Theory.” *Criticism*, vol. 45, no. 2, 2003, pp. 149–71.
- MacArthur, Michelle, et al. *Performing Adaptations: Essays and Conversations on the Theory and Practice of Adaptation*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009.
- McClelland, Norman C. *Encyclopedia of Reincarnation and Karma*. McFarland & Company, 2010.
- McKeown, Margaret and Mary Curtis, edited by. *The Nature of Vocabulary Acquisition*. Psychology

Press, 2014.

Meckier, Jerome. "Charles Dickens's *Great Expectations*: A Defense of the Second Ending."

Studies in the Novel, 1993, vol. 25, no. 1, pp. 28–58.

Minchin, Tim and Danny Rubin. *Groundhog Day the Musical*. 2016.

Minchin, Tim. "Groundhog Day the Musical Facebook live Q&A." 30 May 2017. www.facebook.com/GroundhogDayMusical/videos/414335872299361. Accessed 15 Mar. 2019.

Nietzsche, Friedrich. *The Gay Science*. Edited by Barnard Williams, translated by Josefine Nauckhoff. Cambridge UP, 2001.

Nietzsche, Friedrich. *Twilight of the Idols*. Translated by Anthony M. Ludovici. T. N. Foulis, 1911.

"Nihilism," by Alan Pratt, *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, www.iep.utm.edu/nihilism. Accessed 22 Apr. 2022.

Original Broadway Cast of Groundhog Day and Tim Minchin. *Groundhog Day the Musical (Original Broadway Cast Recording)*, Masterworks Broadway and Broadway Records, 2017. *Spotify*, open.spotify.com/album/0nv740XsW6ONByj7LLg9Xl

"Palimpsest." *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 27 June 2019, www.britannica.com/topic/palimpsest-manuscript. Accessed 6 October 2021.

Portwood, Jerry. "Why *Groundhog Day* Needed to Be a Musical." *Rolling Stone*, 20 Apr. 2017. www.rollingstone.com/culture/culture-features/why-groundhog-day-needed-to-be-a-musical-108165. Accessed 24 Mar. 2022.

Raitt, George. "Still Lusting After Fidelity?" *Literature-Film Quarterly*, vol. 38, no. 1, 2010, pp. 47–58.

Riedel, Michael. "Groundhog Day is the Latest Casualty on Broadway." *New York Post*, 15 Aug. 2017. www.nypost.com/2017/08/15/groundhog-day-is-the-latest-casualty-on-broadway. Accessed 24 Mar. 2022.

Rimalower, Ben. "'This Time For Me': The Essential 11 O'Clock Numbers." *Playbill*, 19 July

2014. playbill.com/article/this-time-for-me-the-essential-11-oclock-numbers-com-324660.

Accessed 22 Apr. 2022.

Rubin, Danny. *Groundhog Day*. Directed by Harold Ramis. Columbia Pictures Industries, Inc., 1993.

—. *How to Write Groundhog Day*. Kindle ed., Triad Publishing Company, 2012.

Safranski, Rüdiger. *Martin Heidegger: Between Good and Evil*. Translated by Ewald Osers. Harvard UP, 2002.

Sanders, Julie. *Adaptation and Appropriation*. Routledge, 2006.

Savran, David. "Class and Culture." *The Oxford Handbook of the American Musical*. Edited by Raymond Knapp, Mitchell Morris, and Stacy Wolf. Oxford UP, 2011, pp. 239–50.

Schwartz, Dana. "Danny Rubin on Writing 'Groundhog Day' for the Stage, Sans Bill Murray." *Observer*, 28 Apr. 2017. observer.com/2017/04/danny-rubin-on-writing-groundhog-day-for-the-stage-sans-bill-murray. Accessed 22 Apr. 2022.

Snyder, Claire, R. "What Is Third-Wave Feminism? A New Directions Essay." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 2008, vol. 34, no. 1, pp. 175–96.

Stam, Robert. "Beyond Fidelity: The Dialogics of Adaptation." *Film Adaptation*, 2000, pp. 54–76.

Sternberg, Robert. "Most Vocabulary Is Learned from Context". *The Nature of Vocabulary Acquisition*. Edited by Margaret McKeown and Mary Curtis. Psychology Press, 2014, 89–106.

United States District Court. *Arden v. Columbia Pictures Industries, Inc.* 7 Dec. 1995. Justia, law.justia.com/cases/federal/district-courts/Fsupp/908/1248/1457524. Accessed 22 Apr. 2022.

Verhoeven, Deb, et al. "Controlling for Openness in the Male-Dominated Collaborative Networks of the Global Film Industry." *PLoS ONE*, vol. 15, no 6. doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0234460. Accessed 22 Apr. 2022.

Wells, Elizabeth. "Sondheim and the 11 O'Clock Principle." *Sondheim in Our Time and His*. Edited by W. Anthony Sheppard. Oxford UP, 2022, pp. 374–90.

Yoder, Don. *Groundhog Day*. Stackpole Books, 2003.