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A Wichita Public Library Podcast

Show Notes

Season 6 Episode 2:

The Book Was Better...or Was It? Featuring Fletcher Powell

May 15th, 2026



In this episode

In this episode, podcast hosts Daniel Pewewardy and Jenny Durham interview KMUW film critic Fletcher Powell to discuss the age-old question: which is better, the book or the movie?

About Fletcher Powell



Fletcher Powell has worked at KMUW since 2009 as a producer, reporter, and host. He's been the host of All Things Considered since 2012 and KMUW's movie critic since 2016. He also co-hosts the PMJA-award winning show You're Saying It Wrong, which is distributed around the country on public radio stations and around the world through podcasts. Fletcher is a member of the Critics Choice Association.

Where to Listen to Fletcher Powell

[Movie Review with Fletcher Powell](#) – Thursdays on KMUW

[You're Saying It Wrong \(Podcast\)](#) – Saturdays at 11am on NPR/KMUW

Topics discussed in this episode (with timestamps)

- Introducing Fletcher Powell 2:36
- Making a case for not reading the book first 8:39
- Novelizations of films 12:41
- How film reviewing has changed since 2020 18:32
- What makes an adaptation successful 24:03
- When books ruin the experience of watching the film 36:30
- Adaptations that were better than the book 44:39
- Adaptations that should have deviated more from its source material 51:16
- Fan casting – what would we like to see adapted and who would play the lead(s)? 57:52
- Films that would make great novelizations 1:03:44
- Where to find Fletcher online 1:06:17
- Fletcher’s movie recommendations 1:10:32

Books, authors, films & other media mentioned in this episode

- *10 Things I Hate About You* directed by Gil Junger (1999 feature film adaptation of William Shakespeare’s “The Taming of the Shrew”)
- *300* directed by Zack Snyder (2006 feature film based on the limited comic book series by Frank Miller and Lynn Varley)
- *Abraham Lincoln Vampire Hunter* by Seth Grahame-Smith
- *American Psycho* directed by Mary Harron (2000 feature film based on the novel by Bret Easton Ellis)
- *Atonement* directed by Joe Wright (2007 feature film based on the Ian McEwan novel)
- *Barry Lyndon* directed by Stanley Kubrick (1975 feature film based on William Makepeace Thackeray’s novel *The Luck of Barry Lyndon*)
- *Batman: Resurrection* by John Jackson Miller (novelization inspired by Tim Burton’s 1989 and 1992 Batman films)
- *Batman: Revolution* by John Jackson Miller (novelization inspired by Tim Burton’s 1989 and 1992 Batman films)
- *Blade Runner* directed by Ridley Scott (1982 feature film based on the novel *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* By Philip K. Dick)
- *Blood Meridian* by Cormac McCarthy
- *Bram Stoker’s Dracula* directed by Francis Ford Coppola (1992 feature film based on Bram Stoker’s novel *Dracula*)
- *Bridget Jones’ Diary* directed by Sharon Maguire (2001 feature film based on the Helen Fielding novel)
- *The Buffalo Hunter Hunter* by Stephen Graham Jones

- *Catwoman: Soulstealer* by Sarah J. Maas
- *Cinderella* directed by Kenneth Branagh (2015 feature film based on the 1950 animated film by Disney which was based on Charles Perrault's story *Cendrillon*).
- *Clueless* directed by Amy Heckerling (1995 feature film adapted from Jane Austen's novel *Emma*)
- *Columbo* (NBC TV series running from 1968-1978 then on ABC from 1989-2003)
- *The Count of Monte Cristo* by Alexander Dumas
- *Death by Lightning* (limited 2025 Netflix series based on *Destiny of the Republic* by Candice Millard)
- *Dracula* by Bram Stoker
- *Dune* directed by David Lynch (1984 feature film based on the Frank Herbert novel)
- *Dungeons & Dragons* directed by Courtney Solomon (2000 feature film based on the Tabletop Roleplaying Game)
- *Dungeons & Dragons: Honor Among Thieves* directed by John Francis Daley and Jonathan Goldstein (2023 feature film based on the Tabletop Roleplaying Game)
- *Ever After* directed by Andy Tennant (1998 feature film inspired by Charles Perrault's story *Cendrillon*).
- *Fight Club* directed by David Fincher (1999 feature film based on the novel by Chuck Palahniuk)
- *Five Nights at Freddy's & Five Nights at Freddy's 2* directed by Emma Tammi (based on the video game series by Scott Cawthon)
- *Frankenstein* directed by J. Searle Dawley (1910 short silent film based on the Mary Shelley novel)
- *Game of Thrones* (HBO series 2011-2019, based on the book series *A Song of Ice and Fire*, by George R.R. Martin)
- *Gulliver's Travels* directed by Rob Letterman (2010 feature film based on the Jonathan Swift novel)
- *Heat 2: A Novel* by Michael Mann and Meg Gardiner
- *Heroes* (2006-2010 NBC TV series)
- *The Historian* by Elizabeth Kostova
- *House of Leaves* by Mark Z. Danielewski
- *The Hunger Games* directed by Gary Ross (2012 feature film based on the book series by Suzanne Collins)
- *Invincible* (Amazon Prime Video animated TV series, 2021-present, based on the comic book series by Robert Kirkman)
- *Jurassic Park* directed by Steven Spielberg (1993 feature film based on the Michael Crichton novel)
- *Kindred* (2022 FX on Hulu TV series based on the novel by Octavia E. Butler)
- *Kindred: A Graphic Novel Adaptation* by Damian Duffy
- *Knives Out* directed by Rian Johnson (2019 feature film)
- *The Last of the Mohicans* directed by Michael Mann (1992 feature film based on the novel by James Fenimore Cooper)

- *Legends and Lattes* by Travis Baldree
- *Little Women* directed by Greta Gerwig (2019 feature film based on the Louisa May Alcott novel)
- *Lore Olympus* series by Rachel Smythe
- *Mad Men* (2007-2015 AMC TV series)
- *Middlemarch* by George Eliot
- *Mussolini: Son of the Century* directed by Joe Wright (2025 Sky Atlantic limited TV series, based on Antonio Scurati's novel *M: Son of the Century*).
- *Must Love Pie* directed by Patrick Clement (2020 short film)
- *National Treasure & National Treasure: Book of Secrets* directed by Jon Turteltaub (2004 and 2007 feature films)
- *National Treasure: Gates Family Mysteries* by Catherine Hapka (4-book series published by Disney Press inspired by the *National Treasure* films)
- *Sahara* directed by Breck Eisner (2005 feature film based on the novel by Clive Cussler)
- *Nickel Boys* directed by RaMell Ross (2019 feature film based on Colson Whitehead's novel *The Nickel Boys*)
- *Nirvana the Band the Show the Movie* directed by Matt Johnson (2025 feature film based on the 2007-2009 web series *Nirvana the Band the Show* written by Matt Johnson and Jay McCarrol).
- *Nosferatu: A Symphony of Horror* directed by F.W. Murnau (1922 German silent film based on Bram Stoker's novel *Dracula*)
- *Once Upon a Time in Hollywood: A Novel* by Quentin Tarantino
- *Pinocchio* directed by Robert Zemeckis (2022 feature film based on the 1940 animated film by Disney which was based on Carlo Collodi's story *The Adventures of Pinocchio*).
- *Poker Face* (Peacock TV series 2023-2025 created by Rian Johnson, director of *Knives Out*)
- *Practical Magic* directed by Griffin Dunne (1998 feature film based on the novel by Alice Hoffman)
- *Pride and Prejudice + Zombies* directed by Burr Steers (2016 feature film based on the book by Seth Grahame-Smith which is a parody of the Jane Austen novel *Pride and Prejudice*)
- *The Princess Bride* directed by Rob Reiner (1987 feature film based on the William Goldman novel)
- *Project Hail Mary* directed by Phil Lord and Christopher Miller (2026 feature film based on the novel by Andy Weir).
- *The Queen's Gambit* (2020 Netflix TV miniseries based on the novel by Walter Tevis)
- *Ready Player One* directed by Steven Spielberg (2018 feature film based on the novel by Ernest Cline)
- *Ready Player Two* by Ernest Cline
- *Scaramouche* by Rafael Sabatini

- *A Simple Plan* directed by Sam Raimi (1998 feature film based on the novel by Scott B. Smith)
- *The Sopranos* (1999-2007 HBO TV series)
- *A Trip to the Moon* directed by George Méliès (1902 silent film based on Jules Verne's novels *From the Earth to the Moon* and its sequel *Around the Moon*)
- *True Blood* (HBO series 2008-2014 TV series based on *The Southern Vampire Mysteries* series by Charlaine Harris)
- *Twisted Metal* (Peacock animated TV series, 2023-present, based on the videogame by Sony)
- *Watchmen* directed by Zack Snyder (2009 feature film based on the comic book series by Dave Gibbons)
- *William Shakespeare's Romeo + Juliet* directed by Baz Luhrmann (1996 feature film based on William Shakespeare's play *Romeo and Juliet*).
- *Wonder Woman: Warbringer* by Leigh Bardugo
- *The World of Lore* book series by Aaron Mahnke
- *Wuthering Heights* directed by Emerald Fennell (2026 feature film based on the Emily Bronte novel)

Relevant links to topics mentioned in this episode

- **Bloody-Digusting.com:** ["6 of the Best Horror Novelizations You Should Read" by Luiz H.C. \(2026, March 5\)](#)
- **CBR.com:** ["Nosferatu's Connection to Dracula, Explained" by Timothy Blake Donohoo, Robert Vaux and Ajay Aravind \(2025, March 15\)](#)
- **Collider.com:** ["The 1931 'Dracula' Movie is a Great Movie, But Not a Great Adaptation" by Samuel Williamson \(2023, April 11\)](#)
- **The Dissolve:** ["David Gordon Green on the Films that Defined His Life, from Pete's Dragon to El Topo" by Keith Phipps \(2014, June 17\)](#)
- **KMUW:** ["Remembering Jim Erickson, a Local Legend" by Fletcher Powell \(2020, June 11\)](#)
- [Limetown \(Podcast\)](#)
- **Medium:** ["The 2007 Writers Strike Led to a Serious Decline of Quality Broadcast TV Shows" by David B. Morris \(2023, September 17\)](#)
- [The Moth \(Podcast\)](#)
- **NPR's Fresh Air:** ["Colson Whitehead Shares the True Story of Abuse and Injustice Behind 'Nickel Boys'." \(2025, January 17\)](#)
- [Old Gods of Appalachia \(Podcast\)](#)
- **Variety:** ["John Logan Tapped to Write Film Adaptation of Cormac McCarthy's 'Blood Meridian'." by Katcy Stephan \(2024, April 24\)](#)
- [Welcome to the Night Vale \(Podcast\)](#)

[Link to episode transcript](#)

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Hosts: Daniel Pewewardy and Jenny Durham

Guest(s): Fletcher Powell

Videographer & Editing: Kyle Holly

Producers: Jenny Durham, Ian Bailey & Daniel Pewewardy

Show Notes: Jenny Durham & Ian Bailey

Transcript: Greg Nordyke

Additional Contributors: David Garcia & Steven Kelly

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