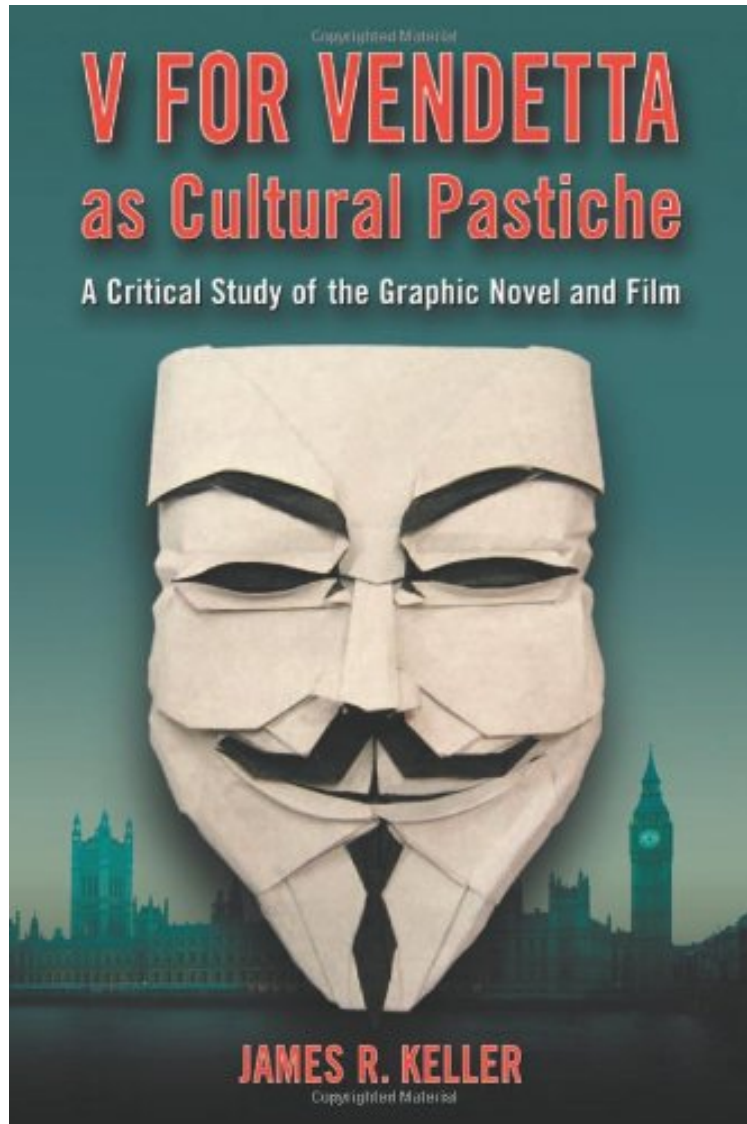


(Free) V For Vendetta As Cultural Pastiche: A Critical Study of the Graphic Novel and Film

## V For Vendetta As Cultural Pastiche: A Critical Study of the Graphic Novel and Film

*James R. Keller*

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FOR VENDETTA AS CULTURAL PASTICHE is, sadly, not a particularly insightful read. And what a shame that is. It's always wonderful to see critical looks at some of the more neglected pieces of work, and the work of Alan Moore is always worth a look. But despite the title and his opening comments in the text, Keller predominantly analyzes the Wachowski/McTeigue film adaptation, and leaves Moore's graphic novel pretty neglected. This is a rather poor choice, given that the Wachowski's film is so heavy-handed, obvious and shallow so that Keller has to strain for insights beyond what is immediately observable. It's a shame, since there is a wealth of idea and analysis just waiting to be done on the graphic novel's rather complex narrative. It would have made for a far interesting critical study if Moore's graphic novel had been the focus, and not the Wachowski/McTeigue film.

The 2005 James McTeigue and Wachowski Brothers film *V for Vendetta* represents a postmodern pastiche, a collection of fragments pasted together from the original Moore and Lloyd graphic novel of the same name, along with numerous allusions to literature, history, cinema, music, art, politics, and medicine. Paralleling the graphic novel, the film simultaneously reflects a range of authorial contributions and influences. This work examines in detail the intersecting texts of *V for Vendetta*. Subjects include the alternative dimensions of the cinematic narrative, represented in the film's conspicuous placement of the painting *The Lady of Shalott* in *V*'s home; the film's overt allusions to the AIDS panic of the 1980s; and the ways in which antecedent narratives such as Terry Gilliam's *Brazil*, Huxley's *Brave New World*, and Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451* represent shadow texts frequently crossing through the overall *V for Vendetta* narrative.

About the Author James R. Keller is a professor and chair of the English and Theatre department at Eastern Kentucky University in Richmond, Kentucky. The author or editor of numerous works about popular culture, he lives in Lexington, Kentucky.