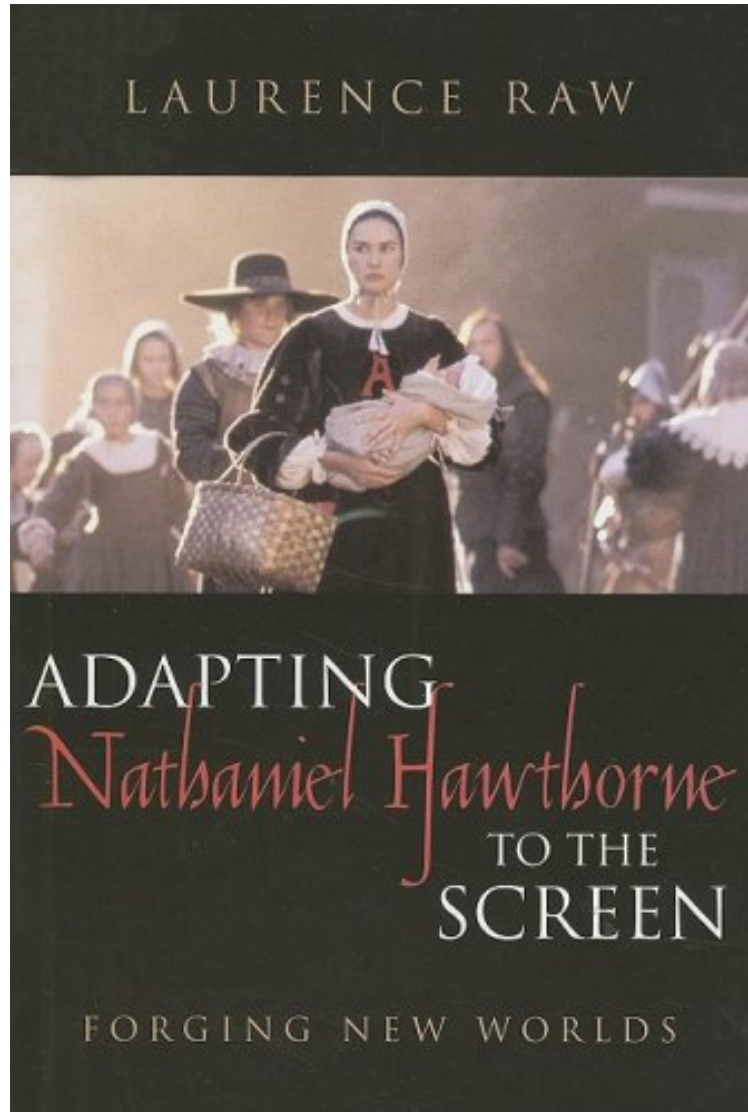


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Adapting Nathaniel Hawthorne to the Screen: Forging New Worlds

Laurence Raw

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Laurence Raw : Adapting Nathaniel Hawthorne to the Screen: Forging New Worlds before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Adapting Nathaniel Hawthorne to the Screen: Forging New Worlds:

Considered one of the greatest of American authors, Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-1864) created a memorable body of literature, which included the novels *The Scarlet Letter* and *The House of Seven Gables*, as well as a wealth of short

stories. In *Adapting Nathaniel Hawthorne to the Screen: Forging New Worlds*, Laurence Raw demonstrates how filmmakers have turned to Hawthorne to comment on the nation's past, present, and future. Raw shows how some filmmakers have tackled the difficulty of Hawthorne's material by treating him strictly as a writer whose work was firmly situated in American life of the mid-nineteenth century. Raw also examines how directors have used Hawthorne's stories to comment on various aspects of twentieth century American life. This device is particularly evident in the many versions of *The Scarlet Letter*, such as the 1950 television version broadcast two months after Senator Joseph McCarthy's speech about State Department employees who were "card-carrying members of the Communist Party" and 1960s and early 70s versions supporting countercultural values where filmmakers created characters prepared to fly in the face of conformity and search for alternative means of existence. In this volume, Raw also discusses adaptations of the short stories "Feathertop," "The Snow Image," "Dr. Heidegger's Experiment," and "Rappaccinni's Daughter," as well as the novels *The House of Seven Gables* and *The Scarlet Letter*, the latter having been transformed into film no less than ten times. By surveying the canon of adaptations produced over the last eight decades, this book provides a unique insight into American social, political, and cultural history from a variety of perspectives, underlining how Hawthorne's work has been of enduring concern to directors and audiences alike.

Laurence Raw has delved into the many film manifestations of Hawthorne's writings with a clear headed and cogent view, analyzing both where they have succeeded or have not. The great American author has shown his stories to have a relevance and timelessness that have transcended the printed medium. The different takes on the *Scarlet Letter* are fascinating to read about, as different mores and viewpoints of the passing decades put their own spin on Hawthorne's most famous novel. Of particular interest is the way Hawthorne's writings have been brought to filmic life; as conventional drama, animation, short film, and even broad farce. Mr. Raw's look into the films based on Hawthorne's writings is a must both for film fans and Hawthorne fans. (Michael Legge, Director of Loons) About the Author Laurence Raw teaches in the Faculty of Education, Baskent University, Ankara, Turkey. He is the author of *Changing Class Attitudes* (1994), *The Country and the City* (1997) and *Adapting Henry James to the Screen* (Scarecrow, 2006).