A HISTORICAL AND COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF MULTIPLATFORM

BOOKS FOR YOUNG READERS: TECHNOLOGIES OF PRODUCTION,

USER-GENERATED CONTENT,

AND ECONOMICS OF IMMATERIAL AND AFFECTIVE LABOR

By

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

A Historical and Comparative Analysis of Multiplatform Books for Young

Readers: Technologies of Production,

User-Generated Content,

and Economics of Immaterial and Affective Labor

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This dissertation examines how publishers' book-based cultural products for

young adults are created, produced, disseminated, received, and consumed with a

focus on the contemporary practice of producing transmedia and multiplatform

books that are embedded in technology, rely on user-generated content, and

increasingly mirror production and consumption practices in other media

industries. Three layers of participants in the field of literary production for young

adults considered were: 1) producers; 2) critics and disseminators; 3) recipients.

Using a case study approach, the phenomenon is explored in a historical context,

and presents a comparative analysis of developments within the field. The data

collection included interviews, a focus group, document analysis, archival and

historical research, and web analytics. Rooted in a key discourse of librarianship

for young people since the early 20th century that justified social reform in the

belief that improving minds leads to improving lives, the study of reform underpinning librarians' efforts now includes access to technology. Yet technology establishes a disintermediated relationship between publishers and teenage readers, fragmenting librarians' traditional roles as shapers of cultural value in that field of cultural production. Now publishers can market directly to teens on their participatory websites. The study has shown divergence in how publishers and teens have appropriated the idea of digital formats and reading and has shown how excorporation on maturing publishers' sites aimed at engaging teenagers' affective and immaterial labor challenge such assumptions about digital literacy. The research revealed how technology transforms librarians' roles, and publishers' marketing strategies, and how publishers' websites eventually enable teens to circumvent the sites' rules and engage in exchanges ranging from verbal skirmishes to creative postings of transgressive content. Limitations of this study are tied to the use of "assigned" readers to study teenagers' responses, and those inherent in free but corporate-owned web analytics as a source of data. This study provides a rich understanding of an emerging phenomenon related to digital platforms and online reading for young adults, connecting historical examples to contemporary ones.

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> At times our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us.
>
> -- Albert Schweitzer

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freelance work, and to Mimi Kayden who told me I needed to go to graduate school in 2003. Mimi, I am proud to call you my friend.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to:

Carlos Ledet, my husband and personal hero. Semper fi!

To my amazing sons:

Christian and Alexander Ledet

To my parents and sister:

Alis Martens, Carl Martens, and Helle Martens

To my advisor-for-life:

Dr. Marija Dalbello

And to the great Mimi Kayden, because after all, it is all her fault.

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Introduction and Context for the Study

Research on this dissertation began in Fall 2008, when I read the letters of Anne Carroll Moore, children's librarian at the New York Public Library during the first half of the twentieth century, and learned how the field of children's literature was first constructed as a genre separate from the field of literature for adults, first in librarianship, and then in publishing, and about Moore's work at the center of a literary sphere of influence, developed and articulated through her connections and reviews. Moore's sphere included publishers, editors, authors and illustrators, other librarians, booksellers, as well as reviewers and awarders (including herself) of children's literature. Moore's influence on the field was profound: she not only contributed to establishing a profession, but in her work, she exemplified the emerging role of children's librarian which would be emulated by future generations of first children's and later teen librarians.

In the early days of the field, books for young readers were selected along the model established by Moore, by a series of adult experts, including among others, editors and librarians, which represented a "top-down" selection process, as these literary products were acquired by a publisher, edited, published, sold, bought—and in the case of a library purchase, cataloged, shelved, and otherwise presented to young readers. The inherent ideology of the selection and recommendation process has changed over the years, from Progressive Era ideals of librarians like Moore who wanted to improve children's minds through the "right" kind of good literature, to the "revolting" librarians of the 1970s who wanted young readers, especially teens, to have access to information which would enable them to make good life choices, even providing that information (on

real life issues, for example, such as birth control or drug addiction) when it conflicted with the moral values of their parents. Since Anne Carroll Moore's reign at the New York Public Library in the first half of the 20th century, librarians have continuously been important mediators of literary cultural products for young people, influencing content via reviews and awards and even by pre-screening manuscripts for editors, establishing selection via book acquisitions in libraries, and guiding (from shelf placement and displays, to readers' advisory lists and other library activities) which books would get into the hands of young people. Digital technologies have enabled a new configuration, which establishes a disintermediated relationship between publishers and young readers, via publishers' interactive websites.

Interactivity in books has existed long before digital technologies, from the earliest pop-up books, to Packard's *Choose Your Own Adventure Stories*, which were popular in the 1980s and 1990s and allowed users to choose a path for characters to follow, providing agency on part of the user. But technology enables new forms of interaction, from requiring readers to call phone numbers, or to play games on a related website, and now to having readers contribute storylines to books in a series. While new forms of interaction arguably provide for agency on the part of the user, they also allow for a disintermediated relationship between publishers and their teen consumers.

In spring 2009, when I first came across the *RandomBuzzers* and the *Twilight Saga* websites, I noticed that a direct discourse between publishers, authors, and teen consumers existed on such sites. Publishers were able to communicate directly with teen consumers by building websites which used affect to attract teens by providing them with access to their favorite books and authors, and provided agency for teens by soliciting

their feedback, advice, and user-generated-content as related to books released by those publishers. In Fall 2009, I came across *The Amanda Project*, launched in 2009. Unlike Scholastic's *The 39 Clues* series, which started in 2008 and which is perhaps the first multiplatform book series, *The Amanda Project* was a multiplatform book project for teenage girls, and consisted of printed books integrated with an interactive website, and solicited girls' user-generated content, which would be incorporated into future books in the series.

Traditionally, librarians were key intermediaries between publishers and teens, responsible for getting books into the hands of young people, but online, participatory sites represented a disintermediated space, in which publishers could use technology to circumvent the gatekeepers and communicate directly with young adult reading consumers. On these sites, teens were acting as peer-to-peer reviewers and marketers of content, and even as collaborative authors, contributing content. This direct communication presented a new configuration in the field of cultural production for young people, and lead to my overall research plan and questions.

The Internet has enabled the emergence of a contemporary publishing practice of producing new formats of transmedia and multiplatform books. These are embedded in technology and increasingly mirror ongoing production and consumption practices in other media industries such as television and gaming, which now incorporate the consumers themselves, relying on users' feedback, peer-to-peer marketing, and user-generated content. Henry Jenkins (2006) defines convergence culture as being both "a top-down corporate-driven process and a bottom-up consumer-driven process" (p. 18), which in this study is exemplified in the relationship between publishers and their teen

consumers. In recent years, the amount of online fan activity (e.g., reviews, fan sites, and fan fiction) around books for young people demonstrates how readers voluntarily contribute user-generated content. Publishers are able to transform this content into powerful, socially-networked marketing material, which is created and disseminated by its consumers. Therefore, frameworks used to study "mass" media can apply to the study of books for young readers, a focus of this dissertation.

The first wave of convergence, as it applies to publishing, happened during the 1980s. In that decade, many small, independent publishers converged into large multinational corporations, or into what Dan Schiller (1999) calls "vertically integrated megamedia" (p. 99) in which publishers (as part of large media firms) produce the content and control a range of channels on which to market this content. Along with the emergence of the Internet, this transformation of publishing companies propelled the second wave of integration in publishing. This involved the transformation of cultural products from content published in book form, to book-based content that extends across multiple media platforms, increasingly incorporates technology, and enables a direct online discourse between publishers and their teenage reading consumers.

Earlier, librarians were responsible for getting books into the hands of young people, and they acted as literary cultural filters. Librarians' work included developing collections at libraries, providing children with books, and often serving also as book awarders and reviewers. Their access to children, as well as their work as arbiters of taste through awarding and reviewing, made librarians important cultural intermediaries between publishers and teens. Before the rise of social media, publishers, who were fiscally responsible for translating culture into consumer products, had a vested financial

interest in their relationships with librarians. While librarians' work still involves much of the same, the rise of social media enables a new configuration in the field, one in which the cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1984) related to books can be earned in new ways without the intervention of librarians. As social media tools become a part of the reading experience with digital texts, the activity of reading is expanded to also include writing and reviewing. When such activities occur within publishers' propriety sites, publishers are able to have a disintermediated relationship with their teenage readers. On these sites, readers can assume roles as reviewers, peer-to-peer marketers, and even content creators. This disintermediated relationship challenges the traditional role of librarians as cultural intermediaries connecting publishers with young readers, and presents a revised 21st century configuration of the field of literary production for young adults.

In order to study the emerging phenomenon of multiplatform books in the era of convergence within a historical context, and because the fields of children's publishing and librarianship evolved in tandem, this study will focus on three layers of participants in the field of literary production. The layers of participants include: 1) the producers, which include publishers and authors; 2) the critics and disseminators, which include librarians, online reviewing sites not owned by publishers, and booksellers (from small independent bookstores to Amazon.com); and 3) the recipients, which include reading consumers. Materiality is also a necessary fourth layer. In the digital age, materiality includes not only: 1) changing formats of books, as books transition from print to digital formats; but also 2) a new materiality of reading, as readers leave tangible, written evidence of their interaction with texts on participatory, book-related websites.

The primary purpose of this dissertation is to examine how convergence in the publishing industry and the use of technology have altered the field. It focuses on how book-based cultural products for teenagers are created, produced, disseminated, received, and consumed, and consequently, how the role of "tastemaker" (in the sense used by Pierre Bourdieu to denote those who determine cultural capital) is shifting from professional children's literature "experts" (traditionally young adult librarians) to "expert" consumers (teen readers). In order to provide a *longue durée*[1] historical context for comparing differences in the production, reception, and consumption of young adult literature before and after participatory digital technologies were implemented, the study will map out a hundred-year trajectory starting at the turn of the 20th century, when children's literature was being constructed as an independent genre.

Because both children's literature and young adult literature are constructed genres created for constructed audiences, two defining periods within that longer context provide a framework for understanding developments in the field. First, at the turn of the 20th century, the emergence of children's literature, as a genre distinct from books published for adults in the United States, approximately coincides with the reign of Anne Carroll Moore, the first children's librarian at the New York Public Library from 1906 to 1941. The second period of that construction is the emergence of young adult literature as a subfield of children's literature (1967–1980[2]). The emergence of children's literature,

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[1] "Longue durée" is a term attributed to the Annales school of history, and here it is used to refer to long-lasting models in the field.

[2] 1967 is when *The Outsiders* (Hinton, 1967) was published, and it is generally considered the first work of young adult literature. 1980 marks when the Young Adult Alternative Newsletter (YAAN) ceased to be published. YAAN was a librarian-run newsletter that connected early young adult librarians with each other in the earliest days of the field.

and later young adult literature, parallels and reflects shifting cultural definitions of "children" and "adolescents."

During these formative periods, in which we see the differentiation of children's and young adult literature, it was first the children's librarians, and later the teen librarians, who were responsible for getting books into the hands of readers. There is ample evidence of librarians' roles as professional book reviewers—both in trade journals and magazines, and as awarders (the jurors on early committees for such book awards as the Newbery and Caldecott awards were primarily children's librarians). This made them collaborative shapers of the field, responsible for defining its boundaries and for selecting which books would become part of the canon of this newly established genre. Because of this activity, books became infused with cultural capital that publishers soon realized could be exchanged for economic capital in the form of book sales (Squires, 2007). Historically, until the emergence of the Internet, librarians held a culturally dominant role as authoritative intermediaries between publishers and young readers in the following ways: 1) as reviewers and awarders; 2) as developers of library collections, deciding which books would be purchased and which would not; and 3) as those who had direct access to young readers participating in library-based literature programs.

Before 2007, which marks the time when publishers started to use social media to reach teens (two participatory websites relevant to this dissertation were established in 2007), publishers' primary mode of communication with their youngest consumers was mediated via the librarians who served those consumers. Book marketers relied on building personal relationships with those librarians to ensure that the books they

represented were reviewed, awarded, and purchased by libraries. This created a specific configuration and dynamic that remained unchanged until 2007, when both publishers and teens adopted technologies that have enabled a new and more direct interaction.

In this new media ecology, the roles have shifted. Notably, social media provides opportunities for a disintermediated relationship between publishers and young readers, transforming them (in the publishers' eyes) from fringe participants in library-based programs, where their opinions were valued but not validated, into influential reviewers, marketers, and content creators who support publishers' efforts to earn economic capital. Teens' participation on the Internet, within the framework of reading as involving both production and consumption of content, provides an unparalleled resource for publishers interested in these readers' opinions, interests, and even user-generated content. This commodifies both books and readers, and it changes how books for young readers are produced, marketed, and consumed. At this point in time during which book-based products for young people are increasingly adding digital components to print books, or are entirely digital, it becomes important to understand how these digital interventions are transforming books and the reading experience for this population.

The overall goal of this dissertation, organized into eight chapters, is to examine how technology is changing books and the reading experience for young people. Historical and contemporary perspectives are covered in four research questions, each of which addresses a layer of participation in the field, from publishers, to librarians, to teens, and to the materiality of books. Together they contribute to the understanding of a contemporary phenomenon, revealing a new model of publishing and the roles of the participants within it. Methods used to interpret perspectives from each of the areas

include: interviews with publishers, librarians, and teens; document analysis; case studies of three progressive websites which together illuminate how publishers are able to use teens' immaterial and affective labor; and web analytics in order to understand use of and participation in these websites.

The first chapter will establish the historical context for this study, starting with the construction—and ensuing recognition—of the field of children's literature as an independent field, one separate from the field of literature for adults, at the turn of the 20th century. As children's rooms were created in libraries across the United States, publishers recognized that a new market for children's books had opened up. Starting with Louise Seaman Bechtel, the first children's editor hired by Macmillan in 1919, publishers created departments focused on publishing books to fill this need. Children's librarians such as Anne Carroll Moore, who started work at the New York Public Library in 1906, served as cultural arbiters of taste and experts in books for young readers, and they had a powerful influence on editors and on the types of books that were created. Throughout advancements in the field of children's literature, publishers and librarians worked in a synergistic, mutually supported environment, as each influenced and was dependent upon the other.

The first chapter will follow the development of the field, through the lens of four periods of change: 1906–1925; the Mid-20th Century; 1967–1979; and the 21st Century. The first period saw the emergence of the field, starting with perspectives on youth librarianship from librarians such as Anne Carroll Moore and young adult librarians such as Mabel Williams (1887–1985), Margaret Scoggin (1905–1968) and Jean Carolyn Roos (1891–1982), who were influential in establishing service to young adults. Representing

the second period, Margaret Edwards (1902–1988), young adult librarian at the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore, Maryland, and author of the (1969) book *The Fair Garden and the Swarm of Beasts* about her work. She became perhaps the most famous young adult librarian of the 20th century. For the third period of the late 1960s and the 1970s, interviews with veteran young adult librarians provide historical context for how the sub-field of young adult literature was constructed within the broader field of "children's literature." A comparative analysis of archival copies of the Young Adult Alternative Newsletter (YAAN) and the contemporary Young Adult Library Service Association (YALSA) blog connects to the fourth period of the 21st century. This comparison demonstrates how the profession has repositioned itself in the last forty years. Interviews with contemporary librarians describe challenges to serving young adults in the era of social media, and provide some interesting models for practice.

The second chapter focuses on the four interrelated theoretical dimensions of this dissertation: 1) Bourdieu's (1984) work on Distinction; 2) Political Economy; 3) Cultural Studies, Critical Theory, and Audience Studies; and 4) Gender Studies and connections to Immaterial and Affective Labor.

Starting from the historical perspective of the first chapter, the first such framework and dimension of influence, which establishes the concept of "taste" in cultural commodities (here, books and book-related content), uses Bourdieu's concepts of "distinction," "field of cultural production," and "habitus," and builds on Claire Squires' (2007) development of the idea that publishers can exchange cultural capital in books for economic capital. The chapter addresses how cultural criticism in the form of reviews and awards establish "distinction" in YA literature, and how this contributes to the cultural

capital of books. Because of their work reviewing and awarding children's literature, the early children's librarians were established as arbiters of taste in the field of cultural production of literature for young people since the inception of the genre. Their work in improving children's minds, and later children's lives gave them a role as extenders of young people's habitus.

The second theoretical framework that guides this dissertation is the political economy of the culture industry, as it conceptualizes a key shift in the 1980s, when mergers in the publishing industry led to the emergence of transnational publishing companies. These corporations influenced the types of books published for young readers by emphasizing the role of books as commodities and generators of economic capital. These new structures, combined with technological developments, slowly started to alter and erode the previously established, symbiotic relationships between publishers and librarians, in which librarians served as gatekeepers between publishers and teen readers. This relationship had long been central to the formation of the field and influential on the resulting products. In the transnational corporate model, publishers increasingly had to focus on books as profit-making commodities, and began to develop heightened brand awareness in books, a change further enabled by technology in the 2000s.

Work from critical theory starting with Horkheimer and Adorno (1972) applies to mass-produced cultural products, including books. Work from cultural studies (Fiske 1987, 1989, 1996) introduces how consumers (in this case readers) are able to excorporate elements from publishers' proprietary sites, and to resist and repurpose commodified cultural products. Work related to the field of audience studies, from Arnold (1882), to Tarde (1969), to Bratich (2008), and to Butsch (2011) applies here—

perhaps for the first time to readers—because participatory websites related to books present evidence of a visible, reading audience, one capable of being tracked and studied.

The use of technology connects to the third theoretical framework: that of studies of immaterial and affective labor (Andrejevic 2007; Hearn 2008; Humphrey 2008; Lazzaratto 1996; Terranova 2000). Applied to the context of young adult literature, this framework helps us understand what it may mean when teens are encouraged to freely contribute their own user-generated content to publishers' book-related websites, in ways that range from serving as peer-to-peer marketers, to writing book reviews and recommendations, to acting as authors and creators of content that publishers can incorporate into books. A progression of these modes of participation, and of how publishers exploit it, is demonstrated in three case studies in Chapters 5, 6, and 7. Gender is another dimension of influence that guides this dissertation. This, too, connects to immaterial and affective labor, as women have always been key actors in the cultural production of children's literature. Early on, when Anne Carroll Moore reigned as first children's librarian at the New York Public Library (1906–1941), and Louise Seaman Bechtel became the first children's editor at Macmillan in 1919 (Eddy 2006; Miller 2003), essentialist views of women deemed them to be naturally suited for any work related to children, including publishing and librarianship. These views actually served women well in this particular context, as they enabled women to emerge as leaders in the fields. Views on reading as a gendered activity also emerge through the case studies.

Chapter 3 presents the research questions and methodology guiding this dissertation. It also establishes a foundation for the selection of a series of three independent but progressive case studies that illustrate a sequence of technological

changes in the field. Chapter 4 compares historical and contemporary methods of

marketing books to teens, using data collected from interviews with marketers at small,

medium, and large publishing companies, as well as an interview with a veteran marketer

in order to reveal how technology is shaping traditional definitions of marketer, author,

and consumer in favor of collaborative communities of online labor by publishers,

authors, and teen consumers.

Chapters 5, 6, and 7 each present one of the case studies. Data was gathered

within these websites by observation from 2009 to 2012. It is supported by interviews

with teen readers and a focus group of ten teens about reading on digital platforms.

Chapter 5 is a case study of Random House's *Random Buzzers* (Random Buzzers, 2011)

website. This early site dedicated to the publisher's teen consumers adds user-generated

peer-to-peer reviews to the tradition of librarian-based reviews in journals such as

Kirkus,[3] *School Library Journal*, *Publishers Weekly,* and the *Hornbook*. On this site,

teens receive free advance review copies of young adult books in exchange for writing

reviews of such titles. Participating teens receive "Buzz Bucks," a currency earned for

their affective labor, which can be used on the site to buy Random House products (such

as more books), and they are awarded with badges they can display with their user

profiles (a form of cultural capital). Using *Randombuzzers.com* as a case study, this

chapter examines how technology enables a convergence of reader and critic. Several

publishers at the time of this research developed sites for teens that used them as

reviewers. These include Little Brown's *Hip Scouts* (LB Teens, n.d.) and Simon and

Schuster's *Pulse It* (Pulse It, 2009). *Random Buzzers* was chosen for this study in about

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[3] *Kirkus Reviews* was an early review journal founded by former Harper editor Virginia Kirkus in 1933.

2009, because at the time it was more sophisticated than the others—especially because it offered a form of payment to its participants.

Chapter 6 is a case study of *The Twilight Saga* (twilightsaga.com, n.d.) site. This study shows how a publisher used *Twilight* fandom, exemplified by readers' participation on individual websites and blogs, by corralling it into a proprietary "digital enclosure" (Andrejevic 2008) of user-generated content which the publisher, based on its end-user licensing agreements (EULAs), would then have rights to repurpose in any way.

Chapter 7 is a case study of an early multiplatform book-and-integrated-website project called *The Amanda Project*, on which the publisher, HarperCollins, solicits users' feedback, comments, and storylines. All of this is allegedly incorporated into future books in the series.

Finally, Chapter 8 summarizes findings and limitations of this dissertation, and discusses opportunities for future research that arise out of it.

CHAPTER 1: Historical Context for the Study

Introduction

Until the turn of the 20th century, children's literature in the United States was not considered a genre separate from literature for adults. Mandatory education laws and the Progressive Era produced new ideas (and ideals) of childhood, and by 1919, "the campaign on behalf of childhood was in full swing" (Eddy, 2006, p. 4). Childhood was considered to be "a distinct time of life with unique social and cultural requirements," (Eddy, 2006, p. 4), and adults considered children to be individuals in need of protection.

Children's literature existed long before the 20th century, but it did not emerge as a separate field until the turn of the 20th century, connected to Progressive Era values of children as a population in need of protection, and a deep-seated belief that the right books could improve minds. The goal was to keep young people away from corrupting influences—first of dime novels, which were "commercial, mass-produced, sensational fiction of the 19th century" (Denning, 1987, p. 10), and then of movies, which were considered vehicles for entertainment, not enlightenment.

Since the inception of the field of production of children's literature at the beginning of the 20th century, librarians and publishers have collaborated in shaping the field. An understanding of how children's literature has evolved is best viewed through the lens of this synergistic relationship. While librarianship and publishing evolved hand-in-hand, there is less emphasis, at least in the historical analysis, on the voices of teenage readers. The field of children's literature arose around ideologies of protecting children, which meant that adults made decisions on their behalf. Until the 21st century, when

publishers' participatory sites and social media introduced new venues for participation, teens' voices had primarily emerged through library-based programs.

An overall history of children's literature and librarianship serves to show how a new genre of multiplatform books—books infused with technology—or new arrangement of components in the field of cultural production for young readers, from interactive books, to video games, to collector cards, to online games, emerged in a form of "bricolage." What is new with multiplatform books is the interactivity enabled via technology. The next sections will cover a few chronologically successive points of construction during the last century. These explain shifting structures in the field and the progression of teen involvement, first on independent fan sites on the Internet, and later on publishers' interactive websites and social media fora, which eventually enable multiplatform books.

Before digital technologies enabled a direct communication between publishers and teenage readers, librarians were important intermediaries connecting these populations. In Robert Darnton's *Communications Circuit* (Darnton, 1982, p. 70), he places librarians on the left of the model under "Readers," in the box that also includes those who support reading, including purchasers, borrowers, clubs, and libraries (see Figure 1.1. below).
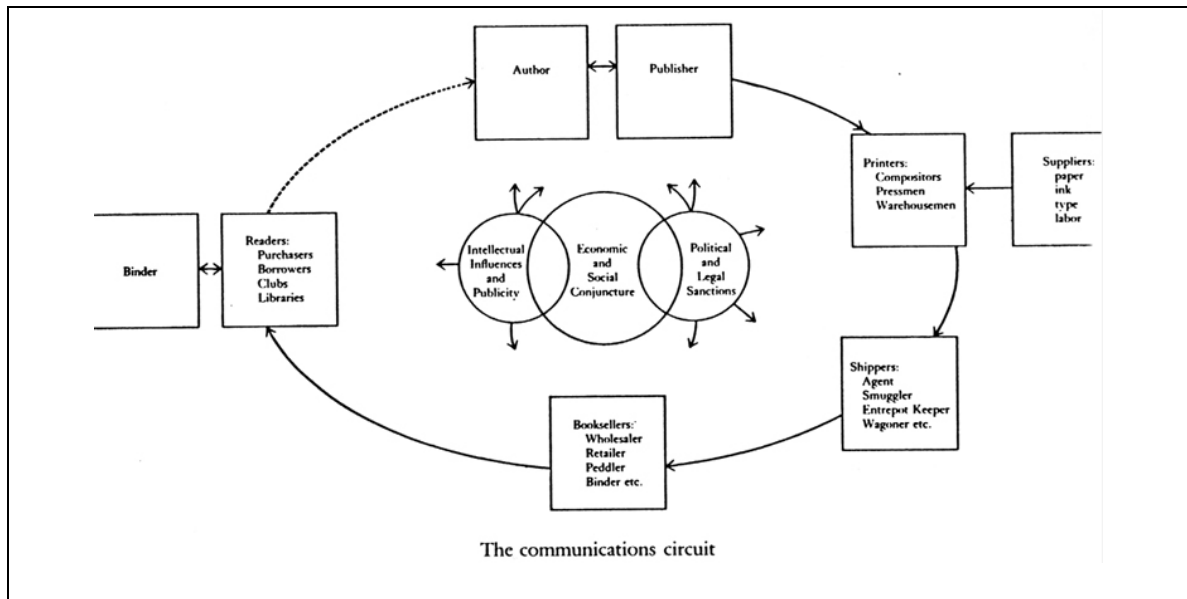
Figure 1.1. Robert Darnton's (1982) Communications Circuit

However, in this dissertation, from the earliest days of the field until technological interventions of the 21st century, as far as literature for young people was concerned, young adult librarians had a greater role as intellectual and political influencers and are perhaps better situated at the center of Darnton's sphere as part of the structural forces that organize the communications circuit globally, connecting authors, publishers, and readers of books for young people. A simplified model, which highlights the authority of gatekeepers (especially librarians) on literature for young people, follows below:
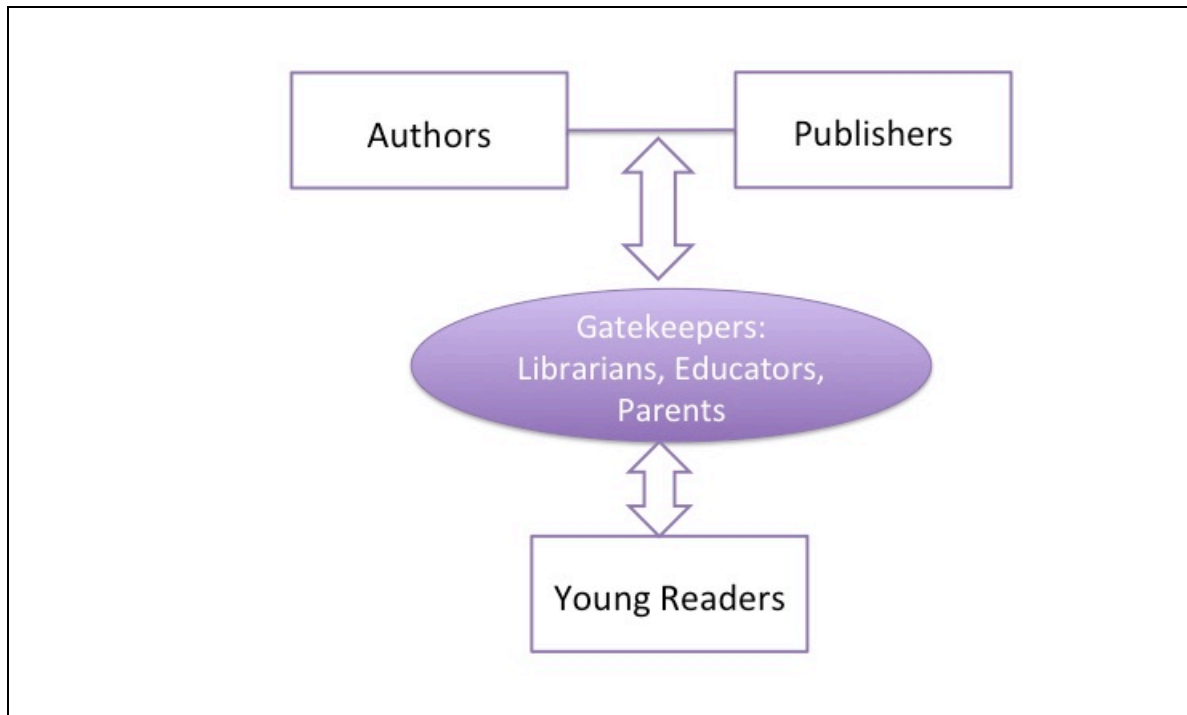
Figure 1.2. Configuration of Children's Publishing Before 2007

Because of their coveted access to young readers, to whom publishers sought to market books, librarians were in a powerful position compared to publishers from the early 20th century until about 2007. In addition to their access to teenage readers, they also served as reviewers and awarders of books.

In order to illustrate the strength of the synergy between publishers and librarians, on which the field of children's literature was established over the last century, and to examine its influence on the production of books for young readers, this chapter will examine four temporal points of reference that organize the field of YA Literature according to dominant influences in each of these four periods, ranging from individuals in the realm of librarianship and publishing, to the formative influences of movements and technological developments that together shaped the history of the field. Each is

divided into two mirroring perspectives—one on librarianship and one on publishing, as presented in Figure 1.3 below.
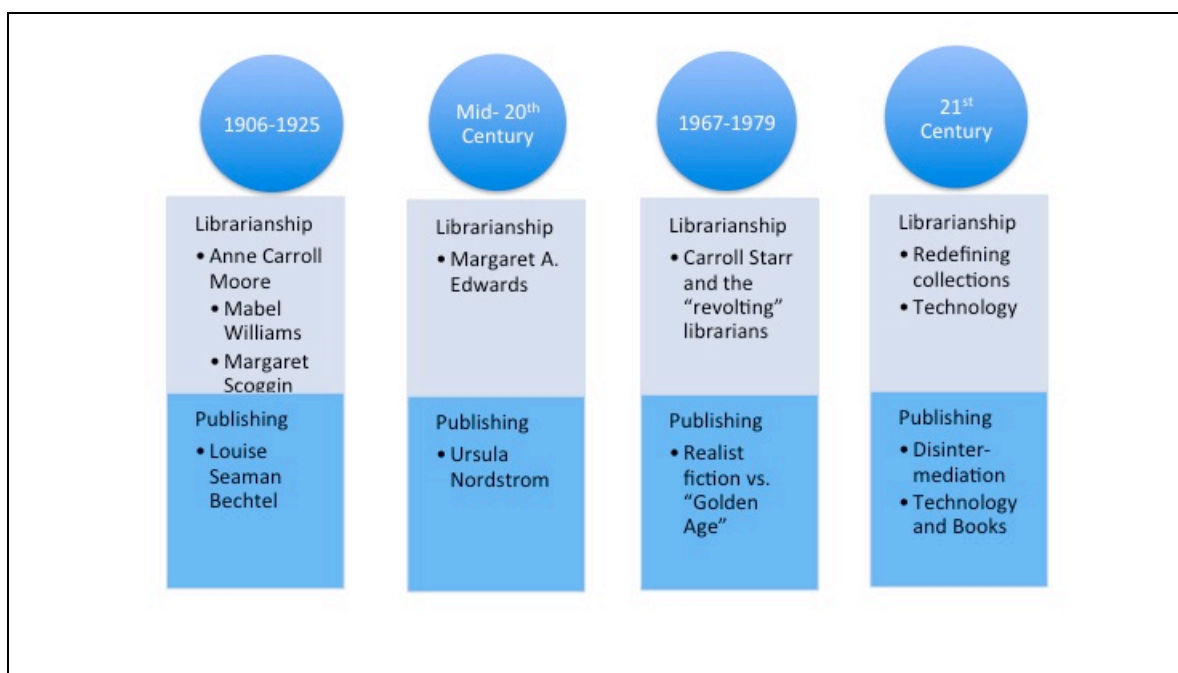
Figure 1.3. Old Configuration: Historical Context

While not intended to be definitive or exhaustive, the periods selected were chosen because each exposes a structural shift in the field. The first, from 1906 to 1925, examines the influence of New York City's first children's librarian, Anne Carroll Moore, as well as Mabel Williams and Margaret Scoggin, the first librarians appointed by Moore to serve young people in New York City, together with Louise Seaman Bechtel and the first editor of books for young readers in the realm of publishing. The second period, marked at mid-20th century, includes the influence of Margaret Edwards at the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Maryland, and Ursula Nordstrom at Harper & Brothers. The third period, from 1967 to 1979, includes Carol Starr and the "radical" librarians of the 1970s, and in publishing, parallel movements toward the "New Realism" in literature and

a "Golden Age" of books. The fourth, arising from the mergers and acquisitions of publishing companies during the 1980s and 1990s, includes the 21st century and a move toward technology in the library and in publishing, with technological interventions in books for young people, from transmedia books to multiplatform books. These periods, while amounting to an incomplete history of young adult publishing and librarianship, were chosen as periodizations that record transformative shifts in the field of production of young adult literature, as constructed by both librarians and publishers. They will be examined in turn, starting with the Progressive Era, and moving on to mid-20th century, 1967–1979, and then the 21st century.

1.1 The Progressive Era's Influence: From the Library to the Publishing House

The following sections examine how Progressive Era ideologies on childhood encouraged the expansion of the field of production of children's literature, from the library to the publishing house, and how in turn books for young readers were constructed at that time. This next section starts with the growth of the field of children's librarianship, the establishment of reviews and awards within the field, and how publishers created departments in their houses to meet a growing demand of books for young readers in the library market.

1.1.1 Librarianship in the Progressive Era.

The early 20th-century children's librarians in America were responsible for serving all children, from infants to young adults. An evolving discourse on childhood, started during the Progressive period, resulted in mandatory education laws, but also in the idea that children were individuals in need of protection (Eddy, 2006; Jenkins, C., 1995). "The social welfare professions of teaching, social work, nursing, and

librarianship were established during the Progressive Era" (Jenkins, 1995, p. 12). These professions were female-intensive and were considered "'semi-professions,' 'helping professions,' and/or 'social housekeeping work'" (Etzioni 1969; Simpson & Simpson 1969; Grimm 1978; Kessler-Harris 1989, 112–119 in Jenkins, 1995, p. 12), and as a result, children's librarianship became a field dominated by women.

To recognize the distinct nature of childhood, the first children's librarians, closely connected to the social workers of the Settlement House Movement (Garrison, 1979), sought to "enrich the life of the child, to Americanize the foreigner, and to deal with the urban problems the settlement houses sought to remedy" (Garrison, 1979, p. 206). At the turn of the 20th century there was a proliferation of early mass-market reading material available for children. This included serials and pulp fiction by best-selling authors of the time, reading material which would soon be addressed (and often denigrated) by children's librarians. Effie Powers is recognized as one of the first children's librarians in America, starting at the Cleveland Public Library in 1895, and being named its first official "Children's Librarian" in 1898 (Kimball et al., 2004).

Entrenched in Progressive Era ideals, children's librarians sought to influence what young people read with the overall goal that such reading should improve their minds. The formidable Anne Carroll Moore served at NYPL from 1906 to 1941 as the first children's librarian in New York. A children's librarian, critic, mentor, and advisor, and de facto literary agent because of her multiple and well-documented interactions with authors, illustrators (such as Walter de la Mare, Beatrix Potter, and Leslie Brooke), and publishers, Moore was also recognized for work as a nurturer of creative talent and a

trainer of future children's book editors.[4] Powerful and eccentric (see Martens, forthcoming, for details about Moore's doll "Nicholas"), Moore was alternately respected, revered, and feared, and she wielded enormous influence in the burgeoning field of children's literature—all at a time when most women did not have careers outside the home. Library service to young adults started shortly thereafter, and by 1925, separate sections for young people were instituted in libraries ("VOYA," 2007) in cities including: Cleveland, Ohio; Trenton, New Jersey; and New York City. This was in response to post-Industrial Revolution social movements, and an interest in improving lives of children, where "Social reform"—especially around improving minds of the young—became a unifying discourse on librarianship for young people.

Joan Atkinson (1986) identifies four influential librarians as key players in the development of the field of young adult librarianship during the first half of the 20th century: Mabel Williams, Margaret Scoggin, Jean Roos, and Margaret Alexander Edwards. Mabel Williams, who worked for Anne Carroll Moore at the New York Public Library from 1916 to 1951, was a pioneer in serving "young adults" by recognizing them as a population separate from the overarching category of "children. She "instituted the first systematic service offered for young adults by a public library" (p. 3). At the time, during an era of minimal recreational reading, one in which students' reading might be limited to textbooks in the classroom and classics at home, Williams's goal was to focus middle school and high school students' attention on books, in order to protect them from the content of newsstands and moving pictures. Williams started a publication of recommended titles called *Books for the Teen Age* at the New York Public Library. Her successor, Margaret Clara Scoggin, who served as Superintendent of Work with Young

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[4] One such editor was Margaret McElderry

People at the New York Public Library from 1952 until 1967, was responsible for developing the Nathan Straus Branch of the New York Public Library for young adults, which was active in "research on reading interests" (Atkinson, 1986, p. 32). Building on Williams's work, Scoggin involved teens in reviews by starting a teen book reviewer group, which published a pamphlet for teens called *Circulatin' the News* in the 1940s.[5] This gave teens voice in the books recommended for this age group, and it has been a theme in young adult librarianship ever since. Jean Roos worked at the Cleveland Public Library from 1925 to 1959, and was supervisor of the youth department from 1940 to 1959, where she was responsible for services to youth in schools and within the public library. Margaret Edwards, at the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore, is known for her seminal work with young adults in designing Young Adult Services, which will be described in section 1.2 below. Despite its focus on young people, young adult librarianship operated for years in the interstices of the overall profession of children's librarianship, with only minimal funding for its national organization until the 1970s, and without a literary award for young adult fiction until the first Margaret A. Edwards Award was awarded in 1988, followed by the Michael L. Printz Award in 2000.

By the 1920s, literary criticism became an important part of many professional children's librarians' work as children's literature experts. Moore started reviewing books for *The Horn Book* in 1919, and her *Three Owls* column ran in *The New York Herald Tribune* from 1924 to 1930 (NYPL, n.d.). As a reviewer, Moore emphasized the protectionist tradition in her work as she worked to eliminate inferior works, such as

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[5] Scoggin's reach extended beyond the borders of the United States, as she served as an advisor at the International Youth Library in Munich, Germany.

serials and pulp fiction, criticized for their mass market, rather than literary, appeal. A burgeoning group of librarians and—soon thereafter editors, too—adopted a role as the official arbiters of taste for youth, responsible for reforming reading habits and for shaping the minds of all children. Literary criticism of children's literature was followed by awards, which also became a key activity of librarians. Moore was involved in the creation of the two most prominent awards for American children's literature: the Newbery Medal for fiction (1922), and the Caldecott Medal for illustration (1938).[6] Criticism boosted the cultural capital in books for young people, but awards cemented it and made it enduring. Such awards, given by librarians, "confirmed the reputation of children's librarians as critics" (Lundin, 2004, p. 49), and served as a "critical prerogative that exerted their authority in the field and established children's books as high literary fare" (p. 49).

An additional responsibility claimed by children's librarians (and tied to Progressive Era ideals) was their mission of shaping children's minds by eliminating "bad" literature from their collections (Jenkins, 1995; Denning 1987). Such "bad" literature, defined as that which did not conform to their standards of quality, was replaced with a selection of the "best" literature for children, as defined by Jenkins (1995):

> "The values of professional librarians were naturally expressed in their book selection standards. The basic standards used to select children's books were generally described as 'literary quality,' 'child appeal,' and 'good values.' The books that were selected and reviewed favorably by youth services librarians had

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[6] The first Newbery Medal, named after John Newbery, an eighteenth-century British bookseller, which was first awarded by the American Library Association in 1922. The Newbery Medal awards the "author of the most distinguished contribution to American literature for children" (ALA.org, retrieved 2/28/2011). The Caldecott Medal (1938), named after nineteenth-century British illustrator Randolph Caldecott, awards "the artist of the most distinguished American picture book for children" (ALA.org, retrieved 7/15/2010).

to meet all three standards. A book with literary quality was characterized by the same elements of characters, plot, setting, dialogue, and theme that literary quality was characterized by the same elements of characters, plot, setting, dialogue, and theme that literary reviewers valued in adult reading matter of the day. A book with child appeal was one that children were drawn to, read or listened to eagerly, and asked for repeatedly. Good values were those espoused by educated middle-class women. These included cooperation, friendship, acceptance, and tolerance on a personal, community, and international level" (p. 10–11).

According to Dee Garrison (1979), while both books for adults and books for children were frequently censored by librarians at the turn of the 20th century, Progressive Era ideals about children being a population in need of protection allowed for children's books to be censored much more liberally. "Idealistic literary standards persisted longer for children than for their parents, however, chiefly because the necessity to monitor the mind of the child was so generally accepted by the public at large" (p. 211). As cultural intermediaries, a burgeoning group of children's librarians (and soon thereafter editors, too) named themselves the official arbiters of taste for youth, responsible for reforming gauche reading habits and for improving the minds of all children (considered to be a vulnerable population) through books (Lundin, 2004).

In tune with this early professional criticism by adult readers evaluating books for children, an emerging ideology related to their self-proclaimed expertise is evident in the first five years of Newbery winners retrieved from the sponsoring organization's website, the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC, n.d.). The content of the award-winning titles reflects the experts' propensity toward pedagogy and didacticism, consistent with Progressive Era values about the purpose of good literature as being that which served to improve children's minds, and reflecting those values of "literary quality," "child appeal," and "good values" described earlier.

The Story of Mankind (van Loon, 1922)	The Voyages of Dr. Doolittle (Lofting, 1923)	The Dark Frigate (Hawes, 1924)	Tales from Silver Lands (Finger, 1925)	Shen of the Sea (Chrisman, 1926)
• Ambitious history of mankind, from creation through the Monroe Doctrine	• Introduces readers to the world, and presents a message about animal rights	• Elevated (i.e. challenging) language; moralistic condemnation of criminals (pirates)	• American interpretation of Latin American folk tales	• American Interpretation of Chinese folk tales

Figure 1.4. First Five Newbery Winners

The first winner, *The Story of Mankind* (van Loon, 1922) won the Newbery Medal in 1922. This book provides an ambitious history of mankind, beginning with the creation of the earth. According to the table of contents, chapter headings include "The World of Columbus," "The Origin of Russia," "How Europe Conquered the World," "The Monroe Doctrine," and "Manpower and Machinepower," providing children with a summary of world history—at least from a particular American perspective. *The Voyages of Doctor Doolittle* (Lofting, 1923) was the second winner, and while this book is a work of fiction, *Doctor Doolittle* introduces readers to the world while also presenting a strong message about animal rights.[7] A fictional work about pirates, *The Dark Frigate* (Hawes, 1924), was the third winner, and it may have been chosen for its elevated (i.e., difficult) language, which certainly connects with the goal of improving minds (or at least boosting vocabularies), as well as for its moralistic condemnation of criminals—in this case, pirates. The fourth and fifth award winners, *Tales from Silver Lands*[8] (Finger, 1925), and *Shen of the Sea* (Chrisman, 1926), each represent an American's interpretation of Latin American and Chinese folktales. Since these two titles were written by North American

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[7] Note that later versions have been edited to remove racist content.

[8] Interesting to note that in 1925, *Nicholas: A Manhattan Christmas Story* by Annie Carroll Moore (Putnam) was an honor book, considering not only Moore's influence as a literary critic, but also her involvement with the establishment of this award.

cultural outsiders, as opposed to being written by Latino or Asian cultural insiders, a modern critical view might deem them inauthentic; but based on their award-winning status at the time, the books were considered tools for introducing American readers to other cultures. Hence their primary focus was connected with the arbiters' ideology on books, in which a book's value was directly connected to its inherent educational or cultural capital. As books that taught about other cultures, these two award-winning books must have provided high levels of both educational and cultural value in the eyes of their contemporary evaluators. In each of the cases, the first five winners arguably represent the awarders' definition of quality literature as being that which is infused with educational, moral, and cultural objectives.

1.1.2 Publishing in the Progressive Era.

The rising discourse around children's literature in the context of reviews and awards led to comparable award-winning children's books increasingly being considered as commodities infused with cultural capital worthy of evaluation, criticism, and prizes, on par with books for adults. As structures of awards and reviews around children's books proliferated, publishers realized they could exploit the cultural capital of books for economic gain (Squires, 2007) by forming separate children's departments within their houses, starting with Louise Seaman Bechtel at Macmillan in 1919. These departments worked in tandem with their primary market, children's libraries, and they used the structures of reviews and awards put in place by librarians to help guide their lists. In this era, the realms of children's librarianship and publishing were interdependent, and largely overlapping within women's networks.

It is important to note that professional developments in the field are closely connected to the general history of gender and women's roles. Essentialist views on women held women to be naturally suited for anything related to children, which resulted in what was surely an unintended consequence—that women would find success in this new profession of children's publishing. Many of the early children's editors emerged from other professions considered appropriate for women, such as teaching, bookselling, or librarianship. One such former teacher, Louise Seaman Bechtel, was the first children's editor, hired by Macmillan in 1919 (Eddy, 2006; Miller, 2003), and other houses quickly followed suit. May Massey was hired at Doubleday in 1922 (and then Viking, in 1932), and Virginia Kirkus, who later created the review journal *Kirkus*, was head of the children's department at Harper & Brothers starting in 1925.

Librarianship, publishing, and bookselling for children emerged as interdependent and overlapping realms within professional women's networks, in which women could not only succeed, but also rise to prominence. All of this created an important cycle of influence in children's literature, operating between libraries, publishers, and booksellers. For example, when Bertha Mahoney Miller created the first children's bookstore in America, *The Bookshop for Boys and Girls* in Boston, her interior design was much influenced by Anne Carroll Moore's Children's Room at the New York Public Library (Eddy, 2006), and Alice Jordan, an early children's librarian in Boston, served on the advisory board of Mahoney Miller's store (Eddy, 2006). Later, Mahoney Miller created an exhaustive recommended list of American children's books organized by age and subject matter, and Anne Carroll Moore used this list as a guideline for collection development in children's rooms at the New York Public Library branches (Eddy, 2006).

By the end of the 1920s, "this network of women—including editors, critics, and librarians—supported [each other's] aesthetic commitment in vocal and powerful ways" (Hearne, 1996, p. 757). This new field of cultural production of children's literature dominated by women arose out of a synergy of both Progressive Era views on childhood and education, and essentialist views on women's work, which inadvertently provided an opportunity for emerging women editors, critics, and librarians to dominate the field as professional children's literature experts—the arbiters of taste in the field.

1.2 Mid-Century and the Cold-War: Margaret Edwards and Ursula Nordstrom

By the middle of the 20th century, the field of production of children's literature was well-established. Children's divisions existed in libraries across America, and many publishers had followed Macmillan's example by forming separate children's imprints within their houses. "Teenagers" were seen as a population separate from the overarching category of "childhood"—as a demographic that belonged neither with childhood nor with adulthood, but that somehow connected the two—and also as a new population to which products could be marketed.

1.2.1 Mid-Century: Acknowledging the "teenage."

"Adolescence can be defined as that period in a person's development when he no longer sees himself as a child, but other people do not see him as an adult."
(YA Task Force, YAAN, 1974)

The concept of "adolescents" as a population that straddled childhood and adulthood had existed since publication of psychologist and educator G. Stanley Hall's *Adolescence* in 1904. The term "youth culture" was first used by the American sociologist Talcott Parsons in 1942 to define "a set of patterns and behavior phenomena which involve a highly complex combination of age grading and sex role elements."

(Parsons, 1942, p. 606).[9] By the late 1950s, there were more adolescents than ever in the United States because the first children of the post-World War II "Baby Boom" were becoming teens. A convergence of events indirectly supported this burgeoning population. The Space Race between the United States and the former Soviet Union, and the ensuing Cold War, encouraged President Lyndon Johnson's *Great Society* agenda (Rollin, 1999), which in turn financially supported education and libraries in an effort to eliminate poverty through education—and to increase the focus on science within education. According to young adult librarian Joan Atkinson (1986), "After Sputnik, the emphasis [was] on upgrading education" (p. 40). This emphasis, which provided money for libraries, also helped the field of children's publishing, which supplied libraries with books.

In an economic environment that supported and emphasized education, teenagers stayed in school longer and more of them graduated from high school and went to college, which delayed their entry into the workforce. Teenagers' part-time jobs provided both time and money for leisure-related activities (Rollin, 1999), and manufacturers recognized a market for this demographic of specific products influenced by popular culture, from television, to film (from the delinquents of *The Blackboard Jungle* to rebels like James Dean and Marlon Brando), to rock-and-roll. These products were counter-culture to the types of products desired by their parents, establishing young adults as both a population and a market separate from adults.

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[9] Throughout this dissertation, this population is interchangeably referred to as "adolescents," "teenagers," "teens," "young adults," and "young people."

1.2.2 Mid-Century librarianship.

Margaret Alexander Edwards (1902–1988) started as librarian at the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore, Maryland in 1932. She is perhaps the most famous young adult librarian of the 20th century, her fame cemented by her (1969) book *The Fair Garden and the Swarm of Beasts*. According to Edwards, the title of her autobiography was paraphrased from Jared Bean's (1773) *Old Librarian's Almanac*, in which he writes that the library "'is no more to be thrown open to the ravages of the unreasoning Mob [meaning the general public, especially young people], than is a Fair Garden to be laid unprotected at the Mercy of a Swarm of Beasts'" (Edward, 1969, p. ix). As such, Edwards considered the library to be "the Fair Garden" and the teenage patrons to be the "beasts." Contrary to this rather insulting nomenclature, Edwards had enormous respect for her young adult patrons, stating that "There is no age group more important than the young adults who in a few short years will be guiding the destiny of this nation, deciding among other things whether to drop the bomb or to use atomic energy for man's good" (Edwards, 1969, p. 19). A forceful personality, not only did Edwards value teens, but she also considered work with young adults as being singularly important to guiding the future of the nation. Because of this, she saw her (and other young adult librarians') work as being infused with the mission of providing the very best in literature to young adults. Edwards' ideological frame of what she considered the "very best" included books which would enable young people to make critical decisions. Edwards felt that unless "man became truly civilized" (via fiction, of course), mankind was nearing the end of the world. Edwards' mission is best understood in view of the Cold War context, which framed a large portion of her career.

In order to fulfill her goal, Edwards initiated for all new library hires her own training program, in which the objective was "to interest our readers in books that would help them become citizens of the world" (p. 20). To enhance their readers' advisory skills, new librarians working under Edwards were required to read and report upon 300 books from "The New York Public Library list of titles it was most essential to read" (p. 22), so that they would be prepared to serve in a readers' advisory capacity when teens approached them in the library. Edwards felt that sending young adults to search in the catalog was equivalent to losing them forever. As many young adult librarians before Edwards and after, she believed in including teens' voices in book recommendations. Following the lead of the New York Public Library's *Back Talk,* which was a pamphlet comprised of book reviews written by teens (following other established models, such as Margaret Scoggin's *Circulatin' the News*), and was intended to provide teens' voices about books which could be used by teens, teachers, publishers, and librarians, Edwards initiated a pamphlet at the Pratt Library called *You're the Critic.* Understanding the difficulty of getting teens to write book reviews on their own time, Edwards worked with teachers to arrange for extra credit for review writers (Edwards, 1969), and she turned this into a publication written by teenagers for their peers.[10] Because of her enormous contribution to the field of young adult literature, the American Library Association has two awards named after her. The Margaret A. Edwards Award is presented annually to an author whose body of work has made a "significant and lasting contribution to young

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[10] With a strong belief that the library was for all, Edwards refused to recognize segregation, and her outreach extended into Baltimore's poorest (and racially segregated) neighborhoods. During the war, Edwards, who was originally from a farm in Texas, bought a horse, and organized a horse-drawn bookmobile, which she herself drove out into those neighborhoods.

adult literature" ("YALSA: About the Edwards Award," 2012) and the Alex Awards are given for the best books for young adults in a given year.

The next section will cover developments in children's librarianship and publishing over the last 100 years. Section 1.2.3 focuses on the institutional frameworks that supported the field. Section 1.2.4 focuses on mid-century publishing, in which children's publishing entered a "golden age." Library collections grew, and as a result, children's publishing expanded to fill such collections, and became a profitable field. Section 1.3 surveys the 1970s, as librarianship—and then publishing—became focused on social change, and children's librarians went from being protectors of children to advocates for children (Jenkins, 1995). The "radical" librarians of the 1970s, who felt that the existing library institutions did not support their work, founded their own network via the Young Adult Alternative Newsletter (YAAN). And finally, section 1.4 looks at the 21st century, in which technology has enabled new forms of interaction between publishers and consumers, as well as an online community of librarians around the YALSA Blog ("YALSA Blog," n.d.).

1.2.3 Young Adult library institutions.

It is impossible to write about librarianship for young people without mentioning the institutions, which contributed to shaping the field. The following section covers the regulatory branches of the American Library Association (ALA), journals, and awards, which apply to youth services. Sources include the Association for Library Service to Children's History page ("ALSC History," n.d.), the Voice of Youth Advocates (VOYA) Chronology at ("VOYA," n.d.), and the Young Adult Library Services Association's (YALSA) History page ("YALSA History," n.d.).

Early attempts to formalize, standardize, and regulate library service to young

people began with the Club of Children's Librarians, formed at the 1900 ALA annual

meeting in Montreal, of which none other than "Miss A.C. Moore was made chairman

…" ("ALSC History," n.d.). The goal of this "club" was to "offer its services in the

making of the program for future sessions on library work with children, if desired." As a

result of the founding of this club, a formalized "Section for Children's Librarians" of the

ALA was established at the 1902 ALA Annual meeting in Boston. In 1941, this became

the ALA's Division for Children and Young People**.** It comprised the "American

Association of School Librarians (formerly the School Libraries Section which had its

first meeting in 1915), the Children's Library Association (formerly the Section for

Library Work with Children**,** which had its first meeting in 1901) and the Young People's

Reading Round Table which first met in 1930" ("ALSC History," n.d.). The division for

Children and Young People had its own journal called *Top of the News*.

Institutions supporting children's (and later, young adult) services evolved with

the field. As areas grew in size, the institutions governing the field developed as well. For

example, as library service expanded during the 1950s, the Division for Children and

Young People was split by 1957 into the Young Adult Services Division (YASD) and the

Children's Services Division (CSD), and one secretary, Mildred Batchelder, served both

divisions. By 1975, ensuing criticism (lead by YASD president Carol Starr) that most of

the resources of the secretary were directed towards serving the Children's Services

Division, YASD finally got its own executive secretary.[11]

YASD Duties included selection via book selection committees, including the

Best Books for Young Adults committee, and Committee work, which during the 1970s

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[11] Evelyn Shaevel served as executive secretary, and later, executive director, from 1975-1989.

expanded to include: "the Intellectual Freedom Committee (1976), Legislation

Committee (1977), Selected Films and Videos for Young Adults (1977), Education

Committee (1978), and Organization and Bylaws (1979)" (YALSA History, n.d.).

Committees were also tasked with creating publications based on their work, organizing

pre-conferences for the midwinter and annual meetings of the American Library

Association, and administering various grants, including research grants. Partially in

response to her criticism of *Top of the News*, and her desire for increased emphasis on

services to teens, Carol Starr created the Young Adult Alternative Newsletter, which she

edited from 1973 to 1979. A more formal professional journal, *The Voice of Youth

Advocates* (VOYA), was co-founded in 1978 by Dorothy Broderick and her partner (and

frequent YAAN contributor) Mary K. Chelton ("VOYA Broderick," 2011).

In 1992, YASD became the Young Adult Library Services Association of the

ALA (YALSA). In efforts to expand library services to young adults, YALSA developed

both a mission statement and a vision statement, launched a teen website called "Teen

Hoopla," established guidelines for service to young adults, and created new book

awards: the Alex Award in 1988 (named after Margaret Alexander Edwards), and The

Printz in 2000 (named after YA librarian Michael Printz), and it expanded its committees,

adding eight genre committees and other popular book selection lists including *Best

Books for Young Adults*, but also *Quick Picks* and *Popular Paperbacks*. The *Journal of

Youth Services in Libraries* (JOYS) was established. Starting in the 1990s, the ALA was

an early leader in using technology, as exemplified by its use of the ALA "gopher" from

1992 to post information for its members, and soon thereafter by establishing listservs

and a website, and by putting JOYS online. Preconferences at the annual meeting of the

ALA and its midwinter conference as well as grant administration became other important tasks within YALSA. By the 21st century, institutions that support children's librarianship, and indirectly, children's publishing, had expanded to fit a growing field. In their first 100 years, from the beginning of the 20th century to the beginning of the 21st century, children's librarianship and publishing worked synergistically as two halves of a field.

Throughout these expansions, and into the 21st century, a primary duty of YALSA remained producing booklists and guidelines to aid librarians serving teens. One example is the "Best Books for Young Adults" (BBYA) list. Although prior incarnations of this list had existed since 1930 (Cart, 1996), earlier lists comprised carefully selected adult books of interest to teenage readers (such as Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*) that fulfilled librarians' desire that books be of high teen interest, but—ever protectionist in nature—low on adult topics or issues. As more young adult titles were published, they replaced adult books on the list. In 2010, because of the ever-growing size of the BBYA list, which previously included all genres of books published for young adults in a given year, the committee became the "Best Fiction for Young Adults" (BFYA) Committee instead. The next section looks at the parallel field of children's publishing, starting in mid-20th century.

1.2.4 Mid-Century Publishing

With a career spanning a large part of the 20th century in children's publishing, Ursula Nordstrom was a transformative figure in children's literature. Her career at Harper & Brothers spanned almost fifty years (1931 to 1980), in which she went from clerk, to head of her own imprint, Ursula Nordstrom Books (Marcus, 1998). She edited

what have become canonical works of American childhood, including *Good Night Moon* by Margaret Wise Brown, *Where the Wild Things Are* by Maurice Sendak, and *Stuart Little* by E.B. White. During an era when independent young adult imprints did not exist within publishing houses, and books for children from babies to young adults were published under "children's" imprints, Nordstrom also edited young adult novels, including those by M.E. Kerr and Louise Fitzhugh, as well as more controversial books, such as the first book for young adults which referenced homosexuality: John Donovan's *I'll Get There, It Better Be Worth the Trip* (Marcus, 1998) which was originally published in 1969. By the 1960s, the field of children's literature had been firmly established as its own entity separate from the field of adult literature, and it was entering a period of rapid growth, characterized by economic support and an emerging demographic. Following Sputnik, and later the Secondary Education Act of 1965, schools and libraries got an influx of funding, which meant they had money to buy books. As schools and libraries expanded, publishers' children's divisions profited and expanded.

Starting in the 1950s, publishers, who had already established separate children's imprints, recognized that the library market was the core market for books for young people. In order to address this market, they hired marketing staff and sent them out on reconnaissance trips. Mimi Kayden, one such veteran marketer who worked for Ursula Nordstrom in the 1950s, was given a budget and a rental car and told to "go out, dear, and find out something about this [growing library market]" (Kayden, interview, September 2010). Regional conferences cropped up to support school libraries, and this group of junior marketers and librarians spent many holidays[12] attending conferences (which were

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[12] Kayden spent many Thanksgivings at conferences such as the National Council of Teachers of English, which always met over Thanksgiving.

held over holidays to avoid interfering with the school calendar). According to Kayden, "We were young and unimportant to the whole scheme of things, we weren't editors, … [we were paid] five thousand dollars a year." Kayden compares her work to the work of the itinerant peddlers (traveling salesmen) of the early 20th century, who served as conduits of news between customers as they traveled door-to-door and spread news along the way. Kayden would spend at least a month every year on the road in California, travelling from San Bernardino, to Riverside, and to La Jolla, establishing a network of librarians who would otherwise not necessarily meet each other, and serving as a conduit for information just as the peddlers had. With a few exceptions, such as Bill Morris,[13] whose career at Harper started in 1955, these paid, professional "schmoozers"—whose responsibilities of seeking potential markets resided in the interstices between editorial departments and the marketplace, but did not include actually selling books—were primarily women. With hostess-like elements in their job descriptions, these marketers arranged dinners and lunches, wrote personal letters including thank-you notes, congratulatory notes, and sympathy notes, and served as communicators, facilitators, and liaisons between publishing companies, libraries, and the young adults who used them. As such, women's networks, within both librarianship and publishing provided a framework for the field.

1.3 From "Protectors" to "Advocates:" How the 1970s Changed the Field

In the late 1960s and 1970s, cultural factors such as the women's movement, the sexual revolution, and the Vietnam War influenced both librarians' and publishers'

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[13] Eden Ross Lipson's obituary of William Morris is available here:
http://www.nytimes.com/2003/09/30/arts/william-c-morris-74-innovator-in-children-s-book-marketing.html

perceptions of young adults. Librarians' ideologies on their role shifted: if earlier 20th-century youth services librarians had focused on their role as "child protectors," by the 1970s, this role shifted toward one as "child advocates" (Jenkins, 1995). Between the de facto social-worker-like role adopted by many librarians during this period, and the realist fiction (problem novels) published at the time, the focus shifted from protecting young people from library material which might hurt them, to an ideology of providing young people with the information they needed to make good life choices. In the eyes of young adult librarians of the 1970s, library institutions which had existed since the inception of the field were not sufficiently supportive of their efforts. The next section demonstrates how these librarians altered the existing model by going outside the established framework and developing their own alternative support system.

By the 1970s, young adult literature had been established as a genre-within-a-genre of children's literature (Cart, 1996. Librarians who served young adults helped radicalize the profession by disrupting existing library institutions and creating their own alternative organization, and by providing resources in the library for teens that instead of just improving minds, would also help improve teenagers' lives. At the same time, the overarching field of librarianship for young people was partitioned into distinct categories of children's and teen librarianship, and the ideas of protecting or shielding children from "bad" books were revised with an inherent interest in providing young adults with the information they needed, thereby casting librarians as advocates for young people. Librarians redefined what was considered to be the "best," from books that would improve young people's minds, to books that would improve young people's lives, heralding a new cultural sensitivity towards real life issues faced by young adults. At the

beginning of the 20th century, protecting children might have meant censoring books and removing controversial content; but by the 1970s, a professional and ideological shift in the field suggested that protecting children and young adults meant informing them about their life choices. This shift toward advocacy meant providing young adults with resources on topics from substance abuse to sexual education.

As a result, during the 1970s, formal structures in young adult librarianship established by Margaret Edwards, and her network of trainees, were replaced with what Campbell (1973) calls a "let-it-all-hang-out" attitude, as libraries gradually became information centers with material on whatever teens needed. New young adult librarians and the books being published for this readership reflected the societal changes of the 1970s. The realistic fiction published during this era didactically addressed real-life problems from sexually transmitted disease and teen pregnancy, to homosexuality, the civil rights movement, drug abuse, and anti-war sentiment (Cart, 1996). Librarians, who were in charge of collection development, and were the first to get books into the hands of young adults, would be the ones to provide the material that would help steer adolescents toward making good life choices.

According to Cart (1996), the early problem novels written for young adults in the late 1960s and early 1970s had an excessive focus on a single problem such as divorce, abortion, suicide, or dropping out of school rather than focusing on the characters themselves. But despite the seriousness of their subject matter, Roger Sutton wrote that "teens don't even read these books so much as they gobble them like peanuts, picking them up by the handful, one right after the other" (Sutton in Cart (1996), p. 67), as they sought information that previously had been difficult to obtain. While these books were

tasked with protecting, preparing, and warning teens about the adult situations they faced, in order to be read by teens, they also had to entertain. By necessity, books published for young adults had to cater to two audiences—teen readers and adult gatekeepers.

Young Adult (YA) literature straddles the space between children's literature and literature for adults, with an inherent tension between the adults who at times use YA literature to control, shape, and guide young minds (as in the moralizing messages of 1970s problem novels), and the teenage consumers and their desire for intellectual freedom, participation, and empowerment. From the publishers' perspective, as we will see in the case studies of Chapters 5, 6, and 7, YA literature also bridges education and entertainment. The rhetoric of teen empowerment, fostered and encouraged by young adult librarians, has been part of YA literature since the genre was established in the late 1960s, when publishers identified an opportunity in the marketplace and constructed a genre to capitalize on it. Librarians have been primary supporters of teen fiction, serving both as champions of intellectual freedom for teens and as primary critics (and the arbiters of taste) of the YA genre, and they have encouraged teen participation in the selection process with the annual *Best Books for Young Adults* (BBYA) bibliography. A contemporary example of the BBYA process is discussed in 1.4. However, as we will see in ensuing chapters, the Internet provides countless venues for teen participation in the review process on sites removed from the library—from teen review sites such as weRead.com, to independent blogs, to publisher's websites. As the field of librarianship changed to respond to changing cultural values during the 1970s, a group of revolutionary librarians emerged. Examples of such appear in Celeste West's (1972) *Revolting Librarians*. Young Adult services grew in the 1970s, and many, such as Carol

Starr, felt that the institutions that supported the field were not supportive of it, and that these institutions favored children's services. As a result, Starr subversively created her own network for young adult librarians. Both of these writers (West and Starr) will be discussed in the next section.

1.3.1 The "Revolting" librarians and the *Young Adult Alternative Newsletter.*

San Francisco librarian Celeste West's collection: *Revolting Librarians*, published in 1972 under her imprint "Booklegger Press" in San Francisco, examined librarianship through a counter-cultural lens. This "collectively-published" volume included articles which critically addressed the field of librarianship, such as: "The Sensuous Librarian" by Kathleen Glab about confronting librarian stereotypes; an article called "Library School Lunacy" by Harleigh Kyson about changing the orthodoxy of library schools; Sanford Berman's article called "Libraries to the People!" about serving the counterculture; and an article by Jana Varlejs about library service for migrant workers in Cranbury, NJ.

Especially interesting in the context of this dissertation is a critical article by Anne Osborn called "How to Annihilate Library Service to Teenagers," (Osborn in West, 1972, p. 58–62), Osborn criticizes the "protector" role of librarians which had existed in previous decades. For example, if her supervisors deemed books that she ordered for her teen patrons to be controversial, they would get " . . . lost, stolen, or strayed. If the book arrived and was too objectionable, it was sent back to the publisher posthaste before I saw it. If the book arrived and was objectionable, but I caught it in time and made a fuss, it might go on the Dirty Book Shelf, hidden from the public in the sorting room and requiring proof of over-18-age to get a book fetched from it" (p. 59). When attempts by

Osborn to make her teen collection " balanced," which she defines as including magazines such as *Rolling Stone*, *Teen*, and *NOW* (the publication of the National Organization of Women) as a counterpoint to conservative publications in the library, and by including teens' requests, she met resistance. Finding no support within the library, Osborn began attending meetings of the Young Adult Reviewers of Southern California (YAR), where she encountered kindred spirits.[14] "We were saddened but not surprised to find how many directors thought we were very wrong to make available to teenagers such items as sex manuals (*Boys and Sex*), novels with sexual encounters and four-letter words (*Love Story)*, books advocating or describing radical behavior and ideas (*Do It*), books describing drug use (*The Drug Scene*), and student underground publications (*How Old Will You Be in 1984?*)*"* (Osborne in West, p. 61).

During this time, one young adult librarian, Carol Starr, emerged as a leader who would address the frustrations of young adult librarians and change the institutional structures that governed young adult library services. Growing up during the 1950s, Carol Starr understood early on that as a woman, she could be ". . . one of five things . . . a mother, a teacher, a nurse, an airline hostess, or a librarian" (Starr, interview, 2011). Starr knew she did not want children, she fainted at the sign of blood, and she did not consider herself attractive enough to be an airline hostess. But she loved reading, so "librarian" became an obvious career goal. Starr graduated from library school at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1967, the same year that *The Outsiders* was published.

Starr was frustrated by the way that funding that was supposed to be shared between the Association for Library Services to Children and Young Adult Services Division of the ALA continuously supported children's services over services to teens.

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[14] Inteviewee Patty Campbell was another attendee of the Young Adult Reviewers.

She identified a similar struggle for YA services within the division's journal, *Top of the News,* which she felt privileged content related to children's services rather than teen services (and also took months to publish items). Eager to defend her claim about uneven distribution of children's content compared to teen content in *Top of the News*, Carol Starr (with librarian Lisa Naef) conducted a content analysis of *Top of the News* in YAAN (Starr, Naef, 1973) and proved overwhelmingly that almost two-thirds of articles, news items, and booklists favored the Children's Services Division rather than the Young Adult Services Division, despite the fact that CSD and YASD members shared the cost of producing *Top of the News*.

Recognizing that library institutions that existed to support children's services in general were not sufficiently supporting young adult services, Carol Starr identified a need for alternative young adult voices. This motivated Starr to start the *Young Adult Alternative Newsletter* (YAAN), which she compiled five to six times a year between 1973 and 1979 (Starr, interview, 2011). A community arose around the newsletter, which served to connect previously insular librarians, by giving these librarians a voice and a platform on which they could share resources, issues they faced in their libraries, and issues faced in the field. While some of the writing in YAAN may seem personal, and the writing style colloquial, as if one librarian were writing to a group of like-minded friends, YAAN's reach was large, and its content was distributed at a professional level. At its height, Starr reports subscriptions of over 1,000 libraries. YAAN raised awareness by highlighting efforts of individual librarians in a shared forum. Many of those YAAN opinion makers went on to be professional leaders in the field of young adult librarianship, starting with Carol Starr, who founded YAAN, but also served as YASD

president. Other frequent YAAN contributors who went on to leadership roles in the field include Mary Kay Chelton, who served as YASD president in 1976, and Patty Campbell, who would win the Grolier Award, an award given annually for outstanding contributions to the field of young adult librarianship.

Because of the way it connected librarians and encouraged shared participation, YAAN could be considered an "ur" blog (or what Welch (2010) describes as a "paper blog"), albeit one with librarians' collaborative participation via the United States Postal System rather than via the Internet. According to former teen librarian Patty Campbell, before YAAN, librarians felt very isolated in their branches. Some had monthly face-to-face young adult reviewer meetings with neighboring librarians (such as the YAR meetings Anne Osborn attended), but when YAAN came along, it ". . . changed the world. It was just a mimeographed thing, you know, stapled-together yellow paper, but everybody just grabbed it! It tied us together—it gave us a voice. It was very exciting. Carol [Starr] became very famous, and very looked-up-to. She definitely became the leader at that time" (Campbell, interview, 2011). Starr did become famous as the YAAN editor, and was elected president of YASD from 1974 to 1975. Through the newsletter, Starr befriended others who shared her passion about young adult services, and she appointed those friends, including Patty Campbell and Mary Kay Chelton, to YASD committees, thereby single-handedly shaping the future of young adult services in America. With YAAN, Starr ". . . provided the conduit for all of our interests to feed off of each other, and gave us a voice, a communication voice, and realized that we all had lots to share and we wanted to!" (Starr, interview, 2011). By 1977 YASD was able to

break away from the Association of Library Services to Children and hire its own full-time executive secretary, as described in section 1.2.3.

YAAN reads like a cultural lens on the 1970s. Common themes which appeared in nearly every issue of the YAAN newsletters from 1973 to 1979 reflect the burgeoning women's movement, the sexual revolution, and an awareness of societal problems of youth including drug addiction, suicide, teen runaways, juvenile incarceration, pregnancy, and disease prevention, as well as a willingness to address such problems via the library and to give teens agency in library programming and collection development. Figure 1.5 below outlines key, recurring themes within YAAN as shown in Figure 5.1. The themes are discussed individually in sections 1.3.1.1 through 1.3.1.5. They include: 1) The women's movement; 2) sexual education in the library; 3) social work via the library; 4) teens' involvement in YA programming and selection; 5) publishers' interactions via YAAN. These all illustrate how library service to young adults both influenced—and was influenced by—cultural changes of the 1970s, as YA services moved from ideologies of improving young people's minds, to improving young people's lives.
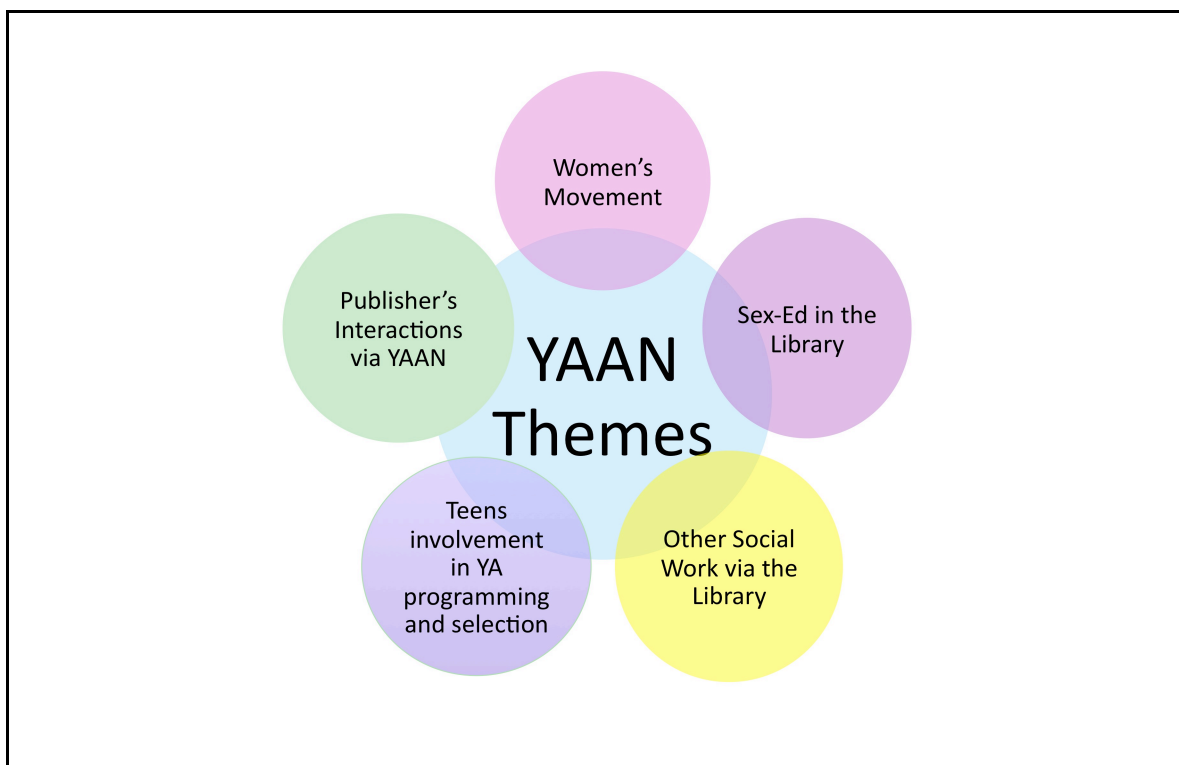
Figure 1.5. Recurring Themes within the Young Adult Alternative Newsletter (YAAN)

The Women's Movement

Themes from YAAN connected to society at large as such issues manifested themselves in the library. For example, using their library platform, YAAN contributors helped further the women's movement in a range of ways: from librarians' subversive efforts to eradicate sexist content in educational texts and pamphlets; to writing scathing reviews of books with sexist content; to organizing informational panels at the American Library Association conferences, such as one panel on "sexism in adolescent lives and literature" ("Panel," 1974); to listings of feminist resources such as "SHARE: Sisters Have Resources Everywhere" (Chelton, YAAN, 1974). Another example describes the potential of using comics for underground feminist activities. A Bay Area YA Librarian's

meeting of September 1975 was organized around the topic of "Women's Comic Collective" and examined the difference between "overground" vs. "underground" comics, and the possibility for feminists to use "underground" comics to "reach people who generally don't read" ("Comics," YAAN, 1976). In this way, informational material could be disguised as entertainment. One such example was the underground comic-style brochure called "Abortion Eve" which was distributed in free clinics and in libraries.

YAAN also includes several descriptions of how librarians challenged content in print material for young people, demonstrating how they used resources available to them to raise awareness and create social change. For example, in 1976, Starr included a copy of a letter written by librarian Arlene Gross from Croton, NY to Mr. Mark R. Arnold, VP of Advertising, Westchester Rockland Newspapers, in which Gross complains about sexist representations of women in a brochure for young people about careers in print media. According to Gross, in this pamphlet, women are depicted not as journalists, but always as secretaries, in tight skirts and high heels, and as a result, this pamphlet does not present the more serious side of media careers as options available to women (Gross, YAAN, 1976). Two other such examples demonstrate how librarians were able to use their purchasing power for social change. A copy of a letter written by Patty Campbell to an editor complains about sexism in a book called *Challenging Careers in Urban Affairs* by Sterling McLeod, stating that while "the information in this book may be accurate…it certainly is not going to offer any aid and comfort to a young woman who wants to become an architect or a city planner. Since we think this kind of guidance is an important function of a career book, we will not purchase this title, nor any other that ignore women's needs in this manner" (Campbell, YAAN, 1977). In a 1979 *Random*

Notes section, Starr includes an entry about how feminist English-as-a-foreign-language

teachers were organizing to combat sexism in teaching materials and textbooks. In the

same issue, Starr promotes "… a growing field of women's music, a new cultural event

that is represented by an impressive list of feminist musicians recorded usually on their

own labels" (Starr, YAAN, 1979). Reviews of books were gathered in each issue, and in

the second volume published in 1973, Starr gives a scathing review of a book called *Your*

Future in Library Careers by Alpha Myers and Sara A. Temkin, which she describes as

being "so incredibly bad I find it hard to believe it was really published in 1973," and

despite the fact that it is written by two women, she claims the book is "rife with an MCP

(Male Chauvinist Pig) attitude and seems hell-bent on insisting that all you single female

would-be librarians will find plenty of attractive men in your work" (Starr, YAAN,

1973). As those responsible for collection development, these librarians were able to use

their financial clout to make social change, and the shared voices raised awareness across

a distributed network of librarians via YAAN, which reached across the United States

and abroad.

Sexual Education in the Library

In the post-sexual revolution era, but before sexual health education was

mandated in schools,[15] libraries were important points of access to such information for

young adults. From across the United States, each issue of YAAN provided listings of

free resources ("Freebies") which could be ordered, such as a pamphlet: "You Can Get it

at The Library—Information on VD" ("Freebies," YAAN, 1973), or descriptions of

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[15] Sexual health education was not mandated in schools until the 1980s, when the AIDS/HIV epidemic lead to its inclusion (Moran, 2004).

programs which could be reproduced locally. Diane Ray Tope, of Raleigh, NC, describes a conference in which a psychologist advocated for providing access to books about sex available to teens on open shelves, so that they did not have to ask for them (Tope, "Conference," YAAN, 1974). Mary K. Chelton recommended a book to YAAN readers for their teen users called *Everything a Teenager Wants to Know about Sex . . . And Should* (Chelton, "Recommends," YAAN, 1974), and in the same issue, Starr provides information about how to get copies of a free button "Are you VD Free?" Judy Simpson from the Cuyahoga County Library in Ohio describes her programs on "Teen Sexuality" (Simpson, "Sexuality," YAAN, 1979). Planned Parenthood appears frequently, demonstrating evidence of their collaboration with libraries concerning this population, and descriptions of their programs in libraries such as one called "About Sex" ("About Sex," YAAN, 1976). The contributor, Mel Rosenberg from Los Angeles, CA, describes this program, but also asks: "Is the library the best setting for 'voluntary' sex education? We'll see."

Young adult librarians of the 1970s were well aware of the need for information about teen sexuality at the library, but even if they were at times conflicted about being the providers, their role as teen advocates prevailed. Patty Campbell was not conflicted about this role—she embraced it. "At the time, my specialty was sex education. I wrote a book on sex education. I was traveling and speaking about it, so I was calling *Forever*[16] (Blume, 1975) one of the best practice manuals to sensible sex that we had!" (Campbell, interview, July 2011).

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[16] A romance novel which deals with teens' first sexual experience, *Forever* is on the list of *The 100 Most Frequently Challenged Books of 1990–1999* (ALA, "Frequently Challenged, 2012)

Social Work via the Library

The shift from youth "protectors" to youth "advocates" is evident in the social

worker role assumed by 1970s librarians. In addition to providing information about

sexual health, the young adult librarians of the 1970s had other *de facto* roles as social

workers.[17] Jan Polacheck from Canton, Ohio describes an in-service training for YA

workers on controversial material, such as providing posters on pregnancy, venereal

disease, drugs, and suicide prevention—each captioned with a phone number to the

appropriate agency (Polacheck, "In-Service, YAAN, 1973). The *Random Notes* section of

this same volume provides information about a quarterly newsletter of the Institute of

Family Research and Education, about establishing inter-generational communication on

"love, morality, sex, birth control, VD, drugs, and other areas of vital concern to our

youth." Judith Rovenger of Ossening, New York, writes "When I first started here two

years ago I envisioned myself going out into the ghetto areas, the drug centers, etc. saying

'the library has something for everyone' kind of crap." Instead, she focused her teen

department on providing legal aid to teens, and "the need arose for more counseling

services to these kids—legal aid, drug counseling, runaway info, jobs counseling, etc. and

as we began to gather more information, more kids began to make use of these services"

(Rovenger, "Legal Aid," YAAN, 1973).

Librarians were also recruited to promote social awareness of drug abuse. Susan

Ellsworth wrote of the need of YA librarians, especially budding YA librarians such as

those in library school, to work on [drug abuse] hotlines, as they are then best able "to

organize (and catalog) references, evaluate and provide information" to those in need

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[17] In addition to serving teens, they also held parenting workshops for parents of adolescent children.

(Ellsworth, "Drug Abuse," YAAN, 1974). Joy Macari of Dublin, California, wrote an article called "Active Listening for the YA Librarian," describing a training program at the local crisis intervention switchboard, in which she connected with others who cared about teens, and offered support via the library" (Macari, "Active Listening," YAAN, 1974). In her programming, Marilyn Van Gieson of the Hawaii State Library included speakers from social agencies who were used to working with teenagers.

Throughout YAAN there are efforts by librarians to form partnerships with other agencies that worked with young people. In Vol. III, No. 1, *Random Notes* included information about a newsletter called *Inside-Outside* about library services to youth and adults in prisons, jails, and detention centers, and information about the "National Runaway Switchboard," a referral service for runaways. In Vol. III, No. 3, *Freebies* lists an anti-drug brochure called "The Magical Misery Tour: Drugs and Drug Abuse." Mary Flournoy of the Free Library of Philadelphia, describes cooperation with institutions serving disadvantaged youth, and film programs at the library on probation (Flournoy, "Disadvantaged Youth," YAAN, 1976). *Random Notes* in Vol. IV, No. 1, includes information about how to order an information packet on alcoholism for Spanish speakers from the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. Consistent in YAAN is evidence of librarians crossing into the world of social work as they strove to provide information to teens that would improve their lives.

Teens' Involvement in YA Programming and Selection

Throughout YAAN, there is evidence of librarians' strong desire to give teens voice—from descriptions of librarians' success stories in setting up Youth Advisory Boards (such as one from Mary Moore, Modesto, California in Vol. III, No. 1), to

including teen reviews and writings, such as teen news from Mavis Richards's library in

the Republic of Singapore[18] (Vol. III, No. 1). A letter from YA Librarian Patty Campbell

(Los Angeles) describes how she was able to get teens "evaluating titles and planning

programs, and first thing you know they were writing letters to the head librarians

suggesting changes in the system" (Campbell, "Suggesting Changes," YAAN, 1973) or

samples of teen creative writing pamphlets published by different libraries, such as

"*Insight*" collected by Michael Garrison, Baldwin Public Library in Michigan, or the

Seven Hills Review published by Hortense Meister, Head of YA Services, The Public

Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County (published in Vol. 1, No. 5), or a column by

Carol Starr about the Bay Area Librarians' Meeting of November 26, 1974 called "Right

On Women" (Starr, "Right On," YAAN, 1975), in which she connects services to teens

with the women's movement in describing efforts of an organization of ambitious young

feminists at a high school who had published an article in *Ms* magazine, and arranged for

Anaïs Nin to visit their school.[19]

Questions were posed to readers in each issue, and then answered in a subsequent

issue. In 1976, Carol Starr asked readers: "If you are involved with either a YA advisory

board or have a teenager serving on your library board, would you please write up a brief

description . . . ?" (Starr, "Brief Description," YAAN, 1976). Responses (published in

Vol. 4, No. 2) included: Margaret Neu in Alice, Texas who described a 15 to 20 member

youth council at her library, of which two teens were appointed to the library board; Lee

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[18] This also demonstrates the wide reach of YAAN, from across the US to overseas.

[19] She also describes how the young women reacted to being told by guidance counselors that "Stanford is a boys' school, don't bother to apply," or being recommended to go to nursing school instead of medical school, and how they had uncovered discrepancies in athletic funding for boys and girls at the school: $5,900 a year for boys, and $900 a year for girls. (Vol. III, No. 1)

Hayden of Madison, Wisconsin, who described a 15 member YA Advisory Council from local high schools and middle schools who meet twice a month; and by Ann Noble of Greenville, North Carolina, describing a teen on her library board who was able to vote, and who was outspoken, and not shy about participating.

Publishers' Interactions via YAAN

Publishers were absent in the first year of YAAN, but soon their presence was felt. By 1974, in Vol. II, No. 2, Starr posts information as follows: "Bantam has a new person, Roger Cooper (Bantam Books, 666 Fifth Avenue, 10019) in the School Division, whose main job is PR [public relations] with YA librarians. He would like contributions for ideas on how Bantam could help, including hardback titles which have been overlooked in paperback printing. . . . He would also welcome comments on covers which librarians have found to be less than successful on their books" (Starr, "Bantam," YAAN, 1974). The facts that publishers had now dedicated staff to promoting public relations with YA librarians, and that they were posting these types of queries within YAAN in order to solicit feedback from librarians, indicates that publishers were aware that YAAN's network of librarians was influential, and that YAAN was a valuable way to receive feedback from those who had direct contact with young adults.

From the articles, it is evident that during the 1970s, libraries represented the core market for books to young people, and that a relatively small number of books were sold directly to teens. By soliciting feedback directly from YA librarians, Cooper tapped into a useful resource. By asking which hardback titles had been overlooked, he was asking for backlist hardcovers which librarians would purchase in hardcover—thereby creating an automatic market for books. Under *Freebies* in Vol. III, No. 3, the publisher Henry Holt's

catalog was available for anyone who wrote to request it, and under *Random Notes* "Scholastic announces the Great Paperback contest," described as a way to bring teens and paperbacks together. While publishers' comments were not pervasive across YAAN, those that appeared provide evidence that publishers recognized YAAN as an effective channel for reaching young adult librarians and the teens they served. Just as children's librarianship helped create the field of children's publishing at the turn of the 20th century, the same thing happened with young adult literature in the 1970s. Because service to young adults grew as an independent field within the overall field of librarianship during this time, a parallel development of publishing for this population also began to take shape, as will be shown in the next section.

Section 1.3 developed out of interviews with veteran YA librarians Carol Starr and Patty Campbell, as well as an analysis of Carol Starr's Young Adult Alternative Newsletter. Just as at the turn of the 20th century, when children's librarians created a genre, which publishers later identified as a market (after which they developed children's departments within their houses in order to serve such a market), this section demonstrates the leadership of YA librarians of the 1970s in establishing taste within the field. Starting with historical context for defining YA literature, the next section describes the types of books published during the 1970s, which bridged the ideology of 1970s YA librarians on providing information that would help teens make informed life choices, with the types of books teens wanted to read.

1.4 Young Adult Publishing

During the 1970s, in response to teens buying books for themselves, particularly paperbacks, as Carol Starr described (interview, Starr, 2011), publishers started

marketing books directly to this population. In his book *Genres in Discourse* (1990), the

philosopher Tzvetan Todorov writes: "Where do genres come from? Quite simply from

other genres. A new genre is always the transformation of an earlier one, or of several: by

inversion, by displacement, by combination" (Todorov, 1990, p. 15). According to

Todorov, genres arise out of discourse. YA literature arose out of the discourse on the

teenage as a developmental phase distinct from childhood and adulthood, just as

children's literature had earlier emerged from a discourse on children as a population in

need of protection.

Initially, books for young adults were simply incorporated into existing children's

imprints.[20] As Cart (1996) writes, exactly when YA literature emerged as a distinct genre

within the overarching genre of children's literature is a topic of great debate. If books for

young adults are supposed to be about teenagers, then the *Elsie Dinsmore* series books by

Martha Finley (published between 1867 and 1905), Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women*

(published in 1868), and Maureen Daly's *Seventeenth Summer* (published in 1942) could

arguably be considered YA prototypes, as well as the series published by the Stratemeyer

Syndicate,[21] including the *Bobbsey Twins* series (which began in 1904) and the *Nancy*

Drew series, which began in 1930 (Rollin, 1999). Another ancillary print culture product

with high teen appeal was comics, and long before the *Archie* comics of the 1950s, the

first to feature teenagers was the *Harold Teen* comic strip which started in 1919 (Rollin,

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[20] It was not until the 1990s that separate imprints for young adult fiction were formed. According to
Michael Cart, Avon's "Tempest" imprint (launched in 1999) and Simon & Schuster's "Pulse" imprint
(launched in 2002), both published original paperbacks; and in 2002, Scholastic followed suite with its own
edgy paperback line for teens called "Push."

[21] The Stratemeyer Syndicate's popular written-to-order children's series books were particularly
problematic for early librarians, and Edward Stratemeyer, publisher of thousands of mass-produced
children's series titles, was the bête noire of children's librarians throughout his long career" (Jenkins,
2000, pp. 112–113).

1999). While *The Catcher in the Rye* by J.D. Salinger (1951[22]) was initially published for

an adult market, adolescents became its most devoted readership, as it featured a young

adult protagonist dealing with adult issues for the first time. *Catcher* served as a

precursor for the realist and problem novels of the 1960s and 1970s, as the protagonist,

Holden Caulfield, runs away from preparatory school and spends three nights in New

York City engaging in the sorts of activities—from drinking, to smoking, to swearing,

and even to hiring a prostitute—that would classify the book as exactly the sort that irks

adults by presenting content from which Progressive Era librarians would want to protect

children, while simultaneously delighting young readers. As evidence of gatekeepers'[23]

desire to protect readers from the lessons of *Catcher,* according to the American Library

Association's Office for Intellectual Freedom, *Catcher* is the second most frequently

challenged novel in America (ALA, n.d.)—and one of the best-selling novels of all time.

Despite *Catcher's* popularity, many agree that S.E. Hinton's (1967) publication of *The

Outsiders* officially marks the first young adult novel (Cart, 1996) because it was the first

book specifically published for a teenage audience.

According to Patty Campbell, *Forever* by Judy Blume (1975), about a first sexual

relationship, was a bellwether that changed the market for publishers. Prior to *Forever*,

the primary market for young adult literature was the library; but after its publication,

according to Campbell, it "changed the market . . . it showed publishers that kids would

buy the books themselves" (Campbell interview, July, 2011). A key consideration in

marketing for teens was price point, and publishers would publish in paperback to make

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[22] *The Catcher in the Rye* was initially published in the *New Yorker* magazine prior to its hardcover
publication.
[23] In this context, the term "gatekeepers" refers to those acting as intermediaries between children and the
books they read, including librarians, teachers, and parents.

books more affordable for teens. In addition, because of paperbacks' low price point, librarians would buy them in large quantities—especially popular titles. Trained in her first job by Julia Losinski, who in turn had been trained by Margaret Edwards, Starr became an expert in book talks, which was Margaret Edwards' primary tool for reaching teens. During the 1970s, paperbacks became the book content delivery vehicle of choice for teens, and since there was plenty of funding during these years, Starr would go into high schools for book talks with ten copies each of popular titles, and then lend them out on an honor system (Starr, interview, 2011). From the publishers' perspective, even though paperbacks had a lower price point than hardcover books, sales volume made up for any lost profit.

Michael Cart calls the 1970s a "Golden Age" of YA lit—with a caveat, as this designation would exclude the worst of the problem novels, and instead focus on the many classics published during that era by authors like Robert Cormier, Richard Peck, and Judy Blume, whose books are still read today. The Realist fiction published at the time mirrored a shifting style of library service, with publishers providing a wealth of "problem novels" (or what Patty Campbell calls the "New Realism") in which the "problem" was central to the plot. "They were very easy to sell to kids, but they were not literature . . .when there were headlines about . . . some problem in the newspapers, we knew in about six months, we could have a novel about it!" (Campbell, interview, 2011).

Moralistic in tone, the goal with these books was to teach young adults to make good life choices. Some of the strongest books published during this era addressed real issues in teens' lives—from the Vietnam War and the Civil Rights Movement (*If Beale Street Could Talk* by James Baldwin), to the sexual revolution and woman's movement

(*My Darling, My Hamburger* by Paul Zindel), drug use and addiction (*A Hero Ain't Nothing But a Sandwich* by Alice Childress and *Go Ask Alice* by Anonymous), and homosexuality (*I'll Get There, It Better be Worth the Trip* by John Donovan). While these titles are still in print, many of the shorter-lived problem books embraced a didactic tone that echoed the protectionist tradition behind books published for young readers during the early days of children's literature.

Despite the 1970s "Golden Age" of YA Literature designation, the cultural capital inherent in these books did not translate to awards until the 1980s. Since the Young Adult Library Service Association (YALSA)—originally known as the Young Adult Services Division (YASD)—had existed since 1954, it is surprising that the first American Library Association (ALA) award for young adult fiction, the Margaret A. Edwards Award, was not awarded until 1988. Granted, that particular award acknowledges the lifetime achievement of an author, so naturally a large body of work—by the author, and by others in the same genre—had to be established before the award could be given. Another prominent ALA-based award, the Michael L. Printz Award, sponsored by *School Library Journal,* seeks to award books of exceptional literary merit (Retrieved May 12, 2009 from ALA.org), and it was first given in 2000. Both of these awards are named for young adult librarians. The Margaret A. Edwards Award, sponsored by *Booklist* Magazine, looks for an author whose work effectively teaches young adults:

> "The award will be given annually to an author whose book or books, over a period of time, have been accepted by young adults as an authentic voice that continues to illuminate their experiences and emotions, giving insight into their lives. The book or books should enable them to understand themselves, the world in which they live, and their relationship with others and with society. The book

or books must be in print at the time of the nomination" (ALA.org, "Margaret A. Edwards Award," 1997-2012).

Developments in the field of production of young adult literature during the 1970s served to establish it as an field of its own, as librarians strove to serve this population in young adult sections by providing content that would help improve young adults' lives. Institutionally, led by Carol Starr, librarians disrupted the traditional structures that supported this group within the American Library Association by going outside to build their own alternative community of YA service via the Young Adult Alternative Newsletter (YAAN). Just as the Newbery (1922) and Caldecott (1938) Awards lent legitimacy to the field of children's literature, literary awards established around the genre of young adult literature in the 1980s and 1990s added legitimacy to the field of young adult literature, cementing its stature as a field of its own, separate from children's literature. The next section will explore how in the 1980s, the political economy of the publishing industry started to change the types of products created for young people, and will look at young people's voices in the books they read via observations of a BBYA Committee meeting.

1.5 From the 1980s and Beyond

This last section has been about a "Golden Age" of young adult literature during the 1970s, in which a large market for young adult literature existed via libraries during a period of solid funding, and teenage readers who started buying their own paperback copies of books. By the 1980s, the genre of teen fiction had been firmly established. Soon thereafter, the publishing industry shifted, as mergers and acquisitions of small independent houses created transnational conglomerates that "left little room for books

with new, controversial ideas or challenging literary voices" (Schiffrin, 2000, p. 7).

While Schiffrin was writing about the market for adult books, the mergers had a parallel

effect on books for young readers. With the consolidations of the 1980s and 1990s came

the pressure to publish what Henry Jenkins (2003) calls "transmedia"—highly

commercial products of mass appeal that could appear on more than one media platform,

appeal to multiple markets, and simultaneously generate profit in multiple arenas. Such

products created a conflict for publishers forced to balance books potentially eligible for

the prestigious Printz Award, which is an annual best book for young adults award that

was first granted in 2000, with highly commercial books that better suit the transmedia

product model. The Printz Award focuses on awarding books of high "literary merit"

(ALA, "The Michael L. Printz Award," 1997–2012).

Several years before *Harry Potter* was published, there had been a change in the

marketplace for children's books. Initially, according to Gauch (2003), the primary

market for children's books was the institutional market (i.e., schools and libraries), but

"by the early 1990s—most major publishers increasingly 'serve[d] the trade': bookstores

and bookselling interests from Barnes and Noble to Costco to the peripatetic Books Are

Fun" (p. 133). This meant that publishers were increasingly interested in publishing: "big

names and big ideas, with big authors and big illustrators illustrating" (Gauch, 2003, p.

133), as those books were more likely to guarantee sales, and therefore were considered

less risky. As a result, Gauch (2003) argues that it was no longer enough for an editor to

advocate for a book he or she wanted to publish—if the sales and marketing departments

did not think a book would sell in those important trade channels, that book would not be

published. Because conglomerate publishers prize transmedia products for their earning

potential, editors interested in publishing books of high literary merit that appeal to a select readership are pressured to seek potential transmedia titles, in which a good sales angle outweighs literary quality.

But teenage readers are not always immune to such marketing, as will be demonstrated in the next section, which is based on observation of a Best Books for Young Adults (BBYA) Committee meeting at the 2009 American Library Association conference. Since the early days of YA literature, librarians have always been interested in providing venues for teen voices, providing them with opportunities through peer-to-peer reviewing, such as Margaret Scoggin's *Circulatin' the News* brochure, which is described earlier in this chapter. The BBYA is another such opportunity that allows teenage voices to be heard, and we will see how the BBYA provides publishers with evidence of teens' taste.

1.5.1 Teens' voices: Best Books for Young Adults Committee (BBYA).

In the 21st century we see a development in which librarians are increasingly providing vehicles for teenagers to engage in the discourse on librarianship, especially in their role as reviewers and awarders of young adult literature. The BBYA Committee remains an important vehicle for young adult voices, as evidenced from observation at a 2009 ALA conference. Although BBYA committee members have the final word on which books will be included in the list, input from readers has long been an important component in building the list. At the biannual ALA conferences, attending teens speak before the BBYA committee members, as well as editors and publishing professionals who make up the audience. As much as YA librarians care about teens' opinions, the YA

editors and publishing professionals are equally interested, and apply their feedback to

works in progress, or to acquisition strategies for new works. What trends are interesting

to young adults? What are their likes and dislikes? Teenagers are especially valuable

contributors, as they tend to be very outspoken and direct about their likes and dislikes.

According to Sharon Rawlins, Youth Services Consultant for the New Jersey State

Library and former BBYA Committee Member, while participants' negative input will

not necessarily make the committee remove a book from the list, the committee does

seriously consider their comments. A book will stay on if, for example, committee

members feel that a given book is difficult, but of high literary quality (Sharon Rawlins,

personal communication, April 7, 2009). Input from young readers sometimes includes

impassioned pleas for popular titles, challenging librarians' taste for the literary. As Marc

Aronson writes: "YA Literature is the product of this difficult blend of adult judgment on

behalf of teenagers and the preferences teenagers manifest and the books they talk about,

take out of the library, and even buy" (Aronson, 1999). At the American Library

Association's 2009 annual conference, local library BBYA groups wore t-shirts

emblazoned with team names like TKB "Teens Know Best." Their comments and

criticisms about 2009 titles were overall, reflective and insightful. Appreciating the

humor in *The ABCs of Kissing Boys* by Tina Ferraro, a reader said that she read this aloud

to her two best friends while camping, and their laughter woke up the entire campground.

A reader of *The Anatomy of Wings* by Karen Foxlee felt that the entire book could have

been condensed into ten pages. A girl who read *Marcelo in the Real World* by Francisco

Stork felt that it was like eating good chocolate: "You want to put it in your mouth and

savor it and let it melt." *Dear Julia* by Amy Bronwen Zemser was criticized for having inaccurate depictions of high school and for its one-sided characters.

In addition, given the success of the *Twilight* series, the BBYA teens were aware of an abundance of vampire books in the marketplace at the time of this meeting. They expressed resistance toward such derivative works, arguing that certain titles were too similar to *Twilight*, or relief when a book about vampires was not too much like *Twilight*. For example, in discussing *Need* by Carrie Jones, a reviewer felt that the plot was choppy and unconnected, and was too much like *Twilight*. A reviewer of *The Dust of 100 Dogs* by A.S. King said she was relieved to read a book about pirates, rather than vampires. While *The Reformed Vampire Support Group* by Catherine Jinks actually is about vampires, it received kudos for being very different from *Twilight.* One reader said: "Quite honestly, this was amazing. It was in the *Harry Potter* league, and I hated *Twilight*, too."

Since the 1970s, teen feedback has been a critical component of creating books for young adults, via the BBYA, and then later, the YA Galley Program, and the Teens' Top Ten list. The BBYA reflects the old configuration, in which publishers got such feedback filtered through library-based programs. Technological developments in the 21st century have built upon this, and there now are three general venues for participating in young adult literature: at the library, via the Internet (on sites such as Teen Ink (teenink.com), weRead.com, Amazon.com, blogs, and fan sites), and starting in 2007, on participatory sections of publishers' websites, as will be discussed in Chapters 5, 6, and 7. Online communities around librarianship include blogs by individual librarians that

center around reviewing, to the American Library Association's YALSA Blog. These

blogs serve to connect and inform about the field; but instead of the mimeographed

mailings of YAAN, commentary on blogs is instant and online. If YAAN is considered

an "ur" blog, then YALSA is an actual blog, dedicated to the profession of YA

Librarianship. An analysis of the YALSA Blog follows in the next section.

1.6 Librarianship and the YALSA Blog

According to the Internet Archive's wayback machine, the YALSA blog was first

found via a link on April 4, 2008 (Internet Archive, n.d.). While an in-depth analysis of

the YALSA blog was not possible for purposes of this dissertation, a shorter analysis

demonstrates that as YAAN reflected and built community around YA Librarianship of

the 1970s, the ALA's YALSA blog did the same around current library practices. YAAN

began during a time of rapid growth in the field of young adult librarianship, during

which several young adult librarians noticed that institutional support that was supposed

to be divided between children's services and young adult services consistently favored

children's services. In order to remedy this situation, YAAN, created as an independent

newsletter and edited by YA librarian Carol Starr, went outside of regular institutional

channels in order to build a network of young adult librarianship. YAAN existed from

1973 to 1979, and its existence influenced the course of young adult librarianship. The

YALSA blog serves as a similar conduit for connecting young adult librarians, although

now such discourse has moved back within the institution that supports the field.

A cursory comparison of topics between YAAN and the YALSA Blog reveal that

issues have shifted from a 1970s emphasis on librarians' social-worker role to an

emphasis on teaching about technology. YALSA's mission is to provide "free and equal

access to materials and services," arguably, such material has shifted from the 1970s

librarians *de facto* social-worker role, informing about sexual health, legal services, drug

abuse, and suicide prevention, to one focused on increasing access to technology and

erasing the digital divide. An analysis of the YALSA Blog conducted in Fall 2011

between October 24th and December 30th, 2012, uncovered articles around the following

recurring themes, each of which will be discussed below:

Figure 1.6. YALSA Blog Themes 2011

Teens and Technology is the dominant theme of the site, with multiple entries related

to Teen Tech Week, which is celebrated in libraries across America every March.[24]

Several blog entries were about teaching teens proper *Copyright and Citation* methods,

such as Mairead Duffy's "Teaching Teens About Copyright and Citation" entry on

November 21, 2011. *Fitness* was a topic that also emerged recently, most likely because

of increased media attention to childhood obesity, and Michelle Obama's "Let's Move"

campaign designed to combat it.

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[24] For more information about Teen Tech Week, please see http://teentechweek.ning.com/.

The fact that *gaming* now appears in the library discourse represents an ideological shift. In earlier eras, "gaming" would have been considered as belonging to the domain of entertainment, and therefore something that did not belong within the library. But the recent inclusion demonstrates how library programming reflects young adults' interests first. An article called "Happy Minecraft Day" is a celebration for the release of a popular new video game, posted by Erin Daly on November 18, 2011. The category of *Librarians and Technology* reflects how librarians teach teens about technology, but also how they evaluate the latest developments, and then share resources, which then can be passed on to teens within their communities. Weekly categories called "App of the Week" and "Tweets of the Week" are compiled and reviewed by librarians, eager to share such finds with other librarians, and subsequently with their collective users. Entries under "App of the Week" include "Michael Jackson, the Experience," sent by Erica Gauquier, and "Pride and Prejudice and Zombies: The Interactive eBook," sent by Rebekah Kamp on October 26, 2011.

A far more in-depth analysis of the YALSA blog, going back to its 2008 origins, is an area that would benefit from future comprehensive research. Details of this brief analysis are in Appendix B. As in the 1970s, librarians today are connected to broader social themes, but the themes that impact teens have changed. While libraries still provide books and information on sexual health, which was a dominant theme of the 1970s, the Aids and HIV epidemic of the 1980s led to mandatory sexual health education in schools by the 1990s (Moran, 2004), and librarians have subsequently become more focused on teaching about and providing access to technology. Arguably, the ability to

use technology is required for future success, and as such, librarians' work as extenders of habitus continues in the digital age.

1.7 Summary and Conclusions

This chapter used interviews with veteran librarians, document analysis of the YAAN newsletter and the YALSA blog, use of ALA websites including the subsections of Association of Library Services to Children (ALSC), Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA), and VOYA (Voice of Youth Advocates), and observation of a 2009 BBYA committee meeting in order to construct the field of children's librarianship, and the traditional roles of youth services librarians.

As this chapter has shown, young adult library service since the beginning of the 20th century has, in many ways, been about increasing teens' visibility as a group of readers and population of library users. Over the last century (and as described in this chapter), the field of production of children's literature has been shaped by a synergistic relationship between publishers and librarians (and teens, via the librarians who served them). From serving as child protectors at the beginning of the 20th century, to serving as child advocates from the 1970s until today, women who cared passionately about the young adults they served in their libraries became advocates for this population.

Publishers have paralleled library developments by creating products for teens—first, by publishing books which "protected" young readers, addressing Progressive Era ideologies on children as a population in need of protection, next by providing books which "informed" young adults about other people and cultures, and as Margaret

Edwards' hoped, served as vehicles for peaceful understanding, and then, in the 1970s, as young adults were seen as a population that needed information, by publishing "realist fiction" and problem novels which provided the type of information needed to make good life choices. Today, teens' voices are expected if not assumed, in both the library, where programs such as BBYA and Teen Advisory Groups seek reader input, and in the publishing industry, where addressing the desire for self-determination and agency is becoming as important a feature of marketing books to this population as it is in regard to television (Banet-Weiser, 2004) and magazines (McRobbie, 1982). Within media products for young people, capital provides space for leisure, and by providing illusions of self-determination and agency, seeks to control it in a pleasurable way.

Starting with patterns established in this chapter illuminating teens' work as critics of YA literature from the early days of Margaret Scoggin's "Circulatin' the News" pamphlet, to BBYA book groups, the following chapters will examine how in the new configuration of the field, technology provides the type of voice previously provided by librarians—but now on publishers' websites. By focusing on commercial sites onto which teens are interpellated by snappy names like *Hip Scout*s or the *In Group* to perform what the Italian autonomist Maurizio Lazzarato (1996) calls immaterial labor, the next chapters will explore themes of co-creation, participatory culture, and commodification around books such as those in the *Twilight* series, and its effect on the concept of teen empowerment within YA literature. The next chapter delves into the theoretical frameworks guiding this dissertation.

CHAPTER 2: Theoretical Framework and Dimensions of Influence

Introduction

Within the overall context and historical trajectory of the field of young adult literature, this research explores the phenomenon of convergence culture as it relates to new forms of book production and presents new dynamics and relationships in the book production process. What is referred to throughout this dissertation as "the old configuration" of publishing concerns the period from the inception of the field at the turn of the 20th century, until 2007, when publishers began to use interactive websites to reach teenage readers, and the subsequent, post-2007 period is referred to as "the new configuration" of publishing. Several forces are at play as digital technologies influence creation, production, dissemination, reception, and consumption of books, alter the materiality of books, and redefine authorship, as boundaries shift between producer and consumer (or publisher/author and reader). This chapter explores their coherence and application to the overall research goal of the dissertation. Setting the research within a historical trajectory provides another implicit dimension of this work. Figure 2.1 below outlines the four inter-connected theoretical frameworks of this dissertation:
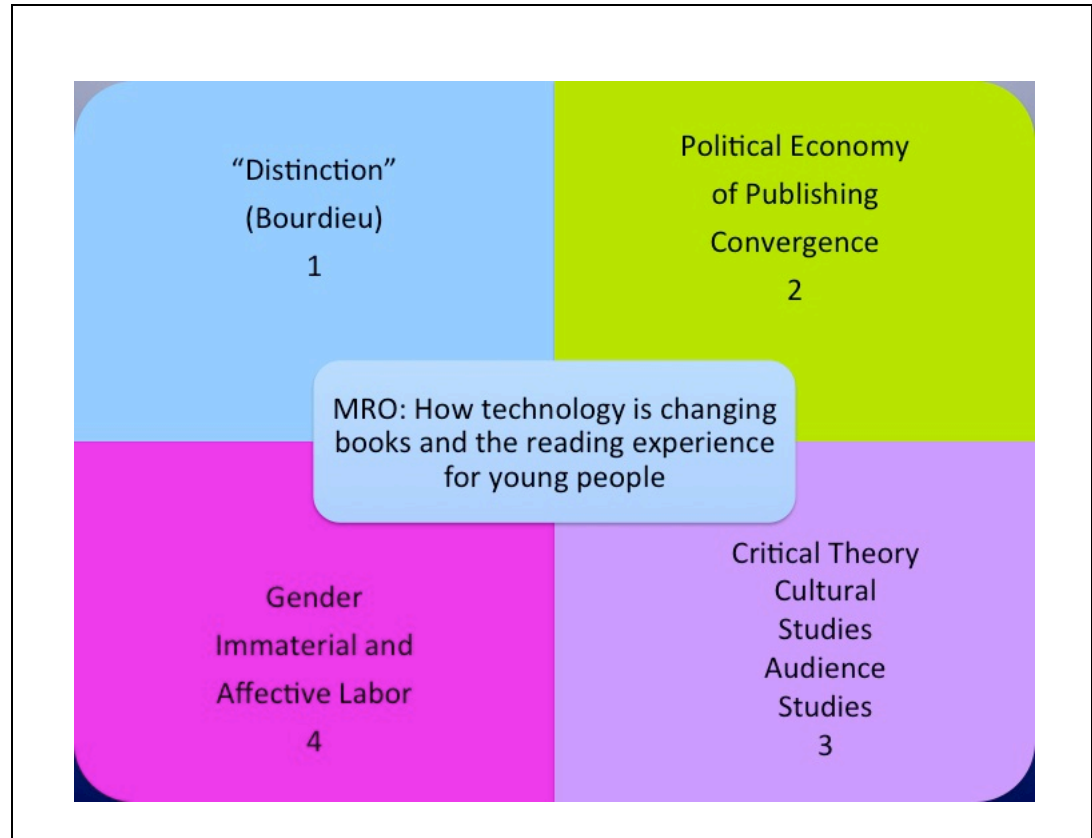
Figure 2.1. Quadrants of Interrelated Theoretical Frameworks of this Dissertation

These four frameworks, which in places overlap or are otherwise connected, are used in this study to address the main research objective on how technological formats are changing books and the reading experience for young people, and how it shifts existing configurations of book production, dissemination, and consumption. The first such framework is 1) Pierre Bourdieu's (1984) work on distinction, which exposes how cultural capital established in the field of cultural production—is applied to books for young adults. This framework provides an understanding of the forces that shape the field and why certain products in particular are believed to contribute to the creation of cultural capital. In the context of this dissertation, "distinction" is applied through the gatekeepers

who determined distinction, through the publishers, for whom cultural capital (as related to distinction) is exchanged for economic capital, and through the readers themselves, as it connects to their realms of habitus, and shifts dimensions of influence from library-related activities, to publishers' interactive websites. The second framework is 2) work from political economy, which informs the overarching transnational corporations that control the contemporary literary field of production, from the types of products they create and what guides them, to their use of the Internet as a source for consumer information, user-generated content, and as a tool for peer-to-peer marketing. The third framework is 3) critical theory (the Frankfurt theorists), cultural studies, and audience studies (represented by John Fiske), which illuminate how readers participate—and resist—on book-related participatory sites. The fourth framework is 4) work from gender studies, which illuminates not only how children's publishing and librarianship emerged as gendered fields that would be dominated by women, but also how the nature of a gendered readership emerged, which applies in particular to this dissertation. Theories on immaterial and affective labor are also related to work on gender, as they help explain how young people develop affective relationships with the books they read, and what drives contemporary teens, primarily girls, to voluntarily labor on book-related sites.

These four frameworks support the main research objective of understanding how technological formats are changing books and the reading experience. Convergence culture and the political economy of publishing demonstrate how converging structures in the publishing industry foster an environment focused on creating bestselling, transmedia products, and establish a disintermediated relationship between publishers and teen

reading consumers. This new relationship bypasses those traditionally responsible for determining distinction.

Critical theory, cultural studies, and audience studies are useful for understanding the readers' participation, and also how readers alter proprietary sites to create their own meanings. The field of audience studies is useful because digital formats deliver a visible, reading audience in a consistent manner for the first time. As consumers contribute their affective and immaterial labor related to books on publishers' proprietary websites, they participate in the literary cultural products produced for them, and blur lines between producers and consumers.

2.1 First Framework: Distinction—From Habitus to Convergence

> "There is a fairly close homology between the specialized fields of production in which products are developed and the fields (the field of the social classes or the field of the dominant class) in which tastes are determined" (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 230).

Bourdieu's work helps explain how the fields of production and cultures of consumption are connected, based on one's external influences, which constitute one's "habitus." Habitus refers to the unconscious adoption of societal structures. These are not limited to the fields of social action, but also include cultural preferences adopted from kinship (and beyond)—for example, those structures that are provided through one's family, which in turn serve to define one's social being, from something as mundane as one's posture and behavior, to one's system of values, and one's tastes. Applied to children, habitus is internal and is defined by one's life experiences, as well as structures imposed by primary caregivers and the environment of family life, combined with values and behaviors acquired from the home. As children expanded their experiences beyond

the home, in the old configuration of publishing within the field of production children's literature, children's librarians served as extenders of children's realm of habitus.

Historically, early children's librarianship in America provided an institutional foundation that shaped the field, as shown in Chapter 1. A key mission of Progressive Era librarians and their successors was to improve children's minds and lives—first by providing them with books, which were considered items infused with cultural capital, then by acting as expert children's-literature liaisons between readers and the producers (or publishers), and finally by helping to steer children's taste toward what librarians considered the best books. In doing so, librarians helped construct the cultural and social capital around children's library use, with an assumption that the library helps children bridge relationships first from individual to family, and then from individual to society.

This corresponds to Andrew Carnegie's philanthropic library expansion at the end of the 19th century. This drew on the philosophy of John Dewey, who took "the tasks of education and social reconstruction to be the same. Through participation (as in education), the individual is given the opportunity to acquire and exercise control over the tools of life, intelligence and empathy" (Delia, 1987, p. 24). These values transferred first to the Settlement House Movement (Garrison, 1979), and later to early libraries, which developed out this movement and eventually included children's rooms, that served as sites where individuals could acquire such life tools. In the United States, librarians have traditionally held a role as cultural leaders responsible for improving minds, democratizing a population, and Americanizing immigrants. When seen in relation to Bourdieu's idea of habitus, the early children's librarians fulfilled institutional roles as enablers of social mobility via their mission of improving minds through books;

and in doing so, they served as de facto extenders of habitus. These librarian reformists provided a route of integration, Americanization, and assimilation.

In turn, it was expected that such improved minds would lead to increased social and cultural mobility. As Anne Lundin writes, "the philosophy of American libraries emerged from beliefs in nationalism, philanthropy, economic growth, and the ideology of infinite progress, the American Dream" (Lundin, 2004, p. 16). This idea of infinite progress connected to Progressive Era values positioning books and reading as important educational tools for social mobility. Work by Dee Garrison (1979) establishes the role of early 20th-century librarians as such cultural arbiters of taste, responsible for defining with confidence what would be deemed the "best" literature. In the early 20th-century model of librarianship, "best" is infused with ideologies about "literary quality," "child appeal," and "good values," as described by Jenkins (1995) in 1.1.1. As the collection developers, reviewers, and awarders[25] of children's literature, Lundin's (2004) work demonstrates how librarians became keepers of the literary canon. Unlike other forms of entertainment, such as cinema, which from its inception was suspected of being detrimental to viewers, books were viewed very differently, as objects infused with social and cultural capital—and therefore not "merely" as objects for entertainment, but rather, as belonging to what Bourdieu (1984) calls an "inalienable cultural field." As we will see in a later chapter, publishers are now mixing channels of pure entertainment (such as gaming and online videos) with products from this inalienable cultural field in order to reach readers, and a disintermediated relationship between publishers and readers,

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[25] As described in the preceding chapter, the two primary awards for children's literature, the Newbery and the Caldecott medals, are given by the American Library Association, by committees constituted primarily of librarians.

enabled by digital technologies, is challenging the old configuration, in which children's librarians served as extenders of habitus.

In this context, the "old configuration" of children's publishing and librarianship refers to the period from the inception of the field from the beginning of the 20th century (approximately 1906 as Anne Carroll Moore began her work at the New York Public Library, or 1919 when Louise Seaman Bechtel first started working as children's editor at Macmillan), and the "new configuration" refers to the field of publishing and librarianship after participatory websites and other social media tools were implemented by publishers. In this dissertation, one such point of transition is located in 2007, the year in which two of the three case study websites were launched. As such, the old configuration is approximately represented by the time frame of 1906–2006, and the new configuration is represented as 2007 and beyond.

Because of the culturally and socially important role held by librarians, who were responsible for getting books into the hands of young people, publishers operating in the old configuration of book production (before digital technologies were introduced with book production, dissemination, and consumption, which in this dissertation is marked as 2007, the launch date of the first two case studies herein), who were fiscally responsible to their institutions for translating cultural capital into economic capital, had a vested interest in their relationships with librarians. While the field of cultural production of children's literature was based on a synergistic relationship between librarian and publisher, this collaborative relationship was not without tension because of the different goals of each of the stakeholders. Librarians' primary interest was in serving their readers, and in some way improving their lives, and the publishers' primary interest—no

matter the individual aspirations of their editors—was to pursue economic capital by selling books. These interests are timeless, and they exist in similar ways now.

But digital technological interventions are disrupting this overall configuration in which librarians were arbiters of taste in the field. In the new configuration of publishing since the introduction of social media (2007), young adult publishers are able to circumvent librarians and have a direct relationship with their readers on participatory websites. Cultural capital related to books can now be earned in ways beyond the physical library, and activities previously housed under the overarching domain of the library, including reviewing, awarding, and otherwise promoting books for young people—which represented librarians' work as cultural arbiters of taste related to the activity of reading—are no longer limited to the library. Readers, too, assume new roles as content creators, reviewers, or peer-to-peer marketers on sites exemplified herein by Random House's participatory website for teens called *Random Buzzers* (Randombuzzers.com, 2010), and by Little, Brown's *TwilightSaga.com* (Twilight Saga, 2011). On such sites, teens establish their own disintermediated discourse on taste via peer-to-peer commentaries, and they gain social capital via badges earned on publishers' reviewing sites and displayed next to their online names. Whatever may be earned on these sites, beyond the virtual badges, prizes, and currencies, participation on these sites gives users, primarily girls, a form of cultural currency, which approximates what David Morley (2006) calls "cultural citizenship." This accumulation of cultural currency entails community membership, as we will see in the case studies of Chapters 5, 6, and 7, and it introduces a new means of engagement between publishers and readers after 2007.

2.2 Second Framework: The Political Economy of Publishing and Convergence

The second theoretical framework supporting this research is Political Economy, such as work by: Elizabeth Bullen (2009); Henry A. Giroux (1999); Sut Jhally (1989); Robert McChesney (1999); Douglas Rushkoff (2006); André Schiffrin (2000); Daniel Schiller (1999); Juliet Schor (2004); Ellen Seiter (1995); and others, whose work studying cultural changes attributed to the growth of transnational corporations can be applied to parallel cultural changes in the publishing industry since the 1980s. During this period, small, often family-owned publishing companies merged into large, transnational corporations, and a political economy of the publishing industry ensued, which in turn has influenced the types of books that are published—from a focus on the type of literature likely to win top literary awards (goal of the library), to the type of literature likely to appear on bestseller lists (goal of the publisher)—premised on anticipated popular demand. In that context, the goal of any transnational publisher becomes to create the next bestselling transmedia "phenomenon," rooted in literary content, which can exist and generate transmedia (Jenkins 2006) products which can generate profits across multiple media platforms.

Modern literary products for teenagers are designed so that the same content appeals to the widest possible audience across an array of transmedia platforms, from books, to film, to licensed merchandise, to the Internet. One example of what the Frankfurt theorist Adorno (see 2.3.1) described as "sameness" can be found in the number of vampire books available in the marketplace from a range of publishers after the success of the books in the *Twilight* saga, as discussed in Chapter 1. This economic

reliance on derivative works serves to impose a limitation on what other "vampire-free" books might be published, as these dominant genres of books, which are anticipated to sell in large numbers based on successful sales of similar titles in the marketplace, consume a disproportionate amount of a publisher's acquisition, sales, and marketing budgets. The noise of those loud books in the marketplace subsequently also drowns out quieter books in the combined literary space of young adult literature. This question of the ensuing quality of books connects generally to the main research objective of this study, and specifically, to the fourth research question on the materiality of books.

Eileen Meehan (1986) writes that television as a medium unites the fields of political economy and cultural studies, because "television is a complex combination of industry and artistry" (p. 448). In the same way, both theoretical frameworks apply to books, as books are both cultural artifacts and commodities (as discussed in the previous section), with tension between librarians seeing books as cultural artifacts, and publishers viewing them as commodities. "Television is always and simultaneously an artifact and a commodity that is both created and manufactured; television always and simultaneously presents a vision for interpretation and an ideology for consumption to a viewership that is always and simultaneously a public celebrating meaning and an audience produced for sale in the marketplace. Only by embracing these dualities can we explicate the contradictory fact of television" (Meehan, 1986, p. 449). By contrast, in books, this creates an inner tension, and while Meehan was writing about television, parallels can be drawn between television and books for young readers published by transnational corporations since the 1980s. Within this model, not only are these readers a "public celebrating meaning" (Meehan, 1986, p. 448), but increasingly, as television viewers are

sold via their consumption of advertising, readers—especially participatory, contributing readers—become increasingly commodified as an economic link in the chain of production. In the old configuration (1906–2006), readers were largely invisible, but now, visible evidence of readers' participation on publishers' participatory book-related websites can be channeled by publishers to create and sell books.

Books for young people are particularly interesting to study in this context because of a residual ideology about books published for this population as necessarily being capable of improving minds, and therefore, as needing to be detached from vehicles of entertainment, like television. Because of its established cultural and educational capital, young adult literature belongs to what Bourdieu (1993) calls an inalienable cultural field, which means that as far as books are concerned, high literary quality is valued as being superior to a book's sales potential—especially when compared to other cultural products for young people, such as film or television, which are generally scrutinized (and criticized) by gatekeepers. But at the same time, a highly commercial component now exists in certain books for young people within the product model around books, as they are increasingly sold and marketed much like other products for young people. This includes the use of branding, commodification, and aggressive advertising and marketing campaigns, which are explored in sections 2.2.1-2.2.5.

2.2.1 Branding.

The idea of a brand community, complete with product placement, is moving into the marketplace of books. In response to the question of production-consumption, Henry Jenkins (2006) writes: "according to the logic of affective economics, the ideal consumer is active, emotionally engaged, and socially networked. Watching the advert or

consuming the product is no longer enough; the company invites the audience inside the brand community" (p. 20). One such early example within the world of publishing for young readers is R.L. Stine's *Goosebumps*[26] phenomenon of the 1990s. Perry Nodelman (1997), writing about R.L. Stine, questions why children were so drawn to this particular series, but notes that reading "*Goosebumps* [signifies] membership in the community of acceptable, non-alien children . . . [and therefore] just to own [the books] gives one status in the culture of the playground, and not owning any or not having read any marginalizes children within that culture" (Nodelman, 1997, p. 118). As such, *Goosebumps* became closely linked with children's identity—not only as part of their realm of social capital, but also in providing readers evidence of their own cultural competence. Yet the act of identifying as a *brand reader*, in this case as a *Goosebumps* reader, allows the transfer of political economy from the realm of publisher to the reader and commodifies this readership as part of what Jenkins describes as a "brand community" (p. 79)—which was extremely profitable for the series' publisher, Scholastic. A similar community exists around the *Twilight Saga*, in which readers' shared knowledge about the series, and collection of licensed merchandise, gives them a particular *Twilight* identity. These brand communities have now moved online, and in the case of books, exist around bestsellers, such as books in the *Twilight Saga* and *Harry Potter* series. According to Jenkins (2006), brand communities have much in common with the collective group process of constructing what Pierre Lévy (1997) calls "knowledge communities," because consumers are sharing information and deciding as a group what to purchase and how to participate. With series such as *Twilight* and *Harry Potter*, world building serves as an extension of the reading experience and becomes a natural synergy of reading and

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[26] *Goosebumps*, a series by R.L. Stine, was published by Scholastic from 1992-1997.

consumption for such brand readers. Technology creates the potential for creating brand

readers, which in turn encourages consumption of associated product lines. By building

community and sharing knowledge among brand readers, such online brand communities

and consumption also serve as extenders of children's habitus, as described in 2.1 above.

2.2.2 Commodifying habitus.

According to Giroux (1999), the mega-children's-brand Disney has interpreted

the concept of brand community quite literally by expanding their typical three-to-eight-

year-old audience into physical communities by artificially constructing a commodified

habitus: "prototypes for developing American culture and civility, including a model

town, a prototype school system, and the Disney Institute, where it offers the

intellectually curious vacations organized around learning skills in gardening, radio and

television production, cinema, fitness regimens, and cooking" (p. 156). Disney is

targeting exactly what Naomi Klein (2009) describes as *concept* instead of *commodity*:

"the products that will flourish in the future will be the ones presented not as

"commodities" but as concepts: the brand as experience, as lifestyle" (p. 21).

Online, there is a blurring of brand communities. Traditionally, fan communities

are formed from the bottom up, launched by fans, as was the case with the ever-

expanding online presence of *Harry Potter* or *Twilight* fan sites. But now publishers are

trying to construct top-down fan communities around books, as in the case of *The

Amanda Project* (Kantor, 2009), in which the publisher's interactive website extends the

book experience online and serves to brand the users as consuming participants.

"However media-savvy kids get, they will always lose this particular game. For they have

accepted the language of brands as their cultural currency, and their stakes in the

purchasing decisions as something real" (Rushkoff, 2006, p. 194); and as a result, "the

more [teens] interact with brands, the more they brand themselves" (Rushkoff, 2006, p.

194). Young adults interacting with book-based brands on publisher-owned sites may

experience something that resembles a traditional, aesthetic, pleasurable literary

experience as encountered between a reader and a print-based book; but because of the

commercial, for-profit-nature of these sites, on which teens are encouraged to contribute

to the bottom line via their affective labor, their activity simultaneously brands and

commodifies them—within an extended, commodified habitus.

2.2.3 Marketing, advertising, and commodification.

In the physical realm, Alissa Quart (2004) describes different strategies that

marketers use to get young adults to sell products to their peers—from *Teen People*

Magazine, to Delia*s clothing store, to those working with skate culture in which

teenagers work for producers as trend spotters. Rushkoff (2006) describes how

corporations commodify youth culture by employing "cool hunters" (p. 202) to seek out

the latest trends and report back to the corporations, who can then include these trends in

their production.

In the same way, the transition from consumption to production also occurs in

books in the disintermediated environment of publishing. Previously in the realm of

books for the young, the tension between cultural product and advertised, commodity

product have been solidly drawn and staunchly defended by the gatekeepers. But these

boundaries are fading, as they have in regard to video games, where the line between the

games and their advertisers is difficult to define. As book-based content for young adults

moves online, publishers are increasingly borrowing models from other media industries

such as the gaming industry, and are applying these tools to books in the virtual realm.

Copying a model established in television, and now common in gaming, advertising and

product placement are also edging their way into books. McChesney and Foster (2003)

call this form of product placement "stealth advertising," and in the case of products

marketed to children, "ad creep" (p. 5), in which advertising stealthily sneaks its way into

cultural products for children, thereby commodifying such products.

Products have long been used as narrative tools to establish context in books from

The Outsiders (Hinton, 1967) to *Gossip Girl* (van Ziegesar, 2002); but unlike product

appearances in other media, which are paid for by sponsors, products appearing in books

generally appeared there on an author's whim, free of charge, and where used as literary

devices. In 2006, Proctor & Gamble reached beyond television into books for young

adults, signing a contract with Running Press in 2006 for a book called *Cathy's Book: If*

Found Call (650) 266-8233 (Stewart, 2006), which allowed Covergirl products to be

written into the story. Subsequently, a description of a girl wearing lipgloss became: "A

girl and her CoverGirl 'Demure' lip gloss" (Deam, 2006). Had this appeared in a

television program targeting teens, it is unlikely that there would have been any negative

reaction, because television audiences are already so conditioned to this type of

marketing, and because television is considered primarily a vehicle for entertainment. But

because this happened in a literary context, within an inalienable cultural field, negative

consumer response, such as that from the Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood

(commercialexploitation.org, n.d.) encouraged Running Press to strip all references to

specific cosmetic products from its subsequent paperback edition of the book. This

example highlights the tension between culture and commerce which exists in the field of

cultural production between three layers of participants in young adult literature: the producers, who must make a profit; the critics and disseminators, who care less about profit motives, and more about quality; and the recipients—those reading consumers of young adult literature, who seek both entertainment and empowerment.

2.2.4 Corporate genre construction.

While publishers are never able to predict exactly what will become the next best-selling phenomena, a secondary strategy allows publishers to construct genres around the "implications of genre" (Dalbello, 2001, p. 3), or around derivative works related to a series that has an established community of readers. Considering traditional meanings of "genre," Raymond Williams (1977) explains that the term had a specific Aristotelian meaning of types of poetry, classified as belonging to genres of "epic, lyric, and dramatic" (p.181). In describing conflicts between theory and empiricism related to genre in the modern era, he writes that an abundance of genre and ensuing sub-genres have reduced "classification to absurdity." Williams writes that:

> . . . the debris of this kind of empiricism, representing as it does the combination of at least three types of classification: by literary form, by subject matter, and by intended readership (this last a developing type in terms of specialized market-sectors), to say nothing of classifications which are combinations of these or which represent late, desperate entries to include some miscellaneous but popular type (p. 182).

A more organic genre construction is one in which readers themselves align themselves along social relations around certain types of texts:

> . . . the implications of genre, as some of the exemplary studies have shown (Radway, Long), are in fact studies of readers' questioning particular social relations through their interactions with particular types of texts. But recognizing the broad nature of reading as social practice aids in the interpretation of these practices. Such an approach is not limited to the interactions of an individual reader with an individual monolithic book (the book of literate culture,

bounded and essential in itself), but looks at a genre as an arena for the social interactions of a textual community . . . (Dalbello, 2001, p. 3).

Such an arena of interaction clearly arose around the *Twilight* series, in which the readers themselves established a bottom-up, organically constructed, textual community that started around a monolithic book. As the book became a bestselling series and acquired an online community of brand reader fans, it eventually spawned an entire genre of so-called "teen paranormal romance." This community comprised not only readers of print editions of the books, but also online participants in social interaction that extended from the books onto the web, on which readers shared opinions, news, gossip, fan fiction, and more. In the case of *Twilight*, publishers sought to expand upon this naturally occurring genre creation, and to use the associated textual communities for financial gain.

A proven community of *Twilight* fans, based on the number of copies sold of the books, popularity of the movies, participation on the *Twilight Saga* site as well as on hundreds of fan sites on the web, and the range of licensed merchandise which exists around the series, explains an abundance of teen paranormal romance books on the market after the success of the paranormal romance books of Meyer's *Twilight* (2005) series, after which every publisher sought to have similar books on their list. This type of genre construction, around what Squires (2007) refers to as bandwagon books, is an example of marketers responding to a perceived need in the marketplace, and is hardly a new strategy on the part of publishers . Following the success of Helen Fielding's (1996) *Bridget Jones's Diary*, Squires (2007) describes an abundance of books published around a genre of "Bridgetesque heroines" (p. 158) designed to appeal to the same readership

and capitalize on the success of Fielding's book.[27] When Meyer's last book in the *Twilight* series, *Breaking Dawn,* was published in 2008, an abundance of fans were left behind wanting more. That desire constructed a space in the marketplace for more books in the same genre. Compared to *Twilight's* organic fan construction, as we will see in Chapter 7, *The Amanda Project* represents an attempt by a publisher to construct a fan community around a book series in order to get users to contribute.

The "Teen Paranormal Romance" sub-genre described above seems to be exactly one such desperate entry from publishers who hope to capitalize on readers' perceived interests by creating genres, which will impact sales. According to Williams, "Genre, in this view, is neither an ideal type nor a traditional order nor a set of technical rules. It is in the practical and variable combination and even fusion of what are, in abstraction, different levels of the social material process that what we have known as genre becomes a new kind of constitutive evidence" (p. 185), which applies to this study. It does so first as children's literature and young adult literature were carved out of a general space of all literature, then, and now, when the quantities of sub-genres within young adult literature have become absurd in their sheer abundance and ephemeral nature, reflecting constitutive evidence of how publishers target specific markets and readerships, far removed from the simple genres of classification conceived of by Aristotle.

Therefore, in the case of *Twilight*, contemporary definitions of genre have evolved into frames for consumption as genres are constructed by marketers or readers themselves. Social tagging on LibraryThing (LibraryThing.com, n.d.) reveals a list of user-generated tags about the *Twilight* series, classifying it in genres from "paranormal,"

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[27] According to Squires (2007), one reviewer in *The Times* responding to the profusion of such Bridgetesque novels "found herself in a publishing hell, where 'There is a sub-genre more horrifying than horror writing, and it's called Bridget Jones's Afterbirth" (p. 159).

"love story," "young adult fiction," and "supernatural," to "urban fantasy." Genres posted by users indicate an enormous range of classification topics that users consider suitable for books in the *Twilight* series. Bowker and Star (1999), who wrote that the "only good classification [system] is a living classification" (p. 326), could have written about this with an implication here that there is a need for systems, such as genres, to be flexible and adaptive. LibraryThing's user-generated tags around *Twilight* is a good example of a living, breathing, classification system, one which also connects to the idea of corporate classification.

2.2.5 Classifying literary commodities.

Within this system, in order to be successful, commodities must have both an exchange-value and a use-value, and in the corporate American culture industry, exchange-value dominates within a system in which phenomenon building on the scale of *Twilight Saga* is the goal. In terms of cultural products such as books, it is hard to get beyond the exchange values exemplified by the bestseller list. With a strict focus on bestseller lists as barometers of quality or success, literary quality becomes secondary to salability. Literary awards are indicators of a book's cultural value and its overall cultural capital—at least according to the cultural arbiters of taste in a system that validates books in an inalienable cultural field. But compared to award-winning, for publishers, a book's appearance on a bestseller list is a better indicator of a book's financial success, or in this case, exchange value. Since the 1980s, the rise of conglomerate publishers, and the quest for content that can appear on more than one media platform, books in the one-size-fits-all (or most) category are far more interesting. This changes the traditional definition of a

quality literary product from one that is well reviewed, possibly prized, and certainly

esteemed, to a product that sells the most copies in the most formats.

This study on literature for young people in the context of media convergence

demonstrates that an emphasis on books as cultural commodities, produced primarily for

profit, results in a compromised quality. Not only must books published by transnational

conglomerates attract the widest possible market, but traditional notions of cultural

production blend and merge with their consumption.

Fiske (1989) writes: "The practices of the users of a system not only can exploit

its potential, but can modify the system itself. In the practices of consumption the

commodity system is exposed to the power of the consumer, for the power of the system

is not just top-down, or center-outward, but always two-way, always a flux of conflicting

powers and resistances (p. 31)." This we will see more in case studies in Chapters 6 and

7, in which evidence of users' excorporation appears within corporate-owned websites,

where subordinate reader-participants circumvent sites' EULAs and moderators to make

their own culture within such sites.

Considering the state of young adult literature in the era before 2007 (when social

media was increasingly incorporated into books' marketing and the books themselves)

from a Marxian perspective that justifies consideration of the field of cultural production

and its commodified side, the content of books produced would reside in the

superstructure, i.e. the locus for society's cultural production (ideas and art), while

everything related to physical production, including labor, would reside in the base.[28]

Parallels in the emerging configuration of book production in the post-social media era

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[28] Critiquing definitions that reduce "base" and "superstructure" into material objects, Williams argues instead that : "The physical fixity of the terms exerts a constant pressure against just this realization" (Williams, 1977, p. 82)

which brings the superstructure closer to the base can be drawn with Eileen Meehan's (1986) study on television, in which she describes television as belonging both to industry (base) and culture (superstructure). Just as Meehan describes the duality of television, convergence culture does the same to the field of literary production.

A goal of convergence culture, according to Jenkins, is "transmedia storytelling" (Jenkins, 2006, p. 21) or "world making," which merges relations of production and economics that exist within the base, with the creativity that resides in the superstructure. In transmedia properties, "artists create compelling environments that cannot be fully explored or exhausted within a single work or even a single medium" (p. 116), and in which reach (meaning number of copies sold or bestseller ranking) is valued over literary quality (or literary awards received). For example, the first book in the *Harry Potter* series, *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* (1998), was a perfect example of such storytelling,[29] albeit unplanned by either the author or the publisher. Fans adapted the storyline via their fan fiction and fan sites, and conveniently the rich world of *Harry Potter* extended naturally beyond the book onto movie screens and into endless licensing deals, from jelly beans, to dolls, to an entire section of Universal Studio's amusement park in Orlando, Florida.

Prior to *Harry Potter,* and the later incorporation of digital technologies into books for young people, the young adult market had been considered an ephemeral, hard-to-reach market; but three factors have changed that: the consolidations of publishing

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[29] In addition, this book proved to publishers that teens would buy books in hardcover format. Hardcovers have a similar production cost, but a much higher retail price than paperbacks, which were typically marketed to teen consumers before *Harry Potter*. As an added benefit, hardcovers are more likely to get reviewed in professional journals than are original paperbacks. As a result, *Harry Potter* changed how publishers publish for young adults.

companies, the displacement of independent bookstores by national chain superstores, and Internet-based marketing opportunities.

In books such as *Harry Potter* and *Twilight*, a milieu arises serendipitously and organically from the books out of a combination of a fast-paced, multi-layered plot, a publisher's well-timed marketing efforts, and a solid (and continually expanding) fan base which connects story plot and marketing efforts. But now, rather than waiting for the next fan-supported blockbuster series, publishers are attempting to strategically fabricate world-making, by turning consumers into producers. The *Amanda Project* (Kantor, 2009) published by HarperCollins, is an example of carefully-orchestrated, publisher-controlled, top-down world-making. As applied to books, convergence blurs lines between product and advertising as it has in other entertainment media, such as television, film, and video games. Writing about television, Schiller (1999) describes how advertisers seek to "sign up alternative bands—musicians who in the past often disdained such partnerships as exercises in cooption" (p. 127)[30] and manufacturers are increasingly sponsoring programming: "Proctor & Gamble helped bankroll TV shows such as *Sabrina, the Teenage Witch*" (Schiller, 1999, p. 127. Similar efforts are happening with books.

Like other media producers, publishers are becoming increasingly savvy about how to profit from user-generated content, from creating their own proprietary websites to basing an entire book series on such content as in *The Amanda Project* (2009), which was co-created by work-for-hire authors combined with users' contributions on the company's book-related website (without financial compensation to these user-

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[30] In all fairness, given the current state of the music industry, this represents one way that musicians can actually make money.

contributors). User-generated content introduces a new financial structure around authorship, and can also be channeled by publishers into an effective marketing tool: peer-to-peer marketing. As Alissa Quart (2004) found, this type of direct marketing is a far more effective way of reaching teens for selling products ranging from Mary Kay cosmetics, to Hires root beer, to Delia*s clothing, and to music. Publishers can also benefit from this proven strategy by using digital technologies, social media, and the Internet. In regard to selling books, peer-to-peer marketing in the form of reader recommendations is an efficient and cost-effective way to reach reading audiences, even as it disrupts the traditional way books were disseminated to young people.

User-generated content applies to marketing efforts, but also to authorial efforts. "Historically, young artists learned from established masters, sometimes contributing to the older artists' works . . ." (Jenkins, 2006, p. 190). Now young "authors" of fan fiction learn from "masters," such as J.K. Rowling, author of *Harry Potter*, or directly "borrow" material from other sources and incorporate it into their own remixed works. Jenkins's use of the term "appropriation" raises important questions about authorship in the digital realm, especially as related to user-generated content and co-created works. Does creating a literary work that is based on other works, or which includes pieces borrowed from other authors, constitute a new, creative, and original output? This form of appropriation, now appearing in books, is one that has far deeper roots in the music industry. The music-industry analogy provides important insights for the problem at hand, as some of the creative devices that have been used—legally, and illegally—in the music industry, can now be used in book production. By doing so, teens' affective and immaterial labor contributes to production. This also gives teens a new version of

voice—a more efficient and direct one than existed with programs such as review journals that included teens' reviews, or activities of the BBYA Committee as seen in Chapter 1.

This section explored how the political economy of the publishing industry and convergence culture are changing the production of literary cultural products for young people. The next section will explore reception of such products.

2.3 Third Framework—Critical Theory, Cultural Studies, and Audience Studies

This section will explore how digital technologies are enabling a disintermediated environment in which YA publishers can communicate directly with readers, and how this new configuration leads to the displacement of librarians in their role as mediating gatekeepers between publishers and young adults.

2.3.1 Critical theory: The Frankfurt School.

With their critique of American popular culture starting in the 1940s, the work of the Frankfurt theorists Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno (1972) offers a critical resonance on modern popular culture for teenagers. As refugees to the United States from Nazi Germany, Horkheimer and Adorno viewed the American culture industry they encountered as a uniform, diluted, and dumbed-down culture, used as a mechanism for controlling its consumers in ways that paralleled the Fascist regimes they had escaped, where Hitler and the Nazis used the wireless [radio] to ". . . give shape to their cause just as the printing press did to the Reformation" (Horkheimer & Adorno, 1972, p. 159). Unlike Bourdieu, and his later work on distinction, Horkheimer and Adorno felt that American consumers they encountered had slipped into a mass audience of consumption

around the culture industry's commodities, and they refused to accept that there could be agency on the part of the consumers, because they considered the mass audience to be passive—lulled into inaction by an abundance of low culture (Horkheimer & Adorno, 1972).[31]

In an elaboration of these critical theorists' ideas, cultural studies theorists who followed (such as John Fiske) emphasized the resistant role of the audience, including the possibility of alternate readings of media texts (especially negotiated or oppositional readings). In a contemporary environment in which the political economy of publishing stresses the production of bestselling transmedia books, it is interesting to note that despite publishers' best efforts at extracting labor from young adults and at harnessing and controlling online activity, young adults manage to participate in interstitial resistant activity within such sites (as will be explored further in Chapters 6 and 7).

2.3.2 Using commodities for cultural citizenship.

> Commodities are the resources of the woman (or man) who is exercising some control over her look, her social relations, and her relation to the social order. The Madonna 'wanna-bes' who buy fingerless lacy gloves are not buying the meanings these items would have, for instance, at a Buckingham Palace garden party—they are buying a cultural resource out of which to make their own meanings, to make a statement about their own subcultural identity and thus about their relationship to the social order (Fiske, 1989, p. 35).

In Fiske's example, wearing Madonna-like gloves confers an identity and sense of belonging upon the user, displays a signifier of community membership, and bestows a certain symbolic currency upon the wearer via her insider-status. On book-related sites, brand readers' demonstrated expertise about popular culture (or the equivalent of wearing Madonna's gloves) in online peer communities translates into a type of cultural capital

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[31] See also Adorno's (1975) critique of American jazz.

that is based on the circulation of insider-knowledge of titles and their authors, and acts as an exchange value in which expert knowledge is exchanged for status-bearing badges (which can be posted next to users' profiles). These badges then become a form of admittance for community membership.

For girls of a certain age in early 21st-century America, an awareness of, if not an expertise in, the books in the *Twilight* series has become de rigeur for claiming "cultural citizenship" (Morley, 2006).[32] Participating in sites such as the *Twilight Saga* is a way of boosting personal knowledge about this pop culture phenomenon, which helps explain participation. It all takes place in a new book-related sphere, which is largely peer-to-peer and disintermediated from the librarians. While librarians have always sought to include teens' voices, as shown in Chapter 1 with Margaret Scoggin's *Circulatin' the News* book review pamphlet in the early 20th century, publishers are now able to encroach upon this space and upon the symbolic capital inherent in librarianship. Now teen voices are not only included, but are allowed to dominate (as long as the teens obey the sites' End-User Licensing Agreements). This collective online exchange, marked by visible evidence of participation (users' work is posted in online communities that can be read by anyone, and will be described in detail in Chapters 5, 6, and 7) constructs a "collective body" (Griswold, et al. 2011, in Nightingale), or community of peer-to-peer readers.

This activity marks a cultural shift in which the active, participatory (teenage) reading/consumer assumes the role of critic, or arbiter of taste on publishers' sites because the reviewing and related activities in publishers' participatory sites compete with the work of librarians who are working in a parallel structure of reviewing and awarding within the mediated (old) configuration of librarianship. As such, within these

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[32] Morley, D. (2006). Unanswered questions in audience research. *Communication Review*, 9, (p. 101-121).

commercial sites, which emphasize certain commodity books, teen participation (or labor) is commodified, too. It becomes an asset to the publisher, which in turn helps sell more books. As such, this connects to the main research objective of this dissertation: to examine how technological formats are changing books and the reading experience for young people.

Considering the tensions between technology, audiences, and consumption/production, it is interesting to consider how the Internet provides a means of expression for alternative or resistant readings of popular fiction as evidenced by phenomena such as blogs and self-created, independent websites. Teens write fan fiction and create fan sites or even subversive anti-fan sites in support of resistant readings of these books. An example is *TwilightSucks* (twilightsucks.com, n.d.), on which books in the *Twilight Saga* by Stephenie Meyer (2005, 2006, 2007, 2008) are deconstructed and ridiculed by those who love to hate the series,[33] in fora that exist independently of publishers' sites. If such expressions occur on sites that are owned by multinational corporations where content can be co-opted or appropriated by the publishers and then manipulated and censored to support marketing and production plans, one should think that resistant or alternative expressions would be censored by the site owners. However, as we will see in later chapters, even those highly governed, highly regulated, corporate-owned sites (see section 2.2.5) can unintentionally become subject to excorporation. Once the publishers move onto new books, participants quickly begin testing the limits of the EULAs, with some surprising results.

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[33] Fan sites are those sites which contain favorable content about a book. Anti-fan sites contain only negative content. In addition, in the case of *Twilight*, Stephenie Meyer provides links to fan sites on her own website, while the anti-fan sites are omitted.

Adorno and Horkheimer's (1972) work has new applications in the era of convergence culture, in which cultural products—in this case books for young adults—1) are created to attract the largest possible audience to maximize sales; and 2) in which the use of technology in the production of these cultural products, despite efficacy for the manufacturer, results in products in which profitability matters more than originality or innovation. Out of the necessity to protect the purity of the commodity product, resistant readings of such books are pushed to the fringe, contained in sites such as the anti-fan sites mentioned above—or surreptitiously taking over certain corporate sites. According to Adorno: "what parades as progress in the culture industry, as the incessantly new which it offers up, remains the disguise for an eternal sameness; everywhere the changes mask a skeleton which has changed just as little as the profit motive itself since the time it first gained its predominance over culture" (Adorno (1975), in Marris & Thornham, (2000), p. 33).

2.3.3 A visible, reading audience.

While research on audiences argues that the interactivity of "new media" serves to "disaggregate audiences" (Butsch, 2011, p. 162), in the case of books like those in the *Twilight Saga* and *The Amanda Project*, an active audience is actually aggregated via its visible evidence of participation, as members leave comments, contribute content, and otherwise leave tangible evidence of their presence.

In the case of an online participatory community around books, an "audience" is constructed in part via the detritus of comments and user-generated content left behind by

the users. As Bratich (2008) writes, Fiske's "constituent power"[34]evolves around reading

practices. These online audiences can be widely dispersed: contributors on *The Amanda*

Project site come from all international (and English-speaking) locations of

HarperCollins, from Australia, to the United Kingdom, to the United States, who are

unified around the common interest of *Amanda*. As we will see within these corporate-

owned sites,[35] which are initially highly regulated and controlled digital corrals of content

(because of their economic value in terms of consumer feedback, user-generated content,

and peer-to-peer marketing), as the sites age and the projects around which they were

established move toward the backlist of a publisher's catalog, resistance by users reigns

free, and the sites unintentionally become a "space outside of incorporability" (Bratich,

2008). As we will see in Chapter 6 and 7, participants are able to manipulate the sites'

EULAs to create their own spaces for creating culture, which becomes difficult (if not

impossible) for publishers to regulate.

In order to understand audiences within the context of the case studies of this

dissertation, which present progressive stages of participation, it is helpful to consider

historical descriptions of publics and crowds. According to Butsch (2011), the French

social theorist Gabriel Tarde was the first to distinguish between "publics" and "crowds."

"Theories of crowd psychology that circulated among intellectual elites of the time

characterized crowds as irrational, easily suggestible, and prone to impulsive, violent

collective actions. Tarde defined publics as dispersed and not susceptible to such crowd

traits" (Butsch, in Nightingale, ed. 2011, p. 151). Butsch (2011) describes a difference in

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[34] Constituent power here refers to the power of the participating members—especially as they labor outside of the site owner's rules in order to build their own culture within the site—in conflict with the site owner's intentions.
[35] At the time of this writing (2012), all of the Big Seven publishers (see Chapter 3) had participatory teen websites.

demographics between "publics" and "crowds," arguing that the ". . . latter were

invariably described as women, children, inferior races, and subordinate classes, while

higher-class, northern and western European men were considered of strong enough

character to be good citizens" (Butsch, in Nightingale, p. 153). If this is the case, then the

independent fan sites which pre-date TwilightSaga.com might represent a "dispersed

public," whereas as we will see on the site now, despite rules and guidelines, the behavior

of many participants, who certainly are not "ill-informed" because of their status as

expert fans, has degenerated into "crowd"-like traits.

So far, this chapter has been about the theoretical frameworks that support the

research of this dissertation. The next section examines how the new disintermediated

configuration of literary cultural production is changing the traditional definition of

authorship in which a literary work was attributed to a single author or group of authors.

2.3.4 Poaching culture.

> . . . readers are like travellers; they move across lands belonging to
> someone else, like nomads poaching their way across fields they did not
> write, despoiling the wealth of Egypt to enjoy it themselves.
> (de Certeau, 1984, p. 174).

De Certeau's concept of "poaching" applies especially to the Internet, which has

made it increasingly easy for authors to "move across lands belonging to someone else"

and "poach" from other works. In the new configuration of publishing, the concept of

"authorship" has become more complicated, as the definition expands to include

collaborative works, sometimes by authors holding copyright, but also by contributions

by users of corporate-owned websites, not necessarily protected by copyright. According

to Fiske (1987), commodities reproduce ideologies, but users can reclaim and personalize

(or "excorporate") commodity products such as jeans by tearing them, and by doing so, users assert "one's right to make one's own culture out of the resources provided by the commodity system" (Fiske, 1987, p. 113).[36] This demonstrates agency and resistance on the part of the audience, in contrast to Adorno and Horkheimer's belief that the mass audience had been made passive and lazy because of an abundance of easy-to-access low cultural products. Fan fiction, which effectively involves "borrowing" or appropriating the work of others and making it one's own, connects to John Fiske's concept of creating alternative readings of a media text (Fiske, 1987; Fiske, 1996).

2.4 Audience Studies

Fiske (1996) observes that while homeless men had limited options for creativity, they created their own meaning from watching the movie *Die Hard*. Rather than identifying with the hero, the homeless men identified with the "bad guys," the down-trodden, the villains. The homeless men appropriated elements of the movie and re-interpreted the script to suit their own needs. In a similar way, readers appropriate elements of a popular series and create their own meaning with fan fiction. Jenkins (2006) writes that convergence "occurs when people take media into their own hands" (p. 17), and arguably this is the case with participation in fan fiction on non-corporate sites. As we will see in Chapters 5 and 6, it also the case on corporate-owned sites once these sites lose their importance in the eyes of the publisher.

The Internet has created an explosion of book-related fan communities, from *FanFiction.net* to individual sites grouped around bestsellers from *Harry Potter* to the *Twilight Saga*. By writing fan fiction, readers reclaim commodity books—those books

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[36] According to Fiske, as soon as the commodity system identifies torn jeans as a trend among consumers, it rushes to produce torn jeans for the marketplace.

prized by transnational publishers for their selling ability—by writing their own versions of stories using characters and plotlines from published books. However, while fan fiction authors might consider their writing to be a subversive activity, or an activity undertaken in response to a resistant reading of the original texts, publishers are the true beneficiaries of this activity, as fan fiction reveals glimpses to publishers of what reading consumers want to see in future books. This connects to Fiske's concept of co-opted culture (the jeans). Once consumers reveal what they like, corporations are ready to provide it. Even more poignantly, when such fan fiction is written on a publisher-owned site, it takes place in the publisher's own "digital enclosure" (Andrejevic, 2007), where End-User License Agreements (EULAs) serve as socio-technical agents, defining the legal arrangement between publishers and those contributing to their sites, and granting publishers the right to reuse such user-generated content in almost any way they like, including its incorporation into future books offered for sale by the publisher. Jenkins cites a joke circulating about Web 2.0, which applies here: "You make all the content. They keep all the revenue" (Jenkins, 2006, p. 180). The next sections describe how such content can be produced by users.

2.4.1 Convergence of content: Literary samples, remixes, and mash-ups.

In the digital environment, it is easier than ever to appropriate material from others, as online content is readily available and easily accessible. As Finkelstein & McCleery (2005) write: "Digital technologies, in the view of the liberationist revolutionaries, act as the Robin Hoods of contemporary culture, allowing theft from the information- and power-rich to empower democratic communities. All information becomes available to all consumers" (p. 120).

Using such digital content, books can now be created using techniques that have been prevalent in the music industry: sampling, remixing, and mash-ups. In regard to books, the culture of "remix" challenges established notions of authorship and literary rights. In her (2010) article "Remix my Lit," Simone Murray argues that the future of the book could be the "idea of the book as scrapbook" (p. 30), based on contributions from multiple contributors—a fluid, morphing construction, challenging the notion of "fixity" in the context of print culture (originally introduced by Elizabeth Eisenstein in 1983 to explain the effects of early modern changes on the ideas of text and technology). With print culture, appropriating the literary work of others and claiming it as one's own has always represented a textbook definition of plagiarism.

Sampling involves inserting a piece of an existing song into a new song, in which the original remains recognizable. Sampling allows artists to borrow from existing work to create a new, "original" song. A site called "Who Sampled: Discussing and Exploring the DNA of Music" (whosampled.com, 2011) is searchable, allowing users to find out who has sampled whom in pop music. The 1981 David Bowie song, *Under Pressure*, was notoriously sampled (without permission) by rapper Vanilla Ice in his (1990) song *Ice Ice Baby* (WhoSampled.com). In a similar fashion, a seventeen-year-old German author, Helene Hegemann, was recently found to have used "sampling" in her award-winning literary work. In response to criticism of her writing methods, Hegemann, described as "a child of a media-saturated generation . . . presented herself as a writer whose birthright is the remix, the use of anything at hand she feels suits her purposes, an idea of communal creativity that certainly wasn't shared by those from whom she borrowed" (Kennedy, 2010, para. 4). This directly contradicts the notions of literary property and authorship

that have been at the core of the process by which the judgment of value has shaped reading for young people. This idea of sampling is being used by publishers in collaborative, multiplatform works such as *The Amanda Project*.

In addition to constructing interiors of book-based content from a variety of sources, merging books with technology has changed the way texts can be presented, packaged, or experienced. According to literary theorist Gérard Gennette (1997): "A literary work consists, entirely or essentially, of a text, defined (very minimally) as a more or less long sequence of verbal statements that are more or less endowed with significance. But this text is rarely presented in an unadorned state, unreinforced and unaccompanied by a certain number of verbal or other productions, such as an author's name, a title, a preface, illustrations. And although we do not always know whether these productions are to be regarded as belonging to the text, in any case they surround it and extend it, precisely in order to *present* it, in the usual sense of this verb but also in the strongest sense: *to make present*, to ensure the text's presence in the world, its "reception" and consumption in the form (nowadays, at least) of a book" (Gennette, 1997, p. 1). In this description, Gennette was referring to books in the traditional sense, consisting of printed paper pages encased in a cover. The Internet, and publishers' interactive teen sites, on which publishers can have a direct discourse with young readers, extend a book's narrative into what Gennette might refer to as the "epitext," which is material related to the text. The epitext could arguably include interactive websites and different media platforms, each of which contributes different experiences essential to deriving meaning from the text. Examples will be provided in the case studies of Chapters 5, 6, and 7.

2.4.2 Re-examining "authorship" in the realm of social media.

User-generated content and remix literature force us to re-evaluate our definitions of authorship. Roland Barthes's (1977) essay "Death of the Author" shifted the focus on authorship from what authors attempt to create to how readers interpret it. According to Barthes, "a text's unity lies not in its origin but in its destination" (Barthes, 1977, para. 8). In response to Barthes, Michel Foucault (1977) asked exactly what constitutes an author's work. Foucault argued that an author's name represents more than just a signifier for a particular work: for example, the name "Aristotle" signifies far more than particular words bound in a volume, such as "the founder of ontology" (Foucault, 1977, p. 121). An author's name functions as a tool of classification that establishes relationships between texts, and as an anchor or a point of reference serving "to characterize the existence, circulation, and operation of certain discourses within a society" (p. 124). In Foucault's view, the idea of "Author" is a function of discourse (p. 124), and he argues that a lot of work originates out of discourse—not from one author having a completely original idea, but rather from everything the author has read, heard, or discussed prior to "writing"—a view that lends itself to justification of appropriated works. Raymond Williams (1977) describes what he calls "the political economy of writing" (p. 193)—that authors are not able to write exactly what they want, because after all, they have the pressure of getting their work sold—of creating works that will fit into the unwritten pact which exists between genre-relations and readers.

Building upon Foucault's idea that work emerges out of discourse, Williams argues that authorship has far less to do with individual efforts, and much more to do with what he calls "trans-individual" (p. 195) efforts, meaning that authorship is a

collective effort. "This goes beyond conscious co-operation—collaboration—to effective social relations in which, even while individual projects are being pursued, what is being drawn on is trans-individual, not only in the sense of shared (initial) forms and experiences, but in the specifically creative sense of new responses and formation" (p. 195). Foucault (1977) writes that contemporary definitions of authorship are about copyright, ownership, and the law, and he questions whether or not we have arrived at the point where "discourse would circulate without any need for an author" (p. 138).

This applies particularly in this dissertation to corporate-owned websites which solicit user-generated content, which can be applied towards future books to be constructed by a publisher. This will be seen in the *Amanda Project* case study, which exemplifies how a publisher can solicit storylines and plot ideas for future books in a series, which then are collaboratively authored by a combination of a work-for-hire author, editorial staff at the publisher, content contributed by users, and (allegedly) a fictional character. The use of participatory social media in the field of cultural production elaborates on the discussions of Barthes (1977), Foucault (1977), and Williams (1977), and creates new tensions in the traditional concept of authorship. If publishers are increasingly going to follow *The Amanda Project* (2009) model, in which book production relies on content contributed by users, then the individual author will no longer be as critical to the publishers' profit model, and the term "bestselling author" may no longer have much meaning.

As shown in 2.3.5 and 2.3.6, in books for young people, the conceptualization of "remix" considers the rise of what Toffler (1983) calls the "prosumer," or those readers who both aid in production and are consumers of the literary products created for them.

Convergence culture implies and validates a collectivist model of authorship in which products are in part created by contributions from the consumer. In terms of young adult literature, convergence culture challenges traditional roles held by participants in the field: the producers, the disseminators and critics, and the recipients, and creates tensions: between producers (publishers) and recipients (consumers or readers); between the disseminators and critics (librarians as the traditional arbiters of taste) and online peer-to-peer marketers (who are also be consumers or readers); and between producers (publishers were traditionally reliant upon their relationships with librarians who served as cultural intermediaries) and the disseminators and critics (in this case, the librarians themselves.

Section 2.3 has examined how the new configuration in publishing presents new models of collaborative authorship and a visible audience. The next section will introduce gender and immaterial and affective labor, which combined, support this new configuration within the field.

2.5 Fourth Framework: Gender and Immaterial and Affective Labor

As we will see in this section, critical analysis of gender and of immaterial and affective labor are presented together as the fourth theoretical framework of this dissertation, because in this context they are interconnected. Gender operations can be seen in two dimensions. The first dimension describes the influence of gender on producers and disseminators of books for young readers, including publishers and librarians, and the evolution of these fields as gendered professions. The second dimension describes a gendered readership, as recreational reading has largely been constructed as a gendered activity, especially when referring to leisure reading after the

early childhood years. A recent Pew Research Center Study by Lenhart, Madden, Macgill, and Smith (2007), demonstrates that girls are contributing content online at greater numbers than boys. This connects to historical counterparts and examples of a gendered readership for fiction, from Janice Radway's (1984) *Reading the Romance*, in which suburban women read romance novels, to Deborah O'Keefe's (2000) *Good Girl Messages,* which argues that reading is a gendered activity. A similarly gendered readership was identified around the titles in the case studies of this dissertation.

The first dimension on gender connects to essentialist views on women. Starting in the earliest days of the field, such views held that women's maternal instincts made them the best gender for work related to children or child-rearing, and typified them as experts in any field related to children. As seen in Chapter 1, this helped establish children's (including young adult) librarianship and publishing as fields that were not only appropriate for women to work in, but also fields in which it was acceptable for women to excel. As such, at the turn of the 20th century, first the field of children's librarianship, then the field of children's publishing, rose as spheres in which young women could not only find employment, but could also become successful without threatening their male counterparts operating in more "serious" fields. As women's fields, children's publishing and librarianship always emphasized skills attributed to women: women as builders and maintainers of relationships, and women as enforcers of societal rules such as etiquette, which acted as a controlling ethos. In these businesses, women's relationship-building skills translated into the rise of Elizabeth Hearne's (1996) matriarchy, or "old girls' network," which served as a sphere of power sharing. As rule makers in the ethos of etiquette, these women were able to assign and manipulate

traditional domestic rules to serve their purposes in the public sphere, from business dinners and written communication, to place settings and thank-you notes. As subversive rule makers in this feminine arena, women were appointed the dominant leaders in the field.

As noted, the second dimension in which gender impacts this study is in regard to the gendered readership of children's and young adult literature, and now, gendered participation in the genres via online fora. This connects to the third research question about the participants, which also connects to consumption and the political economy of the publishing industry. Regarding books published up to the 1950s, Deborah O'Keefe writes: "Girls as a group were always more involved than boys were in reading, an activity that is girlish in that it earns approval from one's elders and requires sitting still for long periods of time" (O'Keefe, 2001, p. 26). O'Keefe found the selection of books designed for boys and girls during this era also to be gendered, with "stories of family and community life" (O'Keefe, p. 26) designed to appeal to girls, and adventure stories involving "journeys, quests, battles, struggles to survive and win" (p. 26) designed to appeal to boys. While this gender divide in books for boys and girls has softened in books published since the 1950s, for example in the case of books in the *Harry Potter* series which are read by both boys and girls, it certainly still exists; and girls are more likely to be recreational readers than are boys (Bauerlein & Stotsky, 2005). For girls, reading can be a subcultural activity which takes place in a sphere where girls are encouraged to operate: indoors, and safe from the dangerous subculture of the street (Hebdige, 1979). Participating in books online extends the reading experience from the private sphere to the public sphere as online fora serve as bridges that connect indoor and outdoor spaces.

While book-related user-generated-content is created in the privacy of the indoors, such

online participation connects indoor (private) spaces to outdoor (public) spaces, where

content can be read by and shared with others. The 2007 Pew Internet and American Life

Project study (Lenhart et al., 2007) found that in general, girls are more likely than boys

to be online content creators. This would indicate that girls are actively claiming this

activity for themselves. Predicting these findings in 1989, Fiske's research (as shown in

Table 2.1), demonstrates these activities are aligned along a dichotomous division of

masculine and feminine spheres, and creates a value structure that delineates territories

for men and women, as follows:

Table 2.1: Fiske's Gendered Domains

The Masculine	The Feminine
Public	Private (domestic and subjective)
Work	Leisure
Earning	Spending
Production	Consumption
Empowered	Disempowered
Freedom	Slavery

(Fiske, 1989, p. 22)

Women have used reading as a subversive activity in other ways as well. Such

reading that occurs in "private (domestic)" spaces, is a way for "disempowered"

housewives to carve out "leisure" time away from the "slavery" of housework, as

Radway (1984) has shown in her interpretation of romance reading. Similar to what de

Certeau (1984) describes in a phenomenon he names "la perruque," in which workers

effectively steal time from their employers as they engage in personal activities during

the time they are being paid to work, whether they are updating their resumes on

company computers, or having a phone conference with a child's teacher. There is plenty of evidence from studies of reading that particular styles of reading emerged as gendered activities. Publishers created products for these readers—in this case, "cheap, popular fiction" (Lyons, 1999, p. 314), first in the form of novels. Later, realizing higher profit margins, publishers printed literature in serial format (as was the case with much of the work of Charles Dickens). A gendered tradition in reading arose hand-in-hand with formal schooling for girls, and women's reading was supposed to be related to their roles in the home as "guardian[s] of custom, tradition and family ritual" (p. 316). Nineteenth-century women often had to read in secret—especially when enjoying novels that existed outside the limits of acceptable reading. And while women were responsible for annotating and passing on the family Bible, they were also encouraged to read practical books related to running a household, such as cookbooks—but novels became most popular of all.

In the same way, as already noted, reading allowed Janice Radway's (1984) romance-reading housewives to surreptitiously steal time from the endless drudgery of household chores, and the loneliness of being confined to the home. In Radway (1997), she even describes how books themselves were considered feminine, as a 1925 *Good Housekeeping* article by Jane Guthrie (Radway, 1997, p. 145) describes a commodity fetish around books, suggesting they could be used in the house as decorative objects, sorted by color and grouped with vases and other knick-knacks.

If belonging to an online community equates to belonging to a subculture, then it would be one that is particularly well-suited to girls, even when such participation occurs within a publisher constructed brand-community, because it occurs indoors and centers

on reading. On socially networked sites, girls can assume roles as cultural critics when they write reviews or participate in fan sites and anti-fan sites, and even as creators of content. Proprietary sites owned by transnational corporations such as Bertelsmann (which owns Random House), Hachette (which owns Little, Brown), and News Corporation (which owns HarperCollins) understand this propensity, creating sites that appeal to conventionally defined gender-based interests encouraging teens to participate in their "digital corrals" (Andrejevic, 2007). Many of these sites targeting girl readers feature a shopping component, which also connects to essentialist views of women's work and of appropriate activities for women, of which shopping is a dominant one (Schor, 2004). As such, whether girls are using reading-related activities to engage in the subversive activities of the street or women are using reading as escapism, a certain type of reading has emerged as a gendered practice. The third research question of this dissertation about readers, will examine who especially is involved in the participatory culture around transmedia and multiplatform books.

In an attempt to understand first how and why girls participate in online activity centered around books, and second, how publishers are constructing book-related sites which primarily target this audience, it is important to note the work of Sarah Banet-Weiser (2004), whose research on the television network Nickelodeon demonstrates how a network increased its female viewership by creating girl-specific programming that relies on such techniques; Angela McRobbie, whose work on *Jackie* magazine (1982) deals with identity construction; Sharon Mazzarella's (2005) work on girls and fandom on the Internet; and Ellen Seiter's (1995) work on gendered consumption. This leads to gendered reading being tied to the framework in the context of specific media.

As will be shown in the analysis, the stylistic elements of children's books (and now also related websites) clearly define the target readership. The participatory reading sites are clearly extending gendered reading. For example, even without surveying the participants, an examination of *The Amanda Project* book shows a hot pink cover with the image of a girl on the cover, and interior marginalia of feminine gender-typed doodles of flowers, decorative scrolls, and flowers printed on interior pages—indicates that girls are the target audience. Several researchers have written about the activity of shopping and its association with women and girls (Fiske, 1989;[37] McRobbie, 1982; Quart, 2004; Schor, 2004; Seiter, 1995). Seiter depicts girls' toys of the 1950s as being about emulating their mother's household activities, with girls bathing baby dolls, cooking with a toy oven, or cleaning with a toy vacuum. "Consumption and shopping became an ever more important aspect of play" (Seiter, 1995, p. 76). Shopping, and the ideologies about identity construction inherent in shopping, especially when viewed as a female activity, are extremely complex (Fiske, 1989). The publishers' websites use Althusserian interpellation to hail their participants, in the same way that McRobbie's (1982) readers were interpellated by Jackie magazine. Pre-teen and teenage girls seeking to create an identity for themselves could find a ready-made version in Jackie—a personality available for purchase of the right outfit and accessories. McRobbie describes how the magazine constructed an imaginary Jackie world, into which their perky and popular (albeit imaginary) friend Jackie interpellated readers. The choice of the name was key, because the name represented everything the magazine's readers would want to be themselves.

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[37] Fiske describes shopping as a resistant activity for women (Fiske, 1989, p. 23-24).

Just as readers of *Jackie* magazine could construct their own *Jackie* identity with

lifestyle guidelines (McRobbie, 1982), publishers' teen websites have a consumerist

component that goes beyond the book. *The Amanda Project* site, which bills itself as *a*

*site "*for girls aged 13 and up" (AmandaProject.com, n.d.), has a tab called "shopping"

where readers can buy Amanda-related merchandise, or follow links to stores similar to

the kinds of stores where the fictitious Amanda might shop. More like Nodelman's

description of *Goosebumps* readers above, in this case shopping is about identity

construction and about buying your way into a particular community.

Sarah Banet-Weiser (2004) argues that Nickelodeon created programming for

girls under the guise of girls' empowerment, and that with such programming, girls felt

that they were producers of their own culture and not just "consumers" (p. 125). While

girls may have felt they had some sort of controlling or empowering role in the

programming, in reality, using girls in the selection was simply an effective ploy for

producers to create shows that girls would want to consume, or watch. Banet-Weiser sees

third wave feminism as being anchored in commercial and popular culture. In this case,

Nickelodeon becomes a producer of a commodified brand of feminism, which means the

empowerment sensed by the girl producers is actually the opposite; and instead of having

an empowering role, girls' voices merely aid production of programming aimed at them.

In the same way, girls creating user-generated content on publishers' websites are

contributing to the publishers' profit margins. "In the Web 2.0 world of branding,

children can be exploited as consumers in an ever-more insidious way, where every

social act can be parlayed into a profitable function for media companies" (Banet-Weiser,

2009, p. 89). This model lends itself to the way in which transnational conglomerates are

targeting teens via branding, which is especially apparent in the way in which girls are being recruited on *The Amanda Project* (2009) book and website. Girls and women's work connects to the next theoretical framework, on Labor, which examines why teens willingly donate their work.

2.5.1 "Labor of Love:" Affective and immaterial labor.

Technology is integral to the models by which convergence of consumption, labor, and affect can be brought together in the form of multiplatform books as bestselling phenomena in the political economy model of publishing. The fourth framework serves to guide what motivates teenagers to work free of charge and provide user-generated content on publishers' sites. Maurizio Lazzarato's (1996) work on immaterial labor, Dallas Smythe's (1981) work on media, consumption, labor, and the audience commodity, and Tiziana Terranova's (2000) work on free labor provides a way to examine motivation and affect together with gendered reading.

As indicated in the political economy framework, user input has proven invaluable to publishers in shaping literature produced for young adults. Websites and blogs are effective vehicles for getting feedback from these consumers, and publishers are co-opting these models on their own proprietary sites where teens are actively involved with the books they love. The sites serve to foster an affective relationship between publishers, who appreciate free consumer research, and their consumers, who become participating fans of particular books and authors. Publishers can use the input from their sites to attract and market to other teenagers—exploiting affect and co-opting teens' online activity for marketing purposes.

In writing about computer games, Alison Hearn (2008) writes that the goal of marketers is to blur the lines ". . . between product and consumer, private self and instrumental associative object" (Hearn, 2008, p. 197). By establishing an affective relationship between producer and recipient, which in the case of the producer (publisher and author) / recipient (reader) relationship borders on friendship as goodwill is established between producers and recipients when readers are granted access to their favorite authors via publishers' websites, producers win consumer affect. This relationship is key to developing the immaterial labor of the consumer, as many other researchers have written about in fields from television (Andrejevic, 2008), to social networking sites (Humphreys, 2008), to retail stores such as the Build-a-Bear Workshop (Zwick, Bonsu & Darmody, 2008).

"Goodwill towards brands. . . has arguably become even more important in contemporary times" (Jarrett, 2003, p. 344), and exploiting the affective labor of the consumer is quickly becoming a new strategy for producers. In the case of teens on publishers' websites, their affective labor essentially creates an excellent source of surplus labor comprised of free consumer research and peer-to-peer marketing. Maurizio Lazzarato's (1996) work on immaterial labor incorporates the Web, and he describes such labor as work which "involves a series of activities that are not normally recognized as 'work'—in other words, the kinds of activities involved in defining and fixing cultural and artistic standards, fashions, tastes, consumer norms, and, more strategically, public opinion" (Lazzarato, 1996, p. 132). Coté & Pybus (2007) cite Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri on affective labor as being that which manipulates "a feeling of ease, well being, satisfaction, excitement or passion . . ." and write that "historically this labour has been

unpaid and has been commonly regarded as 'women's work'" (p. 90). This might explain

why the 2007 Pew Institute study found girls to be more active in creating content than

boys.

Tiziana Terranova (2000) argues that the Internet is a site of "disintermediation"

(p. 34) that eliminates the middleman, who in this case is the librarian. Publisher-based

websites for teens are exactly such sites of disintermediation, as they remove a layer of

gatekeepers (librarians) who traditionally reside between books and the teens who read

them, disrupting the traditional means of dissemination of books to young people that

have been in place since the beginning of the 20th century. Terranova (2000) calls those

participating in free labor in the social factory "NetSlaves" (p. 33). If we accept that such

labor is being done in the context of making books, then teens participating on publisher-

based sites are performing the same type of affective, immaterial labor (meaning labor

that is done on an unpaid and voluntary basis out of a feeling of goodwill), done in this

case on the Internet and feeding into products published through other media channels.

For example, Mark Andrejevic (2008) describes the *Television Without Pity*

(TWoP) website where viewer/participants feel empowered, first by having a creative

voice in the direction of the programs, and second by impressing fellow members of the

TWoP community with snarky or pithy comments demonstrating their in-depth criticism

of particular shows, while the producers benefit from free market research; Mark Coté

and Jennifer Pybus (2007) write about immaterial labor on MySpace and other social

networks as a form of identity-building; and Pybus (2007) writes about affective

immaterial labor in the context of caring for *Neopets*, and equates this type of labor

involving "caring and well-being" (Pybus, 2007, para. 5) which connects to the

traditional realm of women's work as care takers. In the realm of books, publishers are creating online sites that parallel and link to what the teens are doing independently on blogs and fan sites, and are doing it in a way that creates and exploits a venue for affective peer-to-peer marketing, all within a digital enclosure (Andrejevic, 2007).

As a result of the convergence of technology, labor, and the new disintermediated configuration of publishing, teens' book-related labor in online environments has become a rich source of information for publishers; and for the last few years, publishers have been carefully monitoring the web for users' opinions, feedback, and content related to the books they publish.

The websites that provided the case studies for this dissertation, including *RandomBuzzers.com*, *TwilightSaga.com*, and *The Amanda Project*, are explored to examine the development of publishers' use of such content—from simply monitoring online content and channeling it to publisher-owned websites, to creating fully-integrated multiplatform book projects which connect physical books with online environments, and serve as proprietary depositories for user-generated content. While such projects do exist for boys, with one example being Patrick Carman's (2009) *Skeleton Creek*, most seem to be aimed at girls. This would support the argument that not only is reading constructed as a gendered activity that connects to Fiske's gendered domains (see Table 2.1) in which female spheres encompass "the private," as well as leisure, spending, and consumption, but also that these book projects draw upon and benefit from female labor.

2.6 Summary and Conclusions

In conclusion, four overarching groupings of theoretical frames serve as scaffolds for this research on the emergence of multiplatform books and those participating in the

field. These frameworks connect the old configuration of publishing with the new disintermediated version, which has arisen out of convergence culture, the political economy of the publishing industry, and advancements in technology such as participatory websites and social media. Multiplatform book products have emerged out of a historical trajectory, starting with the development of a separate genre of children's literature at the turn of the last century, combined with convergence in the publishing industry in the 1980s, which in turn led to large, transnational publishers creating transmedia products (Jenkins, 2006), and subsequently multiplatform books. Publishers serve as producers, marketers, and disseminators (via social media) of these books. Media convergence, digital technology, the Internet, and user-generated content have altered how books for young adults are made, as well as how marketing plans are constructed to reach teens. Readers serve as consumers, creators, peer-to-peer marketers, and also reviewers of these books, and their input allows publishers to shape books in ways that will appeal to the widest possible audience of other teens.

This dissertation on the phenomenon of multiplatform books for young people draws from both political economy and cultural studies. It looks at how readers are participating within online book-related structures created by publishing companies, and compares users' resistant activity on such sites. Such resistance is difficult at the outset as publishers initially maintain careful surveillance (while a product is economically valuable to the publisher), and later it becomes much easier as publishers eventually abandon control when such product becomes less important and moves into the backlist. In this study as well, the frameworks from both political economy—understanding how corporate structures have necessitated a move towards highly commercial commodified

books for young people—and from cultural studies, including affective and immaterial labor, the significance of users' contributions, and especially, resistance on part of the readers, contribute to the overall understanding of multiplatform books for young readers. The four theoretical frameworks, the respective roles of publishers, librarians, teens, and the materiality of books for young readers will serve as lenses through which to study multiplatform books for young readers in order to understand the context out of which they emerged, how the Internet and users' labor have made them possible, why girls are their primary participants, and why they are willing to contribute their labor to these projects. The next chapter reviews the methods used in this dissertation to connect the theoretical framework with the research questions, which are also presented in Chapter 3.

CHAPTER 3: Research Questions and Methodology

Introduction and Context for the Dissertation

The main research objective of this dissertation is to examine how technological formats are changing books and the reading experience for young people, focusing on an extended framework. The primary goal with this research was to conduct a critical analysis of a shift in the cultural production of literature for young people, to view the impact of conglomeration on the field as occurred since the 1980s and 1990s (Schiffrin, 2000), and to examine how this conglomeration in turn exaggerated an emphasis on profit rather than on literature.

The research questions are organized around dimensions of this phenomenon, including creation, production, dissemination, reception, and materiality. They have been studied in a historical and comparative framework, comparing established configurations of production, dissemination, and consumption to revised ones, which incorporate technology.

The purpose of this research is to examine an emerging phenomenon and a contemporary practice of producing multiplatform books. Multiplatform books use technology to extend book-based content across numerous media platforms (from printed book to the Internet), and increasingly utilize production and consumption practices from other media industries—from film, to television, to gaming, which rely on consumer feedback and user-generated content. These cultural commodities require consumers to read content across multiple media platforms in order to derive full meaning from the text and allow user participation in different forms, from playing games on a book-related website, to contributing material to books in a series. In order to present the current

phenomenon within a broader framework, the study identifies three levels of participants in the field of cultural production for young people: 1) publishers (representing production and dissemination); 2) librarians and other gatekeepers (representing reception and criticism); and 3) adolescent consumers (representing consuming readers) in a comparative and historical framework. All of this contributes to the main research objective of investigating a moment in the established configuration of book production, dissemination, reception, and consumption, revealing inner workings of the field as technology produces a recent shift and creates new relations of control and resistance within convergence culture as applied to book production in a historical narrative around the field. The case studies are used to illustrate how publishers are using readers' labor as follows: 1) Random House's *Random Buzzers* site solicits peer-to-peer book recommendations, marketing, and consumer research; 2) Little, Brown's "official" *TwilightSaga.com* site emulates fan content found freely on the web, and it steers such fan contributions toward their own proprietary site, on which fans contribute free consumer research, peer-to-peer marketing, and—additionally compared to *Random Buzzers*—user-generated content; and finally, 3) these forms of contributions culminate and expand further in an early multiplatform book project, *The Amanda Project*. In *The Amanda Project*, the publisher (first Fourth Story Media, and then HarperCollins), seeks labor from fans in ways similar to those sought on both *Random Buzzers* and the *Twilight Saga,* but in addition it seeks (unpaid) user-generated content for story lines and plots for the series.

Various viewpoints, from publishers, librarians, and teen consumers, are provided in order to produce a rich understanding of this phenomenon.

For purposes of this dissertation, the date at which the configurations shifted from old to new is herein identified as 2007, which reflects the year in which two of the three websites used as case studies in this research were founded. This year marks a point during which the top publishers of books for young readers established interactive websites. As of 2012, the Big Seven[38] publishers of books for young people (see note below) are (in alphabetical order): HarperCollins, Little, Brown (Hachette), Macmillan, Penguin Putnam, Random House, Scholastic, and Simon & Schuster.

Multiplatform books are enabled by technology, but other interactive formats established earlier provided inspiration. Books such as Edward Packard's *Choose Your Own Adventure* series, which were popular in the 1980s and 1990s, allowed readers to choose a path of their choice for the hero or heroine of a book. In *Cathy's Book: If Found Call (650) 226-8233* (Stewart & Weissman, 2006), readers could call phone numbers to leave messages for characters in the book. *Random Buzzers.com*, and *Twilight Saga.com*, represent publishers' proprietary websites which encourage readers' online participation—first as peer-to-peer reviewers on *Random Buzzers*, and then as reviewers, fans, marketers, and providers of consumer research and content on *Twilight Saga.com*. Both of these are described in detail in later chapters: *Random Buzzers* in Chapter 5, and *Twilight Saga* in Chapter 6. Scholastic's *The 39 Clues* series (multiple authors, of which the first was published in 2008) is the first multiplatform book project for children ages eight to twelve, and incorporates books, a website, and collector cards, which each contribute to meaning-making within the storyline. Like *The 39 Clues*, *The Amanda Project* (2009) is a multiplatform project for teenage girls, consisting of a book series

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[38] While Ayanna Coleman of the Children's Book Council verbally confirmed this ranking on July 23, 2012, as an employee of a trade organization, she did not want to rank one member above another.

integrated with a participatory website. As in *Cathy's Book,* the protagonist (Amanda) has gone missing; except with *The Amanda Project*, instead of calling a phone number to leave clues, which presumably only the publisher has access to, with *Amanda*, readers are supposed to "help" find her by leaving clues and other content on an integrated and social website. According to the publisher, users' clues could become part of future books in the series, which for the first time, allows readers to participate in writing a book series. *Skeleton Creek* (Carman, 2009) is a multiplatform book series for boys and girls, which incorporates not only books and videos, but also Facebook and other social media platforms; and while readers cannot contribute content to the books (as on *Amanda),* they can participate via social media.[39] The timeline in Figure 3.1 below demonstrates the progression towards the recent phenomenon of multiplatform books, which incorporate books and technology.

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[39] Readers also participate by making their own parody videos of the videos in the series and posting them on YouTube, in which they imitate the hand-held camera used in the official videos. One such example from August 31, 2011, by thecrazypeoplez1 is here: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tXsRFLPQrxc. This is a possible topic for future research.

Title:	Choose Your Own Adventure Stories	Cathy's Book: If Found Call 650-226-8233	Random Buzzers.com (and publishers' participatory websites)	Twilight Saga.com, an example of a publisher-owned fansite	The 39 Clues Series	The Amanda Project series	Skeleton Creek	Launch of Scholastic's Storia imprint
Author:	Edward Packard	Sean Stewart, Jordon	Random Buzzers.com	Based on Stephenie Meyer's	(Multiple Authors)	(Multiple Authors)	Patrick Carman	(Multiple Authors)
Publisher:	Bantam Books	Running Press	Random House	Hachette	Scholastic, Inc.	Fourth Story/Harper Teen	Scholastic Press	Scholastic
Publication Date:	1979-1998	2006	2007	2007	2008	2009	2009	2012

Figure 3.1. Timeline Leading to Multiplatform Books

The last entry on this timeline does not refer to an individual book or to a series, but instead to the 2012 launch of Scholastic's Storia imprint, which demonstrates a significant commitment to digital formats by a top publisher of children's books.

In order to study the emerging phenomenon of multiplatform books and digital formats within historical and contemporary frameworks, a complex approach was designed. Figure 3.2 below outlines the research process within two frameworks: the historical framework on the left, and the contemporary framework on the right. Within each framework, I examined the perspectives of those whom I identify as the three levels of participants in young adult literature: producers (publishers), critics and disseminators (librarians), and recipients (reading consumers). In order to get at meaning, I collected data within each of the participant groups as described in detail below. The plan outlines a multiple-method, multi-dimensional approach that combines several strategies for data

collection including interviews, a focus group, case studies, and document analysis of

blogs, websites, newsletters, web analytics, and trade literature.

Note: This figure presents an overall research plan for this dissertation with historical perspectives on the left, and contemporary perspectives on the right. In each case, the research is divided into the three levels of participants, including publishers, librarians, and teens.
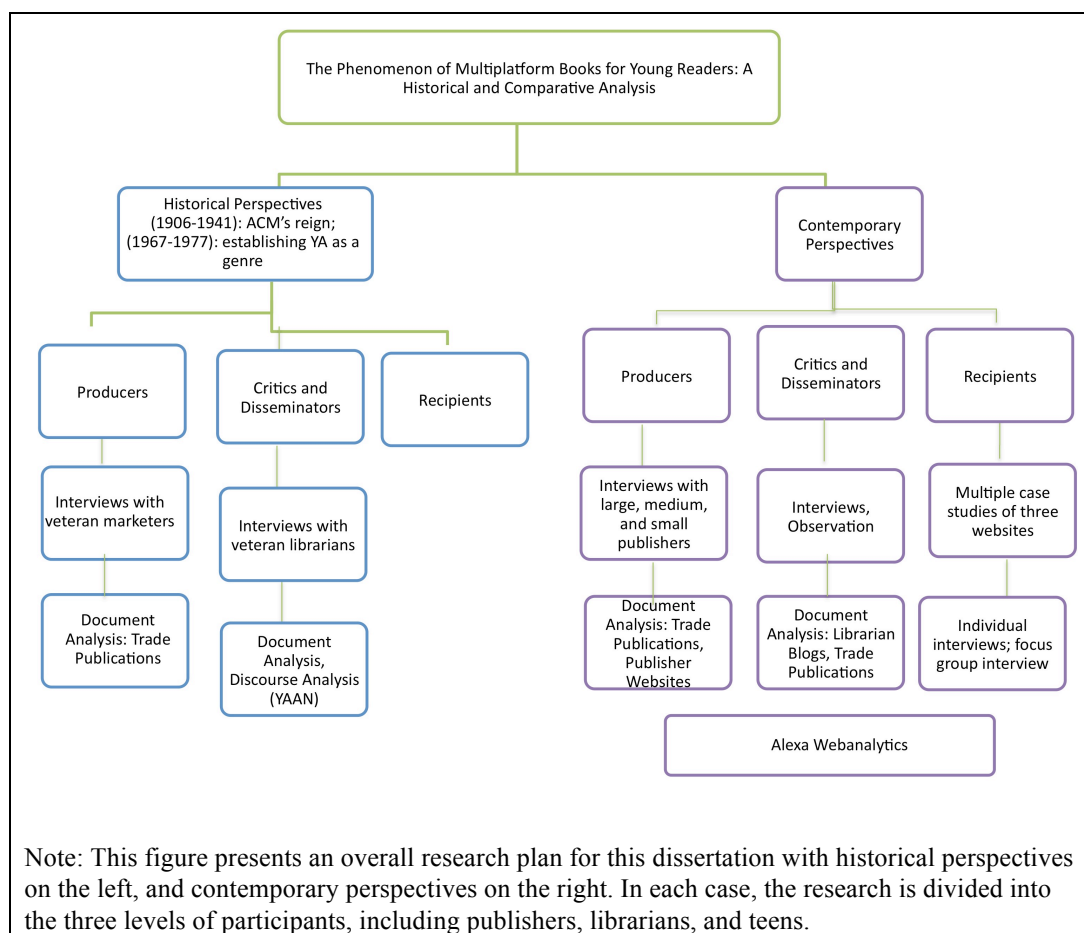
Figure 3.2. Overall Research Plan

3.1 Research Questions

A complex approach was developed in order to study this emerging phenomenon

of a shift in existing configurations of production, which prompted my engagement with

the topic and led to a historical and comparative analysis. Figure 3.2 outlines the research

steps, which were organized around the main research objective of examining how

technological formats are changing books and the reading experience for young people,

and a contemporary practice of producing multiplatform books for teenage readers that is

embedded in technology. This practice increasingly mirrors production and consumption practices in other media industries which rely on consumer feedback and user-generated content that is freely accessible online. As this phenomenon evolved out of prior configurations of production, dissemination, reception, and consumption, this research explores transmedia and multiplatform books as emerging publishing phenomena—from historical models anchored in print culture to contemporary forms that reveal more complex and interactive reading habits. In order to provide a perspective on the two points of comparison, the methodology is divided into two sections: "Historical Perspectives" and "Contemporary Perspectives." Each of these sections delves into three layers of participants: producers (including publishers and authors), disseminators and critics (the gatekeeping critics and awarders of such books), and recipients (in this case, the teenage reader-consumers).

The research questions, which address the main research objective of examining how technological formats are changing books and the reading experience for young people, are presented in the next section, reflecting a comparative and historical perspective that guides this research throughout.

Research Question 1:

Within the emerging configuration (after 2007) of the field of cultural production for young people, how is the use of technology (represented herein by the phenomenon of multiplatform books) providing a disintermediated relationship between publishers (producers) and young readers, and how is this relationship changing the producers' role in the field? And to nest this question in a historical context, how was their role different before 2007?

Because producers (including publishers, authors, and teens) represent the creation, production, and dissemination side of the phenomenon of multiplatform books, this question aims to uncover how publishing such books can be compared with traditional methods of production. The assumption that the Internet enables a direct, disintermediated relationship between publishers and teen consumers via publishers' online book-related sites helps to understand how, in this environment, publishers are using content contributed by readers, and how such content is redefining the traditional publishing model of creation, production, and dissemination of transmedia texts and multiplatform books.

Research Question 2:

How is the new configuration of the field of cultural production for young people (again represented herein by the phenomenon of multiplatform books and the technological innovations which lead to them) changing the role of the critics and disseminators of young adult literature compared to the historically established model?

In the field of young adult literature, critics and disseminators have traditionally been librarians. As key arbiters of taste, they were responsible for the first layer of reception (via their work as reviewers and awarders) as books were published and disseminated into the marketplace. The direct discourse between publishers and teens on publishers' websites within the new configuration, and on peer-to-peer reviewing on sites like Amazon.com, Shelfari, and LibraryThing, is challenging librarians' role as cultural intermediaries between publishers and teens. How does this disintermediated relationship between publishers and teens impact the role of young adult librarians? How does peer-

to-peer marketing and reviewing on websites impact the role of librarians as arbiters of taste and distinction?

Research Question 3:

How does technology (again represented herein by the phenomenon of multiplatform books and the technological innovations which lead to them) establish an audience of participating <u>readers</u> around interactive, book-related sites, and how does this shift in literacy compare to how forms of reading were studied historically, prior to technological interventions?

Because teenagers are the traditional consumers of young adult literature, this question seeks to understand the changing role of consumption when literature is presented in new formats. How do teens consume multiplatform books—not just as readers, but also as content creators, reviewers, and peer-to-peer marketers? Why are teens willing to volunteer hours of free labor on book-related sites? How do communities of readers arise online? How do they experience agency in participating? Is there evidence of resistant behaviors?

Research Question 4:

How is technology changing the <u>materiality</u> of books for young readers compared to materiality in earlier configurations in the field? And what does a visible, material audience mean to the overall field of cultural production for young people?

This question aims to find out how reader participation changes literature and the reading experience. Creation and production of books in the digital realm changes their materiality from books for a mass audience printed on paper to new formats of presentation in which evidence of an active, participatory audience exists via comments,

reviews, and user-generated content. How are transmedia and co-created multiplatform works changing the nature of what we understand by the term "book"? How do user-generated content and collaborative book projects such as *The Amanda Project* change what we understand by the concept of "authorship?" And how do they transform the act of reading?

By addressing the three layers of participants in the field of young adult literature—the producers, the critics and disseminators, and the readers—as well as the changing materiality of books for this market, it is hoped that this dissertation will provide comprehensive insight into a phenomenon that has engaged all dimensions of an existent framework.

Figure 3.3 below expands the research plan in Figure 3.2 above, to explicitly outline the methods of data collection for each of the four research questions within the historical and contemporary frameworks. The four research questions that address areas of involvement of the three layers of participants in the field of literary production as related to young adults are: 1) the producers, which include publishers and authors; 2) the critics and disseminators, which include librarians, online reviewing sites which are not owned by publishers, and booksellers; 3) recipients, which include reading consumers; and 4) the materiality of books and how the Internet and multiplatform books are changing the actual material reading platform.

	Historical	Contemporary
RQ1 (Publishers)	Interviews with veteran book marketers	Interviews with book marketers at a large, a medium, and a small publishing company. Document analysis of trade publications
RQ2 (Librarians)	Interviews of veteran librarians Document analysis and content analysis of YAAN Archival and historical research	Interviews Observation Document Analysis of YALSA blog
RQ3 (Teenagers)		A focus group Interviews Observation Three progressive case studies
RQ4 (Materiality)	Archival and historical research	Alexa Web Analytics Amazon.com Rankings

Figure 3.3. Methods Used to Address Research Questions

Note: This figure presents the methodology for a comparative and historical study of the rise of multiplatform books for young readers**.**

In order to answer the first question on how technology is changing producers'

roles in the field of young adult literature, I relied on interviews of veteran and

contemporary marketers, on trade literature, and on Alexa web analytics and

Amazon.com rankings. In the old configuration of the field, those in the marketing

department were traditionally responsible for connecting books with a readership; and in

the case of young adult literature, this was done through their relationships with

gatekeeping librarians who had access to such readership. In the new configuration,

publishers' interactive websites provide a disintermediated relationship directly with the

teenage readers. Web analytics helped provide information about who was participating, and Amazon.com's rankings enabled a comparative analysis of the popularity of each of the case study sites of Chapters 5, 6, and 7. Limitations include the choice of publishers—since I was unable to gain access to Hachette's marketing department (as discussed in 3.3), I interviewed marketing staff from a small, medium-sized, and large publisher in order to construct an analysis of how different-sized publishers are using digital technologies to reach teenage consumers.

For the second question on the role of critics and disseminators, I interviewed two veteran librarians who had worked as young adult librarians in the 1970s, and three contemporary librarians. I conducted comparative document analysis of the YAAN newsletter (1973–1979) and the YALSA blog (established in 2008), and I observed teens participating in a 2009 Best Books for Young Adults Committee meeting. Limitations here included a small number of interviews. The two veteran librarians both worked primarily in California, a state which had a leading role in America during the counterculture of the 1970s. The contributions from the YAAN newsletter were from across the United States, and while they confirm that the issues addressing the librarians interviewed were similar across the United States, interviews with veteran librarians from different geographical regions would have expanded the results. Another limitation is that the research on the YAAN newsletter covers seven years, but the research on the YALSA blog was only from October 24, 2011 to December 30, 2011. Unfortunately, time allowed only for a comparative snapshot, and instead, this becomes an area for future research.

The third question, on readers and changing formats of literacy, was studied via a focus group interview of ten young adults, by interviews of two teenage girls who had

been assigned *The Amanda Project* to read, by observation of a Teen Advisory Group meeting, and by analysis of participation on three progressive case studies. In this section, limitations include the fact that I had to assign readers, rather than finding fans of the series. If in the future another multiplatform book project for teen readers becomes more successful than *The Amanda Project*, it would be worthwhile to interview its readers.

In order to answer the fourth question, on how technology is changing the materiality of books for young readers, I looked at the case studies, at Alexa web analytics, and at Amazon.com rankings. Most interesting here was the way that materiality was shown to be twofold in the new configuration of publishing: first in regard to changing formats from print to digital, but also as it applies to audiences, as digital formats reveal a reading audience in participatory fora around books. Limitations of methods used to answer this question include the fact that I used free web analytics software, rather than software available for a fee. For-fee software would have provided richer results.

These methods correspond to the research questions, which target the three levels of participants (publishers, librarians, and teenagers) in historical and contemporary frameworks and the operations of data collection. Materiality emerges through data collected on the participants, but evidence of materiality was also studied in a contemporary framework using case studies. All of the methodologies and approaches to data collection, with their assumed approaches to analysis, are listed and discussed with regard to their overall contribution to the study.

In order to address the research questions, methods common to media studies and book history were used. These included interviews, case studies, and document analysis.

Multiple case studies were used to examine the new publishing phenomena, which includes a disintermediated sphere of publisher-teen interaction, as shown in figure 3.4 below. Together, the three case studies demonstrate a progression from early publisher-teen online interaction to complex, multiplatform, co-created book projects, two of which started in 2007, and a third in 2008.

Figure 3.4. Three Progressive Websites[40]

Launched in 2007, 2007, and 2008 respectively, these three sites serve as progressive levels of inspiration (see timeline, Figure 3.1.), giving publishers ideas first

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[40] NB: established dates were identified via the Internet Archive's Wayback Machine (http://archive.org/web/web.php, retrieved July 4, 2012).

of how to channel user-generated content onto proprietary sites, and then demonstrating

how this content could be manipulated for the publishers' purposes, from creating means

of peer-to-peer reviewing, to providing consumer feedback, and then to providing content

which could be repurposed by the publishers into new products. Each case represents an

array of emergent ways in which users' participation benefits the producers—from peer-

to-peer book recommendations on *Random Buzzers,* to a digital corral of fan culture on

TwilightSaga.com, to user-generated content and contributed storylines on *The Amanda*

Project. They were selected because, considered together, they demonstrate a progression

of user participation that has enabled multiplatform books.

3.2 Research Process

In 2009, when I first encountered publishers' online teen sites, the top seven

publishers[41] of children's books (HarperCollins, Little, Brown, Macmillan, Penguin

Putnam, Random House, Scholastic, and Simon & Schuster) had developed sophisticated

teen sites. Random House's site, *Random Buzzers*, with its system of remuneration and

rewards in the form of currency and badges,[42] was the most sophisticated among the

other publishers' sites.

Like Scholastic's *Harry Potter*, the books in Little, Brown's *Twilight Saga* had

endless amounts of user-generated fan content available online, but instead of studying

Harry Potter, I chose the *Twilight Saga*, because as a best-selling phenomenon, it was an

early example of how Little, Brown created a proprietary fan site which emulated content

freely available on the web, and then channeled such content into its site on which the

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[41] Ranking of publishers was established in Chapter 2.
[42] This is also related to the "gamification" of books. Gamification is beyond the scope of this dissertation, but an important topic for future research.

publisher's End-User Licensing Agreements (EULAs) would govern use and control of content. And finally, *The Amanda Project* was chosen because it is an early example of a multiplatform book project which incorporates peer-to-peer reviewing (as on *Random Buzzers*), and fan content (as on *Twilight Saga),* and then in addition, gives readers the opportunity to contribute content to future books in the series, serving as co-authors or collaborators on the series. While this study captures a moment of change, longitudinal studies will be necessary in the future, as the technology and its commercial uses are ever-changing.

Data collection from sources of evidence and its analysis occurred simultaneously (Yin, R., 2004). It proceeded from examining websites and interviewing publishers and teens, which revealed disconnects in terms of publisher expectations, and teen engagement.

The research methods for this project included: interviews and a focus group (between 2010 and 2012); observation in two teen libraries (in 2011) and at the American Library Association's Best Books for Young Adults Committee meeting (in 2009); an analysis from 2009 to 2012 of three websites that reflected aspects of the multiplatform phenomenon and included *Random Buzzers*, *Twilight Saga*, and *The Amanda Project*. Document analysis included archival and historical research conducted on the *Young Adult Alternative Newsletters* (I received a nearly complete set from their editor, Carol Starr, whom I also interviewed), as well as document analysis of the YALSA blog and other blogs related to young adult literature.

Extensive document analysis was also undertaken on the three case study sites: Random House's *Random Buzzers* site (http://www.randombuzzers.com/), Little,

Brown's official *Twilight Saga* site (http://thetwilightsaga.com/), and on *The Amanda Project (*http://www.theamandaproject.com/*)*. Analysis of the websites chosen for the case studies illuminated how teens were participating, and how publishers sought user-generated content. On the *Random Buzzers* site, I created a spreadsheet analyzing sample users (67,524 as of 4/5/12), including users' gender, hometowns, when they became members, last login, numbers of posts, numbers of comments, numbers of Buzz Bucks earned, and "other," which refers to any information users chose to share about themselves. Complete details are in Appendix B.

Google alerts for references in the media to aspects of the case studies, and document analysis of trade publications supported findings; and sales rankings from Amazon.com and web analytics using Alexa helped illuminate how popular (or unpopular) the case study sites were.

As a comparison to the three case study sites, I also scanned other publishers' sites and book-related sites that feature user-generated reviews, such as Amazon.com, weRead, Shelfari, and LibraryThing, on which I looked for evidence of user participation, user motivation, and publishers' use of such user-generated content. I used the list of fansites reported on *Twilight Saga's* author Stephenie Meyer's site ("Official Stephenie Meyer," 2012) to compare online content and activity to that which appeared in Little, Brown's site. When I looked for evidence of active/inactive/vanished statuses, I found that many of the fan sites (of which there were 374 as of 4/29/12) had become inactive since 2008, 2009, 2010, or since 2011. I briefly examined an anti-fan site, *Twilight Sucks: Welcome to the Community of the Undazzled* (Twilight Sucks, n.d.), and an alternate site: *TwilightGuy.com* (Nation, Twilight Guy, n.d.) to compare activity on these sites to the

fan sites listed by Meyer. While the fan sites were in various stages of decline, the anti-fan site was still active, and its presence had expanded to Tumblr. *Twilight Guy* had become a commercial site, including paid advertising.

I conducted 21 interviews from September 2010 to January 2012 as follows: publishers' marketing staff: one veteran, and three contemporary. In targeting publishers, book marketers were chosen over editors, because historically and traditionally, book marketers were those who established relationships with the children's librarians who served as cultural intermediaries between publishers and young adult readers. In the contemporary example, book marketers are those who seek a disintermediated and direct relationship with teenage readers by connecting with them on the web via social media sites, and on the proprietary online book-related sites they construct for the publishers they represent. Historical perspectives on publishers were examined by interviewing a veteran book marketer who was one of the first to work in library marketing within the field of children's books. This veteran marketer was also a source of snowball sampling for retired young adult librarians.

Other marketing subjects were recruited through snowball sampling, starting with personal industry contacts. Marketing staff from the publishers of each of the case studies (Random House, Little, Brown, and HarperCollins), were not included as interview subjects. I initially approached Little, Brown's marketing department via a high-level editor friend at the company, but the interview request was declined (because of a "corporate policy" not to discuss *The Twilight Saga* with anyone outside the company). Because of this, other publishers were contacted instead, based on the researcher's own contacts in the publishing industry. This also allowed for a more critical look at the

websites in question. Since all publishers are now pushed to use social media in marketing to teens, interviewing marketers within three sizes of publishing companies contributed information about how publishers were using user-generated material, and what publishers were doing to support these efforts.

Each publisher's size was established by the number of titles published per year using the Children's Book Council's member information site (cbcbooks.org, n.d.). For example, a "large" publisher is defined here as one who publishes more than 150 titles per year. A "medium" sized publisher publishes 25–150 titles per year, and a "small" publisher releases fewer than 25 titles per year.

Five librarians were interviewed, including Carol Starr and Patty Campbell, two veterans of young adult librarianship who had been active and pioneering influences in the field starting in the 1970s (and were suggested by a former colleague and veteran marketer)[43] and three contemporary young adult librarians—one from a suburban library in the Northeast (recommended through a mutual contact), one librarian from a large urban teen library serving young adults from across a major metropolitan area of New York (recommended by a faculty member in my graduate school), and one librarian who works with teens in a school setting as well as in a public library setting (recommended by the suburban librarian above).

The interviews also included a focus group interview[44] with a group of ten teenage volunteers working in a suburban library during the summer of 2011 (access was provided via the North East suburban librarian above). I conducted observation at this library in order to examine the collection, look at how the teen room was set up, and

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[43] NB: Those whom are named in this dissertation gave approval for use of their names.
[44] With the exception of the focus group, half of which was comprised of males, all of the other interviewees were female.

observe what teens were doing at the library, and I attended an evening Teen Advisory Group Meeting there in October 2011. Observation was also conducted at the urban library for young adults in the major urban center, where I spent two hours in October 2011 in the library observing teens and looking at and photographing the collection, and at a Best Books for Young Adults Committee meeting at the 2009 American Library Association Conference in Anaheim.

Because it proved to be impossible to find teens who had read *The Amanda Project* on their own (possibly because of librarians' own challenges with this series, such as deciding where to shelve it in the library age-wise, and possibly because of other problems with the series described in Chapter 6), two daughters of friends, both willing to read the first two books in the series, were recruited. One girl was from the Northeast, and one from the Southeast, and they read their assigned books during Fall 2011. Interviews with teens—those in the focus group, and the two *Amanda Project* readers— challenged initial researcher assumptions.

In addition to examination of websites and interviews with three levels of participants in the field of cultural production for young readers, documents provided additional insight. Document analysis was conducted on the Young Adult Alternative Newsletter (YAAN) published from 1973 to 1979, as well as on librarian blogs, primarily the *YALSA Blog*[45]*,* but also on sites by librarian bloggers such as *Seven Impossible Things Before Breakfast* (Danielsen, 2012), *Educating Alice* (Edinger, 2012), and *A Fuse #8 Production* (Bird, 2012), in order to examine librarians' perception of their role in the field, and to compare how the field has changed. In order to compare the *YAAN*

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[45] YALSA is the young adult library services association of the American Library Association. The blog is maintained by YALSA staff and contributing members.

newsletter with the contemporary *YALSA Blog*, I created spreadsheets for each, and

grouped topics of the newsletters and the blogs thematically. Details of the YAAN

Analysis are in Appendix A. Details of the YALSA Analysis are in Appendix B.

An online web analysis site called Alexa (owned by Amazon.com), was used to

perform web analytics on the three case study sites, as well as related sites, and this

allowed me to collect information about site status and general demographic information

about site users (male, female, education level, age, etc.). While there were limitations

with the Alexa analysis, it did provide a useful snapshot of users of the three case study

sites. Another Amazon-owned tool, Amazon.com's "Rankings," was used to demonstrate

sales of books in the *Twilight* series.

Articles from trade magazines, such as *Publishers Weekly, School Library

Journal,* and *The Horn Book* were consulted, especially for articles about changes in the

field of publishing. Articles about publishing in newspapers including *The Wall Street

Journal* and *The New York Times* contributed information and updates about the latest

industry developments. In order to monitor breaking news, I created Google alerts for the

following terms: "Amanda project," "ebooks," "Fourth Story Media," "multiplatform

books," and "transmedia storytelling." I also got emailed updates from *TwilightSaga.com*

whenever new content was uploaded to groups I had selected, such the fan groups around

the two romantic heroes of the series: "Official Team Jacob" and "Official Team

Edward," and whenever new discussions were started. This helped establish activity

levels on the site, especially after the last book in the series was published.

This multi-method approach helped illuminate the development of multiplatform

books and the trajectory of the fields of publishing and librarianship as they related to the

formation of young adult literature. Interview protocols and sample data analyses are appended to this dissertation.

3.2.1 Institutional Review Board approval process.

The Institutional Review Board at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, which oversaw this research, required me to have three levels of consent forms for interview subjects: a "Consent" form for participating adults; a "Parental Consent" form authorizing me to interview children; and a "Child's Assent" form for minors. Copies of these forms are in Appendix C. The research of this dissertation was deemed to be "confidential," as opposed to "anonymous," because the records included some information about the subjects, and because I was interviewing people face-to-face. In addition, per language on the consent forms, the data collected from the human subjects "include[s] some information about you and this information will be stored in such a manner that some linkage between your identity and the response in the research exists." In the case of the Child Assent form, the language further specifies: "Some of the information collected about you includes your age, whether you are a boy or a girl, and your reading habits. Please note that we will keep this information confidential by limiting individual's access to the research data and keeping it in a secure location in Rutgers, under lock and key. The research team and the Institutional Review Board at Rutgers University are the only parties that will be allowed to see the data, except as may be required by law."

In terms of benefits and risks, the Parental Consent form states: "You/your child have been told that the benefits of taking part in this study may be educational and entertaining, and will provide information about the field of young adult literature.

However, you may receive no direct benefit from taking part in this study." The general consent form states: "While there are no direct benefits to you of participating, your participation will expand on an overview of the field of young adult literature, which will help us understand how books are created, marketed, and read today." As far as risks are concerned, the subjects of this study were not anticipated to encounter any. Research subjects were told that their participation was voluntary, and that they could withdraw at any time—also that they could choose to not answer any questions they wanted to skip.

Especially in the case of the publisher interviews in which they describe their companies' publishing plans, and in the case of the veteran librarians who have celebrity status in the field, it is relatively easy for those familiar with the business to guess at their identities. As such, the veteran librarians were contacted post-interview for permission to include their names in the dissertation, and such permission was granted. I also obtained permission to use a professional transcription service for help in transcribing recorded data on some of the lengthier interviews.

Librarians were asked about their career choices—why they became YA librarians, and about their work with teenagers. Also, I asked them what they thought about publishers' participatory sites, their relationships with publishers, and about their committee work. The veteran marketer was asked to speak about how marketers reached young people under the previous configuration of the publishing industry, and contemporary marketers were asked about their digital platforms for young readers, their digital initiatives, and about how they are using the Internet to reach teens. Teens were asked about how they participate in book-related sites online, and about where and how they like to read. Interview protocols are in Appendix D.

The next section addresses the possible audience for the research of this dissertation, as well as the significance of the study.

3.3 Audience and Significance of Study

This interdisciplinary work contributes to the undestanding of the field of cultural production of children's literature, at a point of transition from print to digital formats, as seen through the lens of multiplatform books. Scholarly interest in this work could come from: 1) those in fields such as book history, who are interested in the comparative and changing models of cultural production for young people, and those interested in studying reading in digital formats; 2) those in fields such as literature, especially from those interested in children's and young adult literature; 3) academics in the field of library and information science who are interested in the history of, and changing role of librarianship for, young people (and also in studying reading); 4) scholars from media studies, as this book-related research has many parallels in entertainment, especially music and television; 5) those who study affective and immaterial labor in various manifestations; and 6) those who study audiences, as this research includes fandom, resistance, and a visible audience around reading, enabled by digital technologies.

Practitioners, such as librarians and others interested in intercepting the commodification of literature for young people, are also expected to be an interested audience for this project. In particular, I originally intended this research to provide such information to those who work to get books into the hands of teens and provide comparative insights into how they too can use digital tools of engagement parallel to those used by publishers. The historical perspective here demonstrates the evolution of

the field, but also shows comparative models of collaboration. Challenges here—as evidenced by observations of lack of activity on, for example, the New York Public Library's social media sites for teens, and confirmed by librarians—have proven to be related to budgeting and staffing, as staff is required to maintain websites and social media sites.

In addition, the producers—those working in the publishing industry to create and market cultural products for young people—would most likely be interested in the findings of this dissertation, as related to bridging technologies of production from print to digital formats, because it provides insight into the way teens are receiving, manipulating, and subversively resisting cultural products produced for them (Fiske, 1989), including digital formats of books. The significance of this study is in providing a rich understanding of a phenomenon and the various levels of teens' understanding of digital cultural products created for them, and in comparing this to publishers' plans and goals for such products, all in a historical and comparative framework.

3.4 Limitations

Because this study is qualitative and relies on small sample sizes from different fields of influence, there are many limitations to this research. For example, I interviewed only two teen readers of *The Amanda Project*, both of whom were "assigned" the reading. I wanted to interview true fans of the books, or at least those who had found the books on their own and read them, but unfortunately, I was not able to find any, despite soliciting the help of several librarians who work with teens. This could be in part because the librarians themselves were unclear about this series (one librarian was not sure whether it should be shelved in the children's department, or in the teen department),

and in part because of the limitations of the series itself, as expressed by the assigned

readers (who found it to be "too young," and complained that it relied on stereotyped

depictions of what teens are supposed to be like). It was not possible to study readers of

other multiplatform book projects, because at the time of this research, this was an

emerging phenomenon. And while other multiplatform book projects existed (such as *The

39 Clues),* what was interesting about *The Amanda Project* was that the publisher

solicited user-contribution for building the series. At the time, this was the only series

that included that feature, and it was the only multiplatform project for teenage readers.

While demographic data was not collected, the focus group of ten teens that was

presented with questions was an ethnically diverse group equally divided between males

and females, and all lived in a wealthy community with plenty of access to technology (as

demonstrated by the fact that half of the teens owned an e-reading device).

Future research should include teens from communities of varying socio-

economic levels to find out how less-privileged teens might respond to leisure reading in

digital formats—and about their access to such formats. In addition, the fact that the teens

were all library volunteers arguably indicates that this was a "bookish" group of teens

compared to the population at large. It would be useful to take a sample from a more

diverse group of readers (and "non-readers").

Time was a major limitation, as more time could have meant more interviews

with more librarians, more teens, and more publishers of books for young people. I also

started my study with some personal assumptions. I assumed that the current generation

of teen readers would be fully ready, willing, and able to migrate from printed books into

digital formats. When I interviewed publishers about their e-publishing plans, they

supported my initial assumptions with their own enthusiasm for digital formats (as evidenced by significant financial investments in new and expanded websites, in social media efforts, and in the staff to support both). But reactions from teens did not support this assumption, as will be presented in ensuing analysis chapters, and a longitudinal study should be conducted to see whether or not digital formats for leisure reading eventually become embraced by teens.

In addition, Alexa web analytics presented a few limitations. First of all, Alexa is owned by Amazon.com, and this corporate ownership might have skewed the results. Another study conducted with a different web analytics tool might confirm the accuracy of the Alexa results. Additionally, I used a free-of-charge version of Alexa. In addition to using another tool for confirming accuracy, a for-pay site, such as Compuscore, might have provided richer details. Additionally, the Alexa results of users of *The Amanda Project* indicated that the majority of users were both in my age (40s) and educational bracket (graduate student), which could indicate that perhaps I might have been one of the primary users of *The Amanda Project*.

And finally, a key limitation to this dissertation is timing. Because I examined an emerging phenomenon, the technology used was changing. For example, in 2009, when research started on this dissertation, publishers interviewed herein were all establishing and maintaining teen websites for their young adult titles. While those websites still exist in 2012, efforts have moved on to marketing via the social media sites currently inhabited by teens, including Facebook, Tumblr, and Twitter.

3.5 Summary and Conclusions

This chapter connects the primary intent of this dissertation, which is to examine how technological formats are changing books and the reading experience for young adults, the research questions, and the methods used to answer them. In each case, the research is framed in a historical and contemporary framework, and it considers three levels of participants, including publishers, librarians, and teen readers.

The next three chapters delve into the progressive case studies of this dissertation, which focus on how publishers use fans' affective and immaterial labor on multiple levels: Random House's *Random Buzzers* as laboring reviewers and marketers of books; Hachette's *Twilight Saga* site about corralling fandom; and *The Amanda Project* site, which creates "prosuming" readers out of producing consumers. Findings in each of these cases, which are supported by interviews and document analysis, help to illuminate how technological formats are changing books and the reading experience for young adults.

CHAPTER 4: Marketing to Teens in the Digital Age

Introduction

In the old configuration of publishing books for young readers, publishers'

marketing personnel were the liaisons between publishers and their core market for

books—children's librarians—and a primary function of their work was to build

relationships with such librarians, as those who had access to young people, and as those

who reviewed and awarded books for this market. While marketers are still responsible

for building connections with the marketplace, digital technologies have allowed

publishers to use websites and social media tools to build direct relationships with their

core reading audiences.

This chapter uses historical and contemporary frameworks to examine the

changes in marketing since the early days of the field. Historically, marketers provide

important insight into the construction of the field. A contemporary look at marketing

practices demonstrates how the field is changing, relying on interviews with a veteran

marketer and three contemporary marketers. Trade publications, such as *Publishers*

Weekly, contribute to the research. Addressing the overall goal of this dissertation, to

examine how technological formats are changing books and the reading experience for

young people, and focusing on publishers' strategies and teens' input, this chapter

provides important background information for the case study analyses of Chapters 5, 6,

and 7 by exploring how technology has changed the way books are marketed to young

readers, from an established, and largely print-based model, to one that relies mostly on

technology, including websites and social media. Librarians, however, are largely absent

in this section, as disintermediation changes their relationship with publishers. Whereas

the previous model was largely top-down and publisher-led, the new marketing model is collaborative, focuses on community, and disrupts the traditional definitions of "marketer," "author," and "teen-consumer." As this section focuses primarily on the new structures established by publishing companies, each of the first three theoretical frameworks from Chapter 2 are used in this chapter. These include: Distinction, Political Economy of Publishing and Convergence, Gender, and Immaterial and Affective Labor.

4.1 Top-Down Marketing to Teens

4.1.1 Marketing in the old configuration of publishing.

Historically, the most effective way to reach teens was to target the gatekeepers, who were responsible for getting books into the hands of young people, which included librarians, teachers, and parents, but there were other efforts as well. Mimi Kayden is a veteran marketer who started her career working for Ursula Nordstrom at HarperCollins in the 1950s (see Chapter 1). According to Kayden (interview, September 2010), if a publisher had a "major author," advertisements would be placed in magazines, such as Seventeen or Mademoiselle or Boy's Life, but generally, advertising in these magazines was considered too expensive for children's publishers—and not particularly effective. Most of these magazines reviewed only a few books monthly, so it was difficult for books to get marketing exposure via such media. By the early 1990s, publishers started preparing biographical sheets for authors to mail to fans when they got fan letters, and then authors started doing school visits. According to Kayden, she felt the school visits were successful in "making kids realize that all authors are not dead" (Kayden, interview, September 2010).

Previously, from the beginning of the field at the turn of the 20th century, until 2007 when digital technologies enabled new ways of reaching this population, primary marketing tools for reaching young readers included: 1) building relationships with gatekeepers (especially librarians); 2) design of a book's paratextual elements, such as covers and titles; and 3) store placement of books. These were key ways to market books to young readers. When designing for young people, cover design needs to reflect trends and tastes. According to the late publisher Craig Virden, "It's amazing how quickly art looks old. Style has changed so much for teenagers . . . older covers were painted from models and look really dated" (Virden in Cat Yampbell, 2005, p. 357). The entire book, including "the spine . . . the size, shape, paper texture, font, etc." lend themselves to what Yampbell refers to as "grabability," in which the goal is to make a book so visually appealing that it leaps off the shelf, making the consumer "grab" the book" (p. 349). Yampbell writes that publishers alter "the paratext, specifically covers, spines, and sizes, to charm teen readers" (p. 356). Covers are used for branding purposes as well. If a book suddenly turns into a series, the older titles are reissued with covers that look more like the newest book.

In recent years, there has been a move to "one word titles" (perhaps appropriate for a population with a short attention span), and also to capitalize very quickly on whatever attention they can get (Yampbell, 2005). Examples of such include *Speak* by Laurie Halse Anderson (1999), *Smack* by Melvin Burgess (1998), and *Liar* by Justine Larbalestier (2009). Continuing this strategy, publishers' teen websites also have short snappy names designed to get attention quickly: Random House's *Random Buzzers,* or Little, Brown's *Hip-Scouts*.

4.1.2 Seeking teen input in the old configuration.

From library-based peer-to-peer review pamphlets in the early 20th century, to the ALA-sponsored Best Books to Young Adults Committee, and to the Teens Top Ten, input from readers has proven invaluable to publishers in terms of shaping literature produced for them, as shown in Chapter 1.

4.2 Toward a New Configuration of Publishing

4.2.1 Rise of the superstores

Until recently, there were multiple venues in which publishers could sell books, from independent bookstores, to libraries with large budgets (as in the 1950s—see Chapter 1), and to consumers themselves, but these venues are shrinking. Many independent bookstores, which were also responsible for establishing distinction in the field, have gone out of business. Libraries are facing budget cuts. The large chain bookstores (virtual and bricks-and-mortar), which have dominated the market in recent years, have a tremendous influence on what is published in the United States in general, and represent publishers' best market for books. Publishers change book covers and even content based on feedback from Barnes & Noble (B&N) buyers, in order to encourage those buyers to purchase particular books for their stores nationwide (interview, small publisher, 2011).

What is positive about the superstore concept is that it helps make books more appealing to teens, by providing spaces to congregate free-of-charge (and offers coffee, magazines, books, and music for purchase), and consequently, B&N is an important market for young adult literature. "Magazines and food [will] draw teens in, and then [stores] rely on shelf talkers, special displays and hip covers to get them to buy" (Rosen,

2002, Publishers Weekly, p. 86). In Chapter 2, I argue that publishers contribute to genre construction, but superstores do as well. After the success of the books in Stephanie Meyer's *Twilight Saga*, a visit to Barnes & Noble on March 11, 2011 revealed that the "teen section" had a new sub-genre of books called "Paranormal Romance" which occupied a significant portion of total shelving in the section.
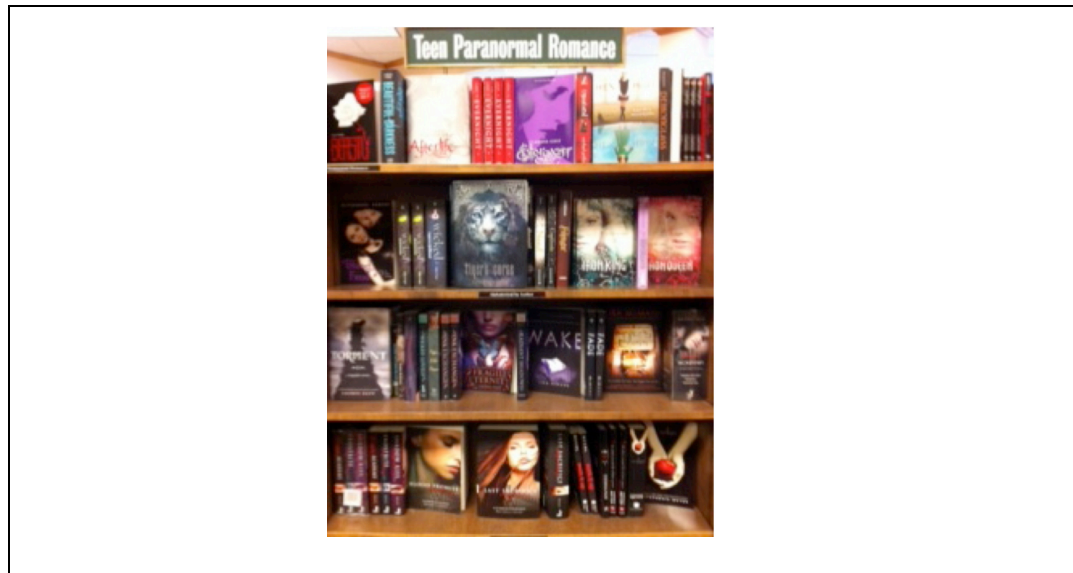
Figure 4.1. "Teen Paranormal Romance" at Barnes & Noble

In terms of design, derivative books in this category all looked remarkably similar to books in the *Twilight* series, one of which appears in the lower right corner of the image. This connects to the political economy of the publishing industry, which focuses on publishing books that will sell.

4.2.2 Transmedia products and a push toward hypercommercialism.

According to Jennifer Geer (2007), marketing agendas serve to define genres more than the audience, and books (especially those which are transmedia properties and exist on multiple media platforms) are gradually following the model from films, which

are increasingly conflated with merchandising, as seen in J.K. Rowling's bestselling

Harry Potter series. From product placement, to branding, to carefully planning a book's

paratextual and epitextual elements, marketing serves to clearly define the YA genre.

"Today the experience of reading for the young is mediated through the mass media and

marketing so that the pleasure and meaning of a book will often be prescripted or dictated

by convention" (Zipes in Nel, 2005, p. 237). Even in the case of a series like Harry

Potter, in which the writing is of a high standard (as evidenced by stellar reviews in all

the top gatekeeper journals, from *Kirkus* to *Booklist* to *School Library Journal*[46]), it is

hard to separate the story itself from the hypercommercialism surrounding the series.

Philip Nel's (2005) article begins with a description of Dan Wasserman's (2000) cartoon

prophesying the future of *Harry Potter*-related merchandising, and while his cartoon

makes up silly products like "Wizard Fries" (available at a fictitious restaurant) to

"Harry Frames" (sold, of course, at eyeglass stores) (Nel, 2005, p. 236), this satire is very

close to reality.

Based on the vast amount of merchandising that is available, many are quick to

criticize *Harry Potter* for being a commercial property over a literary one, but of course it

is difficult to do so. Nel (2005) argues that one cannot say that these books are only about

"monetary success" (p. 237) because to do so "ignores the late capitalist conditions of

their production" (p. 237), in which the conglomerates control the mass media and are

driven by "commodity consumption that at the same time sets the parameters of reading

and aesthetic taste" (p. 237). The unique world-building within *Harry Potter* enables

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[46] Samples of such reviews can be read under the hardcover edition of *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, the first book in the series, on Amazon.com (Retrieved 7/20/12 from http://www.amazon.com/Harry-Potter-Sorcerers-Stone-Book/dp/product-description/0590353403/ref=dp_proddesc_0?ie=UTF8&n=283155&s=books)

hypercommercialism around the series—multiple layers of intertextual, interrelated products—which maneuver fans across media platforms, encouraging them to spend as they go—and helping to establish brand readers around the series. Transnational publishers are uniquely qualified to produce such products, because they have the financial and human resources to attract and build such properties, and often own multiple media platforms. However, as evidenced by the case studies of Chapters 5, 6, and 7 of this dissertation, hypercommercialism cannot be constructed. It requires a combination of transmedia reach, a certain amount of fan-approved literary quality, and above all, adoption by the fans themselves in order for publishers to exploit such potential in books.

Scholastic, the American publisher of *Harry Potter* and more recently the *Skeleton Creek* and *Hunger Games* series, is a well-respected educational mega-brand, with extensive reach into the school market. The firm involves all layers of gatekeepers in children's literature, from teachers, to librarians, to parents. In addition to its trade publishing division, Scholastic used to publish textbooks, but now has established itself as a leader in the new configuration of the field, focusing on educational magazines for teachers, as well as other transmedia products, from "print, audio, television, film, and digital applications" (Scholastic, "About," 2012).

4.2.3 From Top-Down to Bottom-Up Marketing

As early as 2002, Judith Rosen described emerging marketing strategies for reaching teens which combined contemporary efforts that included technology with traditional marketing efforts such as teen magazine reviews and postcard mailings: "Random [House] relies on Internet marketing, reviews in teen magazines and postcards

[which for example can be mailed to summer camps, as in the case of *The Sisterhood of the Travelling Pants* by Ann Brashares], as well, as course, the book itself" (Rosen, 2002). According to Rosen, the goal of this marketing is to get teens to tell their friends about new products, as peer-to-peer marketing was seen as being especially effective with teens. Of course in the last ten years since Rosen's article, the Internet has become the primary vehicle for reaching teens via social media sites and interactive websites such as those in the case studies (Chapters 5, 6, and 7) of this dissertation. By incorporating digital technologies, teens' immaterial and affective labor related to books has become an effective marketing tool.

4.2.4 Teens' immaterial and affective labor: The "New Proletariat."[47]

Lazzarato (1996) defines immaterial labor as including two components: involving computer control, and relying on affect. Workers performing immaterial labor are doing an activity that is not typically associated with "work" (Lazzarato, 1996), as in gaming. Digital technologies have rapidly become the best tools for marketing to teens—especially when teens use such technologies to market to their peers.

In her book Branded: The buying and selling of teenagers (2003), Alissa Quart describes different strategies marketers employ to use teens to market to other teens, including using trendspotters[48], the Internet, and video games. She writes that "American teens' heavy labor is the 'logical extension of materialism'" (Quart, 2003, p. 14), and describes teens as a new proletariat, working more hours in order to consume more products. Writing about products other than books, Quart (2003) describes how marketers

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[47] (Quart, 2003)
[48] Now called "influencers," which can be digitally tracked (or recruited) via a company called House Party (http://houseparty.com/pages/display/brands 4/12/12)

exploit different teenage communities of affect, and how the biggest publishers have figured out that similar strategies are effective within their proprietary teen websites.

Web 2.0 teens live in a world in which the computer is a natural extension of their social sphere, connecting them with everything in their lives, from homework, to media, to friends, to the products they consume. For those who love reading, chatting about books in an online format with friends (both physical and virtual) would seem to be a completely natural activity (although findings in the case studies in the following chapters did not confirm this). Since 2007, publishers are making inroads in enclosing this activity, creating online sites that parallel and link to what the teens are doing independently on blogs and fan sites, and they are doing it in a way that creates and exploits a venue for affective peer-to-peer marketing. For example, on the *Random Buzzer's* site explored in the next chapter, teens become members of the site and sign up for an electronic newsletter, participate in online surveys, quizzes, competitions, games, blogging, and even become bookish trendspotters by applying to become book reviewers and getting reviews posted on the publishers' sites. Those who become reviewers get free Advance Review Copies (ARCs) of books in exchange for reviewing them directly on the publisher's site, and are rewarded for such labor with more free ARCs. Andrejevic describes this as a "a digital enclosure– the creation of an interactive realm wherein every action and transaction generates information about itself" (Andrejevic, 2007).

In this new configuration, publishers encroach upon the cultural work of librarians, as explored in Chapter 1, in which such teens' reviewing activity took place via library-based programs. As we will see in the case studies of Chapters 5, 6, and 7, the Internet provides a much more effective model for getting feedback from consumers, and

publishers are co-opting this model to create their own proprietary sites on which brand

readers feel empowered by being actively involved with the books they love, and develop

affective relationships with the site moderators, who respect and value their opinions, and

the authors who participate. Publishers can use the teen input from their sites to attract

and market to other teens—exploiting teen affect and co-opting teens' online activity for

marketing purposes.

This type of affective relationship already exists in other products for young

people, from television, to teddy bears, to gaming. In writing on games, Hearn (2008)

writes that the goal of marketers is to blur the lines ". . . between product and consumer,

private self and instrumental associative object" (Hearn, 2008, p. 197). By establishing an

affective relationship between producer and consumer, producers win consumer affect,

which in turn attracts immaterial labor of the consumer, as described in fields from

television (Andrejevic, 2008), to social networking sites (Humphreys, 2008), to retail

stores such as the Build-a-Bear Workshop (Zwick, Bonsu & Darmody, 2008). "Goodwill

towards brands. . . has arguably become even more important in contemporary times"

(Jarrett, 2003, p. 344), and exploiting the affective labor of the consumer is quickly

becoming a new model for producers.

In the case of teens and books, their immaterial and affective labor creates free

peer-to-peer marketing, free consumer research, and even book-related content; and as

we will see in the next section, it also contributes to creating brand readers.

4.2.5 Branding books, branding teens.

According to Quart (2003), as of year 2000, Teen People Magazine employed up

to 9,000 teenage trendspotters who test products, take surveys, and inform about peer

trends and tastes. Delia*s, a clothing store for teenage girls, hires teenage trendspotters, who have an affective relationship with the brand, even posting ". . . Delia*s logos on their own home pages as a sign of fidelity to the brand" (Quart, 2003, p. 17). Trendspotters feel a sense of accomplishment by keeping advertisers informed about what they and their friends are wearing and buying. In return for their labor, they receive special recognition, including "invitations to events, often marketing tie-ins that promote the trendspotters' product" (p. 21). Yet another example of teen peer-to-peer marketing exists within skate culture. Although skate culture is largely perceived as being anti-establishment and anti-corporation, with skaters preferring to buy gear from "insider" brands that they perceive as supporting skateboarding, skaters are, ironically, "the most available peer-to-peer marketers around" (Quart, 2003, p. 105), all aiming to be sponsored by corporations. Marketing to teens (and younger customers) occurs right within skateboarding-themed video games such ProSkater3, in which Tony Hawk skates around logos from Quicksilver, to Nokia, to Jeep (Quart, 2003).

Just as Quart describes how marketers exploit different teenage communities of affect, the biggest publishers are using teen websites as platforms for the same. Esther Sonnet (1999) describes books as a cog in the wheel of the economic circuit of production and consumption. Unlike other products, books are still perceived to be inalienable cultural products (Bourdieu 1984), and Brown (2006) describes publishing as "a site where culture and commerce converge" (p. 2). In the case of the erotic fiction Sonnet writes about, meaning is constructed by the circuit, including: "authors, editors, journalists, academics, interviews, fan magazines and readers" (Sonnet, 1999, p. 261). This circuit is recreated within YA fiction, with an even bigger emphasis on participants'

peer-to-peer recommendations. Sonnet's readers of erotic fiction helped shape the content which was eventually generated by authors and publishers. Romantic Times magazine serves as an accompanying tool for extending the experience of reading erotica, and for building a community of readers around it. YA publishers' websites are doing the same for teens, by building interactive online communities of peers where teen input is sought and almost revered.

Branding is rife in products marketed to young people, and despite books' elevated social capital, they have not been immune. Series such as Nancy Drew, *Sweet Valley High*, and *Goosebumps* represent just a few branded series for young readers. More recent branded books include those in Random House's Sisterhood series by Anne Brashares, or Little, Brown's Twilight Saga by Stephenie Meyer. In the case of transnational publishers, branded books become a valuable asset to publishers because of their potential to sell on multiple platforms: as international editions (to be published by other divisions of the publisher in other countries); as films (possibly by the publishers' own film division); as licensed merchandise in the marketplace; and perhaps most importantly, by creating brand readers who consume products related to a particular series.

On Stephenie Meyer's website ("Official Stephenie Meyer," 2012), there were images of twelve covers of international editions of Twilight, the first book in the series (demonstrating *Twilight's* international influence), Twilight-related products retrieved from a Google search include a Cullen family jewelry set, Twilight perfume sold in a red, apple-shaped vial like the blood-red apple on the cover of Twilight, and Edward Cullen boxer shorts. Relations of branding are shifting from a traditional definition in which

brand defines a particular product ("Band-Aid," "Xerox," or "Camel"), to a relationship between a branded product (Twilight or Sisterhood) and those who use such products, linked by service performed on a site. Not only is the product a brand, but the consumer, too, becomes branded, as a fan of that product. As Hearn (2008) writes, "branding is now tied to social identity" (p. 199), and teen participants, interpellated by publishers' sites, can acquire identities as brand readers on the *Hip Scouts* or *Random Buzzers* websites, which will be explored in more detail in Chapter 5.

The next section, based primarily on primary source interviews with three vice presidents of marketing at a large, a medium-sized, and a small publishing company respectively (criteria for establishing these sizes is explained in Chapter 3), contributes to the overall goal of this dissertation, and explores how publishers are using digital technologies to create disintermediated online spaces in which they can communicate directly to teen consumers, and in doing so, how titles of publisher, author, and reader are being redefined.

4.3 Publishers and Social Media: Three Perspectives

Publishers are increasingly relying on social media to reach teens. In theory, using free social media sites should be an opportunity for small publishers with limited budgets to reach teens just as effectively as large publishers are able to do. In theory, this should "level the playing field," allowing small publishers to benefit from new marketing methods as well as large ones. The marketing vice presidents interviewed are hereinafter referred to as "small publisher," "medium-sized publisher," and "large publisher."

4.3.1 A small publisher's perspective.

A small, Midwestern, and neophyte YA publisher, which launched its first YA list consisting of just two titles in fall 2011, did not find that using social media leveled the playing field as far as they were concerned. According to this small publisher and marketing veteran, "bigger houses have the resources to put up a website and run contests and interact—they have the personnel and financial resources" (small publisher, interview, December 2011). While all publishers interviewed used authors' input in different capacities, smaller publishers are especially reliant upon authors' willingness (and available time) to participate, as those publishers cannot lead the effort because they do not have the resources. With the launch of its first two young adult titles in fall 2011, this small publisher managed to produce a book trailer for each of the books with the cooperation and collaboration of a local university's department of education, in which a professor had students (who were future teachers) read the book and respond about how they would use it with teens. In the case of the first book trailer, for a book called *Guantanamo Boy*, by Anna Perera, the publisher's target audience was educators, professors, and parents—those gatekeepers who would encourage teens to read the book. In other words, while the small publisher was arguably using technology to market this title, it still used technology within the context of traditional marketing methods of targeting the gatekeepers instead of the readers directly. The small publisher used so-called "email blasts" to reach this audience, hired an independent publicist to reach traditional media channels, and relied on bloggers to promote the book. Galleys (advance reading copies) were made available via *Net Galley* at http://www.netgalley.com/, which is an online service providing digital galleys of forthcoming titles for "professional

readers" including those who self-identify as: "reviewer, blogger, journalist, librarian, bookseller, educator, or in the media" (*Net Galley*, 2012).

But in terms of its plans to use social media such as Facebook or interactive websites, despite the fact that such resources are available free-of-charge, the company is progressing slowly with such plans, "going from zero to 15 miles per hour at this point" (small publisher, interview, December, 2011), as expanding efforts with social media would necessitate hiring dedicated and experienced staff. The most successful marketing efforts from this company still happen as a result of informal relationships (what veteran marketer Mimi Kayden calls the "old girls' network," which has existed in children's librarianship and publishing since its nascence). Such relationships enable this small publisher to place an author in a "Discover Great New Writers" program at B&N, or to get a book placed with a chain bookseller in exchange for negotiating changes to the book's cover. Such unwritten, informal relationships remain the most influential resource for this small publisher, especially as the small publisher is unable to expand its social media capabilities in the way the medium or large-sized publishers are.

4.3.2 A medium-sized publisher's perspective.

Compared to the small publisher's efforts, the "director of trade and digital marketing" (medium-sized publisher) at a medium-sized New York City-based publishing company, which publishes approximately 100 books per year, is fully entrenched in digital marketing efforts. As of October 2011, this company had one general teen website, and nine Facebook pages dedicated to different book characters. Participation and discussion on the general site determines which books will get dedicated Facebook pages, and Twitter is used to point readers back to Facebook. This

director works directly with authors and an in-house assistant to manage the various

social media outlets. In one successful example, characters from a best-selling series, *The

Drake Chronicles* by Alyxandra Harvey, extend their narrative beyond the confines of the

book by exchanging tweets (which are scripted and managed by the marketing staff), and

interacting with participating teen readers. All of the publisher's social media sites are

interconnected around the series.

Participants' visibility on the sites provides the marketing director with concrete

evidence of how readers are "engaged with the characters, and not just reading the book."

Because most of the books currently published by this publisher tend to be directed at

girls—"*Perfect Chemistry* is a romance series, *Need* is a pretty girl-driven paranormal,

and *The Drake Chronicles* is a romance-y, vampire series" (medium-sized publisher,

interview, October, 2011)—girls are also the dominant social media participants. Boys do

comment occasionally, and the publisher makes efforts to post content related to what it

considers less feminine titles, such as *Time Riders* (a book about time travel), in order to

attract boys.

The medium-sized publisher has found that quizzes and polls are the most

effective ways to attract teen readers back to the site, and that drawings for small, book-

related give-aways[49] (in exchange for asking participants to "like" a comment, or

participate in another way), are an incentive for them to return. Questions are posted one

day, and then answered the next, so that teens have a continuing reason to engage with

the site. With a background in gaming products, this medium-sized publisher falls into

the category of the type of "experienced staff" that the small publisher would like to hire.

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[49] For example, miniature gold make-up sets were a give-away related to the pixie who trails gold dust in *Need* by Carrie Jones.

Authors are also engaged in the production of readers, as publishers (especially at the medium and large firms) seek to "harness" the social media reaches of authors, and to connect authors socially so that they can benefit from cross-marketing, cross-pollination, and crossover readerships, and in those ways become important contributors in social marketing campaigns. Even the small publisher found that partnering with authors extends the effectiveness of a publisher's social media marketing efforts. In the case of the medium-sized publisher, popular authors who are already active on social media sites, such as Alyxandra Harvey's online character extensions described above, can boost a publisher's efforts in constructing online identities for book characters almost seamlessly, as they are the ones who created those characters. One of the largest challenges identified by this medium-sized publisher is the ability to stay in a character's voice, and here the book's own author has an advantage.

For those employees who work on publishers' social media programs, creating and monitoring book-related content in social spaces, there is a lot of creative fun involved. This in turn encourages a level of affective and immaterial labor extending the boundaries of the traditional work day. In the case of the medium-sized publisher, characters from a book series inhabit social spaces by having their own twitter feeds, with dialogue between characters. Of course the publisher's staff produces this dialogue, and while this is certainly creative work, it blurs lines between work and leisure by demanding that the content creators remain mimetically harnessed to the online personas, which they embody on part of the author and the publisher, as they remain responsible for interactions with fans. Content-related feeds linked to other sites, such as Facebook, need to be monitored during what traditionally are non-working hours. Because of this,

employers are able to extract voluntary overtime labor from employees, as online lives of the embodied fictional characters require a perpetuity of engagement during evenings and weekends.

The medium-sized publisher describes how she "can't stop—[has] to keep going—[has] to check on Saturdays and Sundays to make sure no one posts junk. These are teens, after all, and sometimes people post silly Facebook chain letters that have to be removed, or the occasional bad word (which also has to be removed), but fans are pretty good about no spoilers and are not rude" (interview, medium publisher, 10/28/12). Because the company she works for is a transnational corporation, there is an increased emphasis on coordinating book release dates in the United Kingdom and the United States. Social media use raises the likelihood that books will be discussed online, and different release dates increase the risk for readers posting "spoilers," such as the ending of a book.

One unexpected consequence of e-formats is that this medium-sized publisher has experienced a surge in adults buying e-book versions of young adult novels, perhaps because of the privacy enabled by e-readers. "Adults who wouldn't buy teen books in book stores are buying teen books online in large numbers" and "as a result [the publisher is] looking at giving a more adult look for certain teen books, like the Drake series. The core audience is perhaps changing" (medium-sized publisher, interview, October 28, 2012). E-books also enable longevity of titles. Earlier, when a particular book stopped selling below a certain number of copies a year, the book would no longer be listed in the company's backlist catalog, stock left in the warehouse would be sold as "remainders," the author would get the rights reverted, and those copies not sold as remainders would

be pulped, effectively terminating the lifespan of a book. But with digital formats, and print-on-demand technologies, it is possible to keep digital versions of books alive far beyond a print lifespan. "Things that have trailed off in book stores do well on ebooks. We'd look at print numbers, and decide that maybe certain things could be pushed online." A longitudinal study is necessary here, in order to examine what happens to social marketing efforts when a book attracts a crossover readership of teens and adult readers.

4.3.3 A large publisher's perspective.

When creating a new series, especially the type that incorporates technology, large publishers have many advantages including: 1) the financial means to create technological innovations—in books, and in the websites that support them; 2) a stable of "house" authors to draw on—or the means to attract celebrity authors via substantial advance payments and other financial commitments; 3) the ability to cross-market books across a wide range of authors; 4) and the ability to afford the personnel to support these efforts. By "harness[ing] the social media footprints of more than one author at a time to get out a certain kind of messaging, it's very powerful" (large publisher, interview, August 2011).

The marketer at the large publishing company (hereinafter "large publisher") spoke of the power of "harnessing" (large publisher, interview, August 2011) social media across platforms. Each author has his or her own online audience. By cross-promoting other authors via their own sites, authors get exponential increase in exposure from being promoted across an extensive network of online friends (and also peer-to-peer recommendations from authors with whom they are "friends"). Cross-pollination

maximizes a publisher's efforts by encouraging peer-to-peer marketing between authors, and it can be achieved by encouraging friendships among young adult authors. The large publisher in this dissertation recently organized a tour with three young adult authors, Maggie Stiefvater, Meg Cabot, and Libba Bray, who previously did not know one another. They each used their own social media presence to promote each other's books, blogged from the tour, and even participated in a "This Is Teen Live" event on the publisher's website, which blurs physical and virtual presences, allowing those fans who could not meet the authors on the tour to connect online.

Harnessing efforts in the old configuration refers to controlling physical copies of the books. For example, each time a new *Harry Potter* book was published, warehouses would be on lock-down, and employees would sign non-disclosure agreements in order to control the release of the latest book. But in the new configuration, such harnessing also includes controlling the flow of information about book release dates (which is difficult considering that breaking news can be tweeted from marketing meetings), and then coordinating news releases. As the large publisher describes, the goal is to have "a critical mass of notification" (large publisher, interview, August 2011) across staff members' collective social media sites. Certainly there are plenty of precedents for controlling book release dates. But the digital environment complicates this further, because files can be shared quickly and widely.

"Believe me, [multiplatform books] are extremely significant investments for a publisher because there are all these pieces and parts" (large publisher, interview, August 2011), and with that comes a need for corporate secrecy. "We have other digital things in

the plans that I can't get into…"[50] "And also, we wanted to build a community where the kids, the teens, and the readers could engage with each other and have conversations about books. That was really one of the big goals that we had. So there actually is, if you go to ThisIsTeen.com, it's sort of—there's some information there, but it's mostly a redirect to the Facebook page" (large publisher, interview, August 2011). Within this, there is already a hint that the publishers' teen sites are already passé. The rapid evolution of technology is an important consideration for publishers (and again, an advantage for the largest publishers is having the resources to follow trends and quickly change course when necessary). As of Summer 2011, Scholastic decided to focus on using the social media site Facebook to reach teens, rather than using a website, because with a website, readers have to remember to come back. Facebook represents a push of information at consumers, rather than waiting for consumers to remember to pull information off a website.

The larger publisher emphasized that the rapidly changing nature of social media means that it has become virtually impossible to plan a marketing budget when acquiring a new title. Two years before the October 2011 interview, Twitter had been relatively unknown as a marketing tool, and it is impossible to predict which tool will be most popular two years in the future. Some of the publisher sites, which in 2009 were so popular, are now becoming depositories for expanded content that is more effectively marketed via Facebook and Twitter—sites inhabited by teens themselves. As part of the trajectory toward multiplatform books, publishers' teen sites represent a migration toward communities of production of young adult literature.

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[50] In March 2012, Scholastic announced *Storia*—a digital imprint with a free app and eBooks for sale (Storia, "About," n.d.").

Despite a large amount of marketing that can be done on a DIY or community basis, as described in this section, structurally, the largest houses still have obvious advantages including financial resources, and the ability to hire dedicated staff to run social media programs. An interesting finding that arose from the interviews was that as marketing becomes a collective effort involving publishers, authors, and readers, not only is labor being redefined on part of the authors and the publishers' marketing staff, but these very roles are being redefined as well. This will be described in the next section.

4.4 Redefining Labor, Redefining Participants

In addition to redefining the workday, the participants are being redefined as well. Children as consumers extend stories by following them in social media spaces, and interacting via comments and contributed storylines. They also serve as peer-to-peer marketers, sharing information with friends via their social media spaces. Authors are content creators and marketers; publishers are content creators, marketers, and producers of content extensions.

4.4.1 Affective and immaterial labor by publishers.

As evidenced by her enthusiasm, the marketer describing digital campaigns had enjoyed the creativity of coming up with this supportive storyline, and she enjoyed watching the children's reactions. The marketer at the medium-sized publisher also clearly enjoyed assuming the identities of the fictional characters from The Drake Chronicles and continuing their storylines via Twitter feeds. In these cases, social media is serving to redefine the workday for the marketers from the traditional 9-5 day, as this work has no clearly defined boundary. Twitter feeds and Facebook statuses have to be

updated (and occasionally censored for "spoilers" or bad language) almost around the clock.

4.4.2 Affective and immaterial labor by authors.

Certainly authors helped to promote their own books in the past by going on book tours and attending author signings; but in the new political economy of the publishing industry, technological innovations mean that marketing has moved beyond being directed mainly by the publishing company. It is now considered a collaborative, community effort between marketers, authors, and readers. Social media enables a larger than ever focus on Do-It-Yourself (DIY) marketing on part of the authors. Patrick Carman, the author of several books including the *Skeleton Creek* series, embodies multiple roles as he multitasks as "author," "producer," and "marketer" of his work. He produced the videos that support the *Skeleton Creek* series, and he also runs his own social media campaigns that relate to his books. In the case of *Skeleton Creek*, there are numerous Facebook pages allegedly belonging to the fictional characters (and, according to his publisher), "probably" created and maintained by Patrick Carman himself.

Another such critical-mass effort happened with the launch of the *39 Clues* series, in which the marketer was able to email the different authors of the series and then have them "blog about it or tweet about it … and the more coordinated all that messaging was, the bigger the impact was, and that was really cool." (Large publisher, interview, August 2011). "You can create a "critical mass of notification," (p. 4) coordinating authors to use their own social media channels to promote forthcoming books, and getting authors to develop a collegial relationship in which they blog about others. In this way, too, authors

are using immaterial and affective labor to promote their books, and books of their "friends."

"You'd get Rick Riordan doing a post on his enormously read blog like, you know, 'Hey Clue Hunters, Jude Watson's new book is coming out on Tuesday,'" (Large publisher, interview, August 2011). The publisher gets market research via analytics (or surveillance) of the website, which provides valuable information about who the users are, what they are interested in, what is most popular, and what they are responding to the most. As with the medium-sized publisher, that experimented with extending stories across social media, the large publisher of this study is also participating in such story extensions.

When 39 Clues author Peter Lerangis went on tour, he brought his Flip camera, and uploaded clips to the publisher's social media sites. "So … the editors actually created an entire mission, an entire schtick that like had a whole component to it." As the author went from city to city on tour, what started as a five-city tour became a virtual national tour and "kids all over the country kind of got to feel like they were a part of it. They got to follow Peter around . . . and there was an actual mission that they could solve while watching him do this." The author writes the books, and then creates the Flip video accounts of his tour, and the publisher's staff had the idea of creating an ancillary mystery character—a man in a trench coat who starts appearing in the background in videos and is never mentioned on the website, but then suddenly appears in person on Lerangis's tour stops. Children attending the tour visits had noticed the character on the videos, and reacted with great excitement when he materialized in person.

In creating such character extensions, the publisher blends fiction with reality as people become book characters, and book characters come to life. The collaborative community marketing effort, involving publishers' marketing staff, authors, and the participating young readers, explicates the new configuration of the field.

4.4.3 Affective and immaterial labor by teens.

In addition to the important participatory elements of marketing with technology, technology also provides evidence of consumers' tastes. Whereas teens have traditionally been an ephemeral and unpredictable market, web analytics allow the marketing team to "really understand what the kids were excited about. Which aspects of the web site were they responding to the most? What were the important areas?" (Large publisher, interview, August 2011). Surveillance gathered from users via sophisticated web analytic tools then informs about the content of the books, and also what sorts of activities will be developed to promote the books online. The marketer (Large publisher, interview, 2011) refers to "the community aspect of this generation. I think that it's all about talking about it and sharing it and [making] parodies and satires and homages and playlists and you know, it's like 'How do I take this thing then express my whatever for it?'" (Large publisher, interview, August 2011). By revealing what they are most interested in (based on information gathered from web analytics), teens are co-creators of the cultural products made for them.

4.5 Changing Ideologies on Children, Books, and Reading

As Sonia Livingstone and Kirsten Drotner (2011) write, "Children's agency in relation to media is not always publicly welcomed. On the contrary, often this is precisely what gives rise to adult concerns. Examples include contemporary conflicts with teachers

and other adults of authority over time spent texting or gaming" (p. 411). As we have seen in Chapter 1, unlike other products for children, existing ideologies held by gatekeepers elevate books and reading. "In terms of cultural capital in products for young people, books rank high. Compared to books, gaming clearly belongs in the realm of "entertainment," much the way the book/film division existed in the 20th century, and belongs to the "crowd" as described in Chapter 2.

As a way to bridge these ideological conflicts over cultural capital, the largest transnational publishers (who can afford to produce innovative formats) are lauding electronic formats and interactive books as ways to raise readers out of children raised on gaming, who might prefer technology over traditional printed books—and also as new digital profit centers. New ideologies on digital formats, propagated by publishers and authors, argue that the best way to encourage reading is to blur lines between books and games. Patrick Carman, author of the *Skeleton Creek* series,[51] argues that "Mixing media is a way to bring kids back to books," and describes his hybrid creation as a form of "book evangelism" to attract children to reading (Cecelia Goodnow, Seattle P.I. 2/26/2009, retrieved 7/1/11). Rick Richter, former president of Simon & Schuster and current digital media consultant, feels that a key advantage with digital formats is that they can "appeal to non-bookworms, such as computer and gaming geeks" (Springen, *Publishers Weekly* 7/19/10). Like Carman, he feels that this will lead a lot of children back to books.

In an interview with a large publisher, the marketing director said that in creating these books, "we wanted to get those kids that were really into gaming, that maybe

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[51] In Carman's *Skeleton Creek* series, the stories are told from the perspective of two narrators. One writes in a journal, the other creates videos. Readers read a portion of the book, then stop to watch a video, then go back and continue reading.

weren't readers, and the kids that were readers that were also online, and just kind of put

all those pieces together" (Large publisher, interview, August 2011). This marketer

imagined children's reading as part of a chain of multitasking: "the kids, you know, it's

like they've got their book, their computer is on, they're holding their mobile, the TV is

on and the radio is on and they're on the phone" (Large publisher, interview, August

2011).

Publishers have made significant financial investments in digital formats,[52] and

there is an assumption on the part of the publishers, that young people enjoy—and even

expect—these multiplatform/transmedia formats.[53] The publishers' and authors' views

represent the construction of new ideologies on young people's reading through

technological innovations, compared to the construct of the largely invisible and "implied

reader" (Iser, 1978) who existed before. This will be discussed again in Chapter 8.

In response to a question about what she thought about new digital formats, an

Urban Teen Librarian interviewed in 2011 said she supports anything that connects

young people and reading. Yet overall in the library community, there is skepticism about

these new formats. After attending the Children's Publishing Goes Digital Conference in

January 2012, School Library Journal's Contributing Editor Daryl Grabarek wrote:

> "At the end of the day, what was clear was that digital publishing for
> children is still in its infancy. While the audience was treated to peeks and
> insights into some exciting products and companies, educators, parents,
> and booksellers will be waiting to see what publishers and developers
> create for this generation of readers and learners. The field is indeed wide
> open, the new formats offer enormous potential, and the digital audience is
> growing. Let's hope that along with the purely commercial products for

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[52] [According to the Pew Internet and the American Life Project, as of May 2011, 12 % of adults [over 18] in US own e-book reader, which is double the number (6%) who owned one six months earlier, in November 2010. Holiday 2010 was the tipping point for e-books and digital readers (PewInternet, 2011)
[53] The fact that adults are buying ebook versions of young adult novels is another reason for publishers to commit to this format.

children and teens (which are sure to continue to come in droves), there are high-quality, innovative multimedia products that inspire, educate, and inform" (Grabarek, SLJ, 2012).

In this quote, he expresses hope that future digital projects will evolve beyond the commercial projects such as the ones of the case studies in Chapters 6, and 7 in this dissertation. Clearly librarians are aware of the political economy of publishing, and as a result, they are concerned about its implications for distinction, and for maintaining ideologies around providing the "best," which Grabarek defines as "products that inspire, educate, and inform" (Grabarek, SLJ, 2012).

4.6 Summary and Conclusions

As shown in this chapter, marketing to young readers has shifted from top-down marketing efforts by publishers to gatekeepers, to new methods (starting in 2007) of bottom-up-marketing which includes DIY efforts and immaterial and affective labor, in what is now a collaborative, community effort on behalf of publishers, authors, and teen consumers. This has been demonstrated in this chapter through interviews with vice presidents of marketing at a small, medium, and large-sized publishing company, and supported by evidence from trade journals.

While publishers' websites for teens (building interactive online communities of peers where teen input is sought and almost revered) speaks to teens' desire for autonomy (being treated like adults) and flatters them by providing a space where their opinions are influential and respected, the publishers' motives behind the sites speak more of an economic desire to commodify teens so that publishers can create products that closely resemble what teens want to read (and then use the labor of those same teens to sell

more) than any altruistic desire to empower them. They do so by creating a community of users dedicated to books, one in which young readers work for the publisher (free of charge) and encourage their friends to join in as well. As we will see in Chapters 5, 6, and 7 in the context of the case studies, such online marketing efforts by publishers encroach upon territory that previously belonged to the library.

Social media is changing the nature of work as far as the marketing staff is concerned. While publishing has always been a labor-intensive profession in which staff members are expected to read work-related manuscripts during leisure time, keeping up with social media sites requires energy and an on-going commitment, as the sites need to be constantly monitored, including on weekends and holidays. In addition, traditional roles of "marketer," "author," and "teen consumer" are being redefined as they are replaced by a collaborative community of participation in which marketers are also authors, teens are authors and marketers, and authors are also marketers.

CHAPTER 5: Case Study—Teens' Affective and Immaterial Labor at

Random Buzzers.com

In 2009, when research for this dissertation began, most of the Big Seven transnational conglomerates had created teen-specific sites, including HarperCollins, Little, Brown, Macmillan, Penguin Putnam, Random House, Scholastic Corporation, and Simon & Schuster. But Random House's site was the most sophisticated employer of free labor of them all. For this reason, initial research focused on this site as discussed in the methodology chapter (Chapter 3). Within Random House's *Random Buzzers* web site (Random Buzzers.com), members called "Random Buzzers" earn "Buzz Bucks" by posting pictures, answering surveys, taking quizzes, writing essays, voting, posting comments to a message board, clicking on links and sending them to friends, emailing and sending instant messages directly from the site, and "recruiting" friends. A social networking component allows participants to "friend" other reviewers in order to follow their recommendations.

Terranova (2000) describes this unpaid labor in the digital economy as a "social factory" (p. 33) that employs "NetSlaves," and while work on the Random House site is not entirely unpaid, wages are low, and can only be spent within its site. Teens are attracted by an affective relationship with a favorite author, to whom the site promises access.[54] In 2009, on the Sisterhood Central section of the *Random Buzzers* site ("Sisterhood Central," n.d.), participants were able to interact with Ann Brashares, author

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[54] On the *Twilight Saga* website owned by Little, Brown, Stephenie Meyer, author of the *Twilight* series, participated in question and answer sessions with fans ("*Twilight Saga*," n.d.),

of the Traveling Pants series. In this way, participants can have a direct relationship with the authors, and build a connection with the literary mode of production, as described by Pattee (2006).

As described in Chapter 4, in both the old configuration of the field of publishing and the new (post-2007) one, marketers have been relationship builders. Previously, such relationship building occurred between the institution of the publishing company and the institution of the library, as librarians were the primary gatekeepers of books for young people, and those who had access to this market. In the new configuration, digital technologies enable disintermediated relationship building with readers, via publishers' participatory websites, on which marketers solicit teens' immaterial and affective labor around books. This chapter, the first of three case studies, will explore how the new political economy of publishing exploits relationship building between publishers and their reading consumers on the *Random Buzzers* website, on which participating teens act as peer-to-peer book reviewers. In doing so, they alter traditional means of determining distinction which have existed since the beginning of the 20th century. At the same time, they create a visible audience around reading, in which evidence of their reactions appears within the site.

The first of three case studies exemplifying a trajectory toward multiplatform books, *Random Buzzers*, Random House's teen site, aims to get teens to participate in book-related content and demonstrates how marketing to teens has changed. This chapter will explore facets of an emerging community of production enabled via publishers' participatory websites. As the first of three progressive case studies, this chapter examines how the *Random Buzzers* site provides its owner, Random House, with

valuable feedback about users' tastes and about what they consider distinct or popular, as well as what sorts of products they desire. Free consumer research and peer-to-peer marketing (marketing done by teenagers to their peers, in this case via participatory websites) changes relationships in the base of production of children's literature, by having consumers contribute their labor toward products they will later buy. Expanding upon the new book-marketing techniques described in Chapter 4, this chapter will examine how one publisher exploits an online environment to get teens to participate in peer-to-peer reviewing and provide consumer feedback about books.

5.1 Contemporary Marketing to Teens 2.0: From Publisher Websites to *Random Buzzers.com*

While the Internet has created new venues for reaching young adults in the spaces they already inhabit, it also provides a forum for exploiting their immaterial and affective labor around books, from participating in peer-to-peer reviewing to providing consumer research, and by contributing content. Writing about television audiences, Shawn Shimpach (2005) quotes John Wells, a former Senior Vice President for communication at CBS: "fan sites on the web are 'just the best market research you can get,'" and publishers' sites are proving to be equally effective in marketing, and in conducting market research on teen consumers of books. As described earlier, before 2007, marketing books to this population was challenging. Traditional marketing venues that worked for adults, such as author tours (including appearances in bookstores, on television talk shows, etc.), appearances on bestseller and awards lists, and advertisements in magazines, did not necessarily translate to young adults. As an audience, teens have proven to be a fickle, ephemeral market. This has all changed with

Web 2.0 and participatory online venues, from amateur fan sites to professional,

corporate sites created by transnational conglomerates, which act as digital enclosures

(Andrejevic, 2007) of fan labor, including fan-created, corporate-owned, free-of-charge

marketing material, through contributions of comments and content. Andrejevic was

writing about the Television Without Pity (TWOP) website (TWOP, n.d.), but he could

just as easily have been writing about the publisher-owned participatory teen website. On

TWOP, viewers post extensive commentary about their favorite television shows, which

in turn helps writers and directors create new programs.

5.1.1 Interpellating teens.

As described in section 2.4, the publishers' websites use Althusserian

interpretation to hail their participants. In the same way that McRobbie's (1982) readers

were interpellated by the identity that could be constructed via *Jackie* magazine, we can

also apply the notion of interpellation to publishers' sites—specifically in their choice of

names for these sites. By selecting names that emphasize coolness or citizenship in a

particular culture (Morley, 2006), such as Little, Brown's "*Hip Scouts*" or Henry Holt's

"*In Group*," or Random House's "*Random Buzzers*," publishers interpellate readers via

identification with a brand established by the websites. These sites enable interaction

with popular authors. In the case of television fans, Andrejevic (2007) calls this type of

online participation "an implicit bridging of the production-consumption divide." (p. 33).

Andrejevic describes another implicit goal of Television without Pity (TWOP) posters of

wanting to impress other TWOP community members, and thereby achieve a kind of

value, or hierarchy within their community membership. A parallel development in a

publisher site involves merit badges. In 2009, when this research was initially being

conducted, Random House awarded merit badges and ranks to frequent contributors. *Random Buzzers* who had earned badges would add them to their usernames, where they were prominently visible to other site users.

At the time, perhaps because of Little, Brown's popularity as the Twilight Saga publisher, their *Hip Scouts* (*Hip Scouts*, n.d.) site was the most popular of all the top publishers' sites for teenage readers, and as of May 11, 2009, membership was closed to new members (as it still is in April 2012). But teens could still contribute content in other ways. The site had information on starting a book club, contests, and downloads; and on Little, Brown's NING site called *Pick a Poppy* (*Pick a Poppy*, n.d.), they could join a group and earn a badge, or buzz-a-friend with an e-postcard (i.e., conduct peer-to-peer marketing with their friends, and supply Little, Brown with additional teen email addresses). The site's owner is the French multinational conglomerate Hachette (the company that owns the publishing company Little, Brown, which is famous for being the publisher of books in the *Twilight* series). Henry Holt's *In Group* (*In Group*, n.d.) was for teens aged 13–19, and here teens could enroll to get "free" ARCs in exchange for writing reviews. In 2009, Holt's site appeared to be relatively new compared to Random House's or Little, Brown's, as the interactive component of the site was limited. On the Simon & Schuster site, in case potential reviewers were concerned about having to produce book reports comparable to school work, a clarification addresses this concern: "As for the reviews, this isn't like a book report for English class—we just ask about 10 short questions, and filling out the review should take no more than 15 minutes," indicating publishers' efforts to encourage teen participation. But in 2009, sites by other publishers paled in comparison to Random House's *Random Buzzers* site (owned by the

transnational media corporation Bertelsmann), which was more advanced in its content, its range of activities, and the ability of participants to earn a virtual currency called Buzz Bucks.

5.1.2 Who are the *Random Buzzers*?

As of April 5, 2012, there were 67,524 *Random Buzzers*, but this number is somewhat misleading, as once you are a member, your membership never expires. Even those members who had joined in 2008, and had last logged in on the day they joined (last login is displayed), are still counted as members. Membership is open to anyone, not just teens; and while it is difficult to identify or to prove anyone's status, because most participants mask their identities via user names and avatars, there was evidence of gatekeepers' participation as well.

For example, a search for members with the word "teacher" in their user name resulted in eight names (samples are in the table below). Twenty-two users had the word "librarian" in their username, 133 had the word "mom" in their user name, and five had the word "mother." There were ten users with the word "father" in the name, and also thirty with the word "daddy" (however it is difficult to distinguish actual fathers, such as "Kierasdaddy" or "Samsdaddy101," from those who use slang terms such as "Mackdaddy," "bigdaddyg93," or "bigpimpindaddy"). Seventy-three users had the word "dad" in their names, but those whose online identities sound like actual fathers "Lizdad" and "Bensdad" are combined with the results for "dadestroyer" and "Swordaddict" which have the same three consecutive letters within. And as for "teens," 47 members self-describe as "teens" by using "teen" in their usernames. Table 5.1 below demonstrates samples of some of the usernames, which incorporate possible identities.

Table 5.1: Evidence of Participation in *Random Buzzers*.com

"Teacher" in user name:	"Librarian" in username:	Versions of "Mother" in username:	Versions of "Father" in username:	Versions of "Teen" in username:
LAteacher	DJ_Librarian	NewUTMommy	Kierasdaddy	Teen911
historyteacher300	NinjaLibrarian	LilMoma38	Samsdaddy101	Seventeen
Teacherlady	Tinylibrarian	Readings_of_a_bu	Lizdad	Bartowteens
teacher333	LibrarianSarah	Danasmom	Fatherfirefly,	Innovativeteen
teacher	DigitalLibrarian21	amusingmother	Bensdad00	Justeenoman

In addition to the analysis of names, data was collected on sample users, including the number of users (67,524 as of 4/5/12), users' gender, hometown, date of joining, last login, number of posts, number of comments, number of Buzz Bucks earned, and "other," which refers to any information users chose to share about themselves. (Details are in Appendix E). This section examined who the *Random Buzzers* are. The next section examines how they contribute their affective and immaterial labor on the site, in support of the publisher's marketing efforts.

5.1.3 *Random Buzzers* activities and "pay."

One of the reasons that Random House's *Random Buzzers*' site was chosen for analysis was because it offered a form of virtual currency[55] to its participants in exchange for their labor. Therefore, a social networking component allows participants to "friend" other reviewers on the site in order to keep up with their recommendations, and Buzz Bucks can be spent in the site's "mall." In 2009, for 19,000–25,000 Buzz Bucks (BB), participants could buy a book or a poster. For 115,000 they could purchase a $25 American Express Gift Certificate. But by April, 2012, this merchandise has become

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[55] Use of virtual currencies to promote book publishing could be a topic for future research.

merely a choice between five items: one signed hardcover copy of *Fallen* by Lauren Kate (for 50,000 BB), an *Inheritance* poster signed by the book's author, Christopher Paolini (30,000 BB), a Tamora Pierce poster (20,000 BB), an advance reading copy of *The Sharp Time* by Mary O'Connell (20,000 BB), and a copy of a poster for *The Phantom Tollbooth* (hardly a new title—this classic was written by Norton Juster, illustrated by Jules Feiffer, and published in 1961, indicating that publishers are either raising awareness of backlist titles, or recycling material). In offering a "salary" in exchange for their labor, which ranges in activity from answering a survey to posting a review (one such review can be found in Appendix F), Random House acknowledges the value of contributors' "work" (or immaterial labor), which is probably worth far more to the company than are the items which can be purchased via Random House's internal "currency"—all of which are created inexpensively by Random House. The dwindling offerings could indicate less focus by the publisher on soliciting participation on its website, and evidence of a burgeoning *Random Buzzers'* Facebook page supports this. Teens' participation supports the company's earnings via their marketing efforts, and via creating an audience for backlist materials

On the Random House site, in 2009, readers could interact with Anne Brashares, bestselling author of the Sisterhood series (Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants). Some teens posted questions in the Anne Brashares forum like "How did you become an author?" or "What did you wear to your last premiere?" (Answer: Jeans) (Random Buzzers.com, n.d.). As of April 11, 2012, this interaction between readers and authors had become even more sophisticated. The first page of the Random Buzzers site features a book Random House is promoting called Rotters by "featured author" Daniel Kraus

(Random Buzzers.com, n.d.). As is to be expected, there is a brief introduction about the author, a description of this book, and a book trailer. In the interest of "harnessing" (Large publisher, Interview, August 2011) the author's social media potential, readers are encouraged to "Keep in touch with Daniel on his website, Facebook, and Twitter" (http://www.Random Buzzers.com/blog/view/the-buzz/all-about-rotters/2012/04/09/), to which links are provided. And readers are rewarded with 50 Buzz Bucks for writing a comment as simple as: "Welcome, Daniel!"

The Random House site arguably pays sub-minimum wages for its "NetSlaves." Short surveys, such as a Judy Blume survey in 2009, asked readers to check off their favorite Judy Blume titles from a list of seven. Another survey included five multiple choice questions asking participants how much they know about Helen of Troy. Quizzes would earn participants between 15 and 120 Buzz Bucks each. Filling out a survey about their own book-related blog (which asks participants to provide information about how long they have had the blog, how frequently it is updated, whether it is RSS enabled, and a link to the URL) earns a reader 105 Buzz Bucks. Lengthier assignments are worth more. An essay about a reader's favorite Judy Blume book is worth 2,000 Buzz Bucks, and if they post a photo of themselves with the book, they earn extra points. Clearly a fair amount of work had to be done for a $25 gift card. Figure 5.1 below shows examples of readers' participation and their earnings:
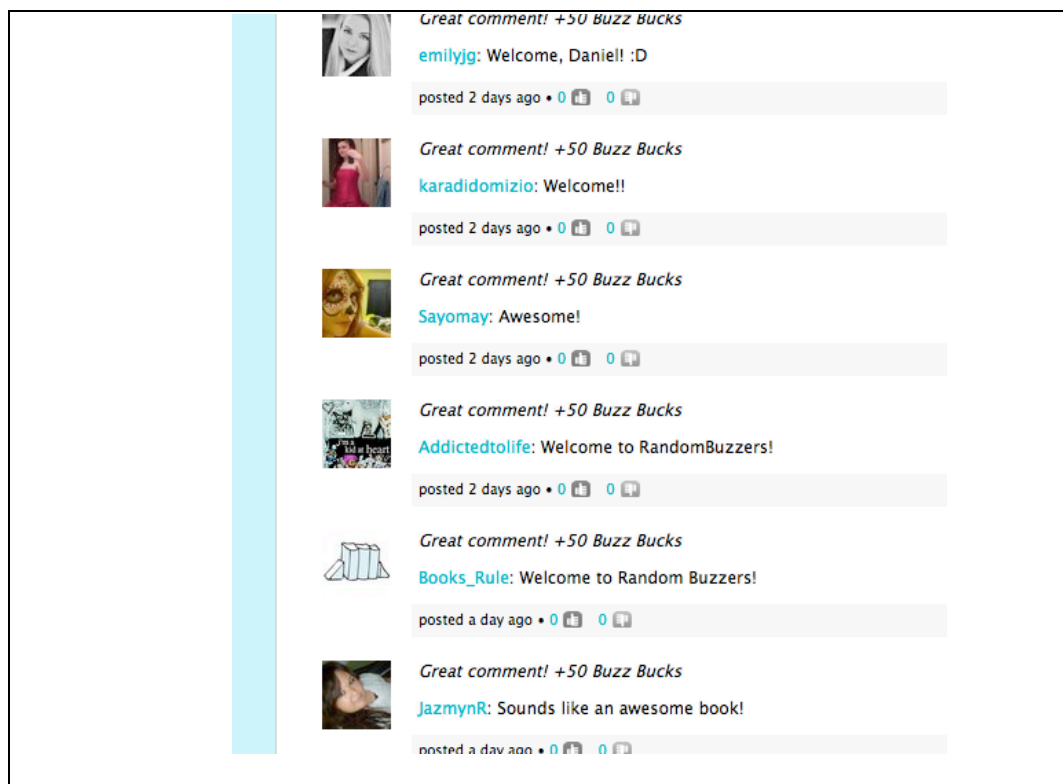
Figure 5.1. Reader Participation and Compensation

Earning virtual currency, identifying as a *Random Buzzers* community member,

by sharing personal information, and by contributing content—participants gain status

and distinction of a symbolic nature, or symbolic capital. In 2009, teens who were more

motivated by status than by "money" could achieve ranked levels and badges for

performance, as in the gaming world, by joining either the Skölir Team or the Sverd

Team (these names are taken from Random House teen author Christopher Paolini's book

Eragon). Ranks include: "Reader," "Bookworm," "Reviewer," "Staff Critic," "Critic -at-

Large," "Editor-in-Chief," "Buzz Blogger," or "Author" (reserved for Random House).

Badges were displayed next to the participants' user names. Embedded in these badges is

prestige and status. Based on comments posted in Random House's forums, it is

considered prestigious to participate as a reviewer for more than one publisher. The more

ARCs are sent to a reviewer from different publishers, the more cultural capital he or she

has, which parallels Coté & Pybus's (2007) description of the acquisition of cultural

capital through the accumulation of friends on Myspace, where the raison d'être is: "to be

valorized and to extend one's social network and hence cultural capital" (Coté & Pybus,

2007, p. 94). But for some unknown reason, by 2012, the site owner's had removed most

ranks and badges from the site.

        In 2009, certain participants' names and photos (or avatars, or other images they

choose to represent themselves) were pervasive on forums throughout the site, including:

Ladytron, thepageflipper, Tweedeldum, and bookreader4, and these participants all had

prestigious "Buzz Blogger" badges next to their names. There was cross-site posting

about other publishers on the Random House site. In response to a posting asking how to

get more ARCs, participants responded with tips about getting on review lists for other

publishers. Some of the participants indicated that they were cross-platform contributors,

working on more than one publisher's site. One participant points out that while

membership on some review sites, like Little, Brown's, is full, participants on those sites

are dropped if they do not submit any reviews by the time they have received three or

more galleys. It seems that Little, Brown has managed to cultivate an elite status through

its exclusion of would-be reviewers (or perhaps Little, Brown attracts more attention

because of its current status as the publisher of the Twilight phenomenon). Another ARC-

related tip posted by lenoreva: "Library Thing [an online review site not affiliated with

any particular publisher] has an Early Reviewers Group that you can join. Each month at

the beginning of the month they post the books they have on offer and you can request

them. Your chances of getting a book are increased if you have a lot of books in your

library (you can have 200 with a free account) and have reviewed many of them"

(Random Buzzers Forums, n.d.). LibraryThing has figured out how to get something for

nothing—it gets free galleys from publishers to send to readers (not restricted to

teenagers), who in turn perform free labor for the site by uploading their books and

reviews to LibraryThing's website.

There was further evidence in 2009 of cross-posting with the thread on the

Random House site called "Hip Scouts," in which Random House ARC reviewers talk

about books they are reading for other publishers. In a future project, it might be

interesting to explore if such a forum is used for gathering intelligence about forthcoming

material by other publishers. There is even a forum for fans of Little, Brown's bestselling

author Stephenie Meyer on the Random House site, lead by frequent poster Ladytron.

Another possible study would be to find out more about such frequent posters. Are they

young adults accumulating symbolic capital? Or are they agents of the publisher?

Reviews are a key activity on the site, and in 2009, books were rated between 2.0

and 5.0, with 5.0 as the highest rating. (By 2012, this had switched to stars, with books

given between zero and five stars). In 2009, Random House included a few negative

reviews with scores of 2.0, such as the lukewarm review for Band Geek Love by Josie

Bloss. Although this book was published in July 2008, it seems only to have been

uploaded to the site on May 3, 2009. The reviewer writes: "Band Geek Love was

basically a high school romance novel. I would recommend reading this if you are

bored—nothing exceptional and aggravating at times" (ylin0261, "Band Geek," 2012).

The inclusion of such negative reviews of Random House's own titles also lends

legitimacy to the site. Random House also includes reviews of books by other publishers on *Random Buzzers'* individual pages within the site. In comparison to the library model of including teenagers in the review process described in Chapter 1, starting with early 20th-century librarians who included their voices in review pamphlets, publishers' sites offer a far larger arena for teen voices, and in this way they encroach upon the librarians and library-based programs as the primary source for reviews (and thereby determiners of distinction).

Discussion sites enable readers to measure an author's popularity, based on how many posts there are by readers. Figure 5.2, a snapshot of recent author postings followed by number of user responses generated by such postings, is an indicator of an author's popularity. As Fiske writes, determining popularity is a combination of producers' efforts, and users' adoption of cultural products.

Cyn Balog Come inside and discuss the novels by Cyn Balog and check out the Q&A session with the author during her visit to Random Buzzers in July!	3	289	Aug 12, 2011, 02:07:21 PM By sstatler
E. Lockhart Are you a fan of the Ruby Oliver series? Join others in discussion about author E. Lockhart's series and see what she (and fictional character, Roo!) had to say during their visit with us.	17	235	Dec 25, 2010, 08:35:45 PM By brandileigh2003
Esther Friesner Are you a fan of Esther Friesner and her work? Come in here to chat about your fave books and meet other fans!	8	222	Jun 22, 2011, 10:51:27 PM By Kaytee329
Fallen Series by Lauren Kate Come inside and discuss all things Lauren Kate, author of the *Fallen* series!	13	1057	Mar 15, 2012, 04:08:54 PM By MizMaliciouz
Jen Bryant Chat about your favorite Jen Bryant novels and join in an author Q&A!	1	146	Jan 17, 2011, 06:03:16 PM By JenBryant
Jennifer Donnelly Come inside and read the Q&A with Jennifer Donnelly, author of *Revolution*!	2	317	Jun 18, 2011, 04:18:17 PM By domisimone
Judy Blume Take a look at what best-selling author Judy Blume chatted about as she visited to discuss all of her beloved books and more!	5	174	Feb 26, 2011, 02:52:43 AM By _Josie_
Juliet Marillier Are you a fan of author Juliet Marillier? Have you read her book Cybele's Secret ? Come here to chat and check out her appearance on the Buzz Boards!	3	82	
Kristin Harmel Come inside to discuss all the great works by Kristin Harmel. She will be joining us on January 11, 2010, so please give her a shout out or ask a question!	2	105	Mar 27, 2010, 01:22:56 PM By carpenoctem

Figure 5.2. Popular Author Posts

As seen above, a discussion about Lauren Kate's Fallen series, started on March 15, 2012 (and viewed April 12, 2012) already had 1,057 posts, compared to a discussion about Kristin Harmel's work that had been up since March 27, 2010, which only had 105 posts.

The apparent openness of the forum on the site—Random House's willingness to allow postings with information about competing publishers and their products, and the fact that a range of reviews, both good and bad are posted—indicates an environment of freedom and openness. However, participants have no way of seeing what material is deleted from the site by *Random Buzzers'* moderators. Those teens clicking through the "Code of Conduct" on Random House's site may not be aware of the constraints imposed on the discourse by Random House's enclosure, especially that which gives Random

House the right to exploit anything they upload to the site, as will be explored next in section 5.2.

For complete understanding, a future study might compare reviews of books from trade journals (such as Kirkus Reviews, Booklist, School Library Journal, and Publishers Weekly*)* to participants' reviews posted on the Random House site, and might examine whether mediocre reviews posted on Amazon.com are balanced by rave reviews on the publisher's site (one of the strategies for future development of findings about the reviews).

5.2 The Digital Enclosure: Control, Surveillance, and Ownership

Massive multiplayer online games (MMOGS) or massive multiplayer online role-playing games (MMORPGS) represent the "convergence of more than technologies. . . [t]hey are both media product and media service" (Humphreys, 2008, p. 150). Similarly, on publisher websites, the line between product and service is blurred, as young adults labor as marketers by reviewing and otherwise participating in building products, and also consume the end product. Whether or not the participants are aware that they are giving away any content they contribute, producers and publishers carefully preserve their ownership of user-generated content by writing and posting end-user licensing agreements (EULAs). Sal Humphreys (2008) describes EULAs as "Panopticon-like surveillance within digital environments" (p. 155) in a Foucauldian fashion. Similar to the EULAs of online games, the publishers have created rules and codes of conduct for participation on their sites. Random House, for example, has perpetual, non-exclusive rights to use whatever content is posted by the website users:

> "By posting messages, sending e-mails, inputting data, answering questions, uploading data or files or otherwise communicating with Random House through its Web site (a "Communication"), you are granting Random House a perpetual, non-exclusive, royalty-free, unrestricted, worldwide license to use, display, sublicense, adapt, transmit and copy such Communication. The foregoing grant shall include the right to exploit any proprietary rights in such Communication, including but not limited to rights under trademark, copyright, servicemark or patent laws in any relevant jurisdiction." (Randomhouse.com, n.d.)

In other words, anything posted on the Random House site belongs (non-exclusively) to Random House, supplying Random House with free (or at least very low cost) marketing tools and other content, which could serve as ideas toward or content for future projects.

Writing about gaming, Humphreys (2008) states that: "The circulation of cultural meanings and the building of, and access to, cultural capital increasingly occurs through participation within these proprietary spaces. Publishers own, and to varying extents control, virtual worlds where cultural capital is built, and where participation increasingly will enable cultural and social inclusion" (Humphreys, 2008, p. 150). Non-compliance with Random House's rules results in termination of the right to participate. "Corporations imagine participation as something they can start and stop, channel and reroute, commodify and market." (Jenkins, 2006, p. 175). Publishers' control of the content of the site creates what Coleman and Dyer-Witheford (2007) refer to as a "digital enclosure" (p. 935), where participants sign away their right to the content that they co-create, and participants must abide by the publishers' "Code of Conduct." Participating in publishers' proprietary sites is much like other online activity—once users participate, their ownership is at stake, whether it is by using Google Docs, or by having health

records on line—elements of privacy and ownership of intellectual property are redefined in this virtual realm.
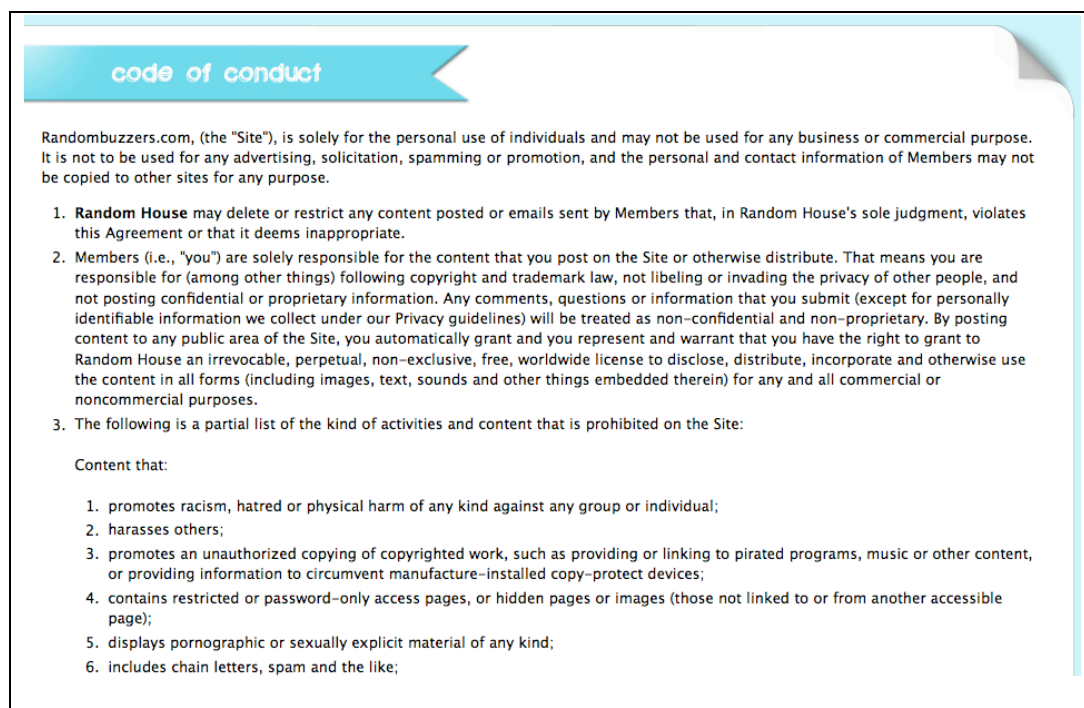
Figure 5.3. *Random Buzzers'* **Code of Conduct (***Random Buzzers***, "Code of Conduct," 2012)**

Random House prohibits any content that "promotes racism," "harasses," "promotes unauthorized copying of copyrighted work," or "is pornographic." (*Random Buzzers.com*, "Code of Conduct," 2011). In addition, users are not allowed to use the site to transmit viruses, or modify or reverse-engineer content. The publishers' panopticon extends beyond the borders of their websites, as most of the young adult publishers also have a presence on Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter, where they can "friend" them, giving the publishers yet another window on the transparent lives of teens.

5.3 Back to the Library: How do librarians feel about publishers' teen sites?

In 2009, a former Supervisor of Teen Services at a large urban-suburban library in a diverse community in the Northeast, who had also served as BBYA Committee Chair, was excited about an increased number of outlets for teens to participate in reading and writing about books (Library Supervisor, interview, May 2009). A former library director in an affluent western community, an author, reviewer and professor of young adult literature, sees the benefits of getting them excited about books, and as resources for librarians in building collections that reflect teens' interests, but despite this, he feels that "there's something vaguely . . . meretricious about them and that their true purpose is to cynically exploit teens but any business these days is trying to do the same thing so I guess it's not fair to single publishers out for special criticism" (Library Director, email exchange, May 7, 2009).

These comments from librarians, as well as the quote in Chapter 4 from SLJ Editor Daryl Grabarek, about the tension between quality and commerce in the latest digital platforms for young people, highlight an inherent tension between the library and the publishing house. While arguably both librarians and publishers might agree that books belong to an inalienable field of cultural productions, tension exists as librarians' favor a view of books as cultural artifacts, and publishers necessarily view books as commodities.

Books represent the convergence between commerce and culture. Because books are infused with cultural capital in a way that video games are not, there is a lingering sense of the power of books—that they have the power to improve minds—and it is objectionable to gatekeepers' values when books are created in ways that best serve the

publishers' financial interests. While the sites do offer a positive way for teens to get

engaged with books in an entertaining and empowering way, the readers do so at a cost.

They become engaged with certain books—those commodity books that the publishers

are pushing. They are further limited in engaging only with the works by certain

publishers (those which can afford to have technologically sophisticated websites and to

produce ARCs).[56] The selection work that librarians do as professional critics of young

adult literature, as well as the role of the library in providing breadth in their collections,

might not have a place on commercial publisher sites.

The publishers' sites are slouching towards a McDonaldization (Zwick, Bonsu &

Darmody, 2008) of publishing. As the opportunities to participate in YA books increases,

the book selection actually shrinks. Teens who participate in library-based BBYA

programs already experience a limited pre-selection of titles as galleys submitted to the

BBYA program are restricted to submissions from big publishers who can afford to

participate. But in theory, with approximately twenty publishers participating, they are

still getting a cross-section of the marketplace. Publishers' websites further funnel the

selection of what gets reviewed, as teens only get Advance Review Copies (ARCs) from

those publishers with which they are registered. In both cases, BBYA and publishers'

sites, it is important to note that publishers only produce ARCs for any season's lead

titles—those which they are attempting to position as bestsellers in the marketplace. This

means that books from authors with a proven track record in the market place have an

enormous advantage over debut novels from first-time authors, and books from large

publishers with more resources have advantages over those from small publishers. Works

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[56] As of 2012, publishers are increasingly using Net Galley (http://www.netgalley.com/), which provides a link to an online version of a manuscript for a limited amount of time, and might make providing galleys more affordable for small publishers as well as large ones.

of mass appeal are much more likely to have ARCs produced, than are eclectic books of

literary fiction. The result is that those who buy their books based on peer-to-peer

recommendations within a publisher's site are shopping at the literary equivalent of the

GAP clothing store. Buyers are free to choose from denim, khaki, or corduroy, but the

buyer cannot go beyond the GAP brand. And what is left is a one-size-fits-all generic,

commodified, transmedia literary product. Certainly empowerment exists for the teens,

expressed through their membership; but such empowerment exists only within a

restrictive, digital enclosure around a predetermined group of books.

5.3.1 Beyond publishers' websites: How teens participate in books online.

Compared to publishers' sites, the librarians of this study are more like the small

publishers of Chapter 4, and have similar problems of funding and staffing. The librarians

interviewed here had limited success with social media, and a study of The New York

Public Library's Teen Central revealed that while it is experimenting with social media to

reach teens, with a Facebook page and a Twitter feed, as of April 1st, 2012, there were

295 "likes" on Teen Central@NYPL's Facebook page, and very few status updates (only

nine in 2012), which could indicate a lack of staff support (or an overburdened staff with

no extra time to manage this). A posting on March 23rd, 2012 coincided with the release

of the Hunger Games film based on the novel by Suzanne Collins, and wished viewers a

"Happy Hunger Games day" (teen central@NYPL on facebook). At that point, the

library's teen-targeted Twitter feed had been stagnant for over a year, since April 8th,

2011 (viewed on April 12, 2012). There was no Tumblr page for the same at this time.

On the New York Public Library's main page, there is a link to a blog called "Stuff for

the Teenage" (NYPL, "Stuff," 2012), which looks as though it has not been updated since 2010, perhaps indicating that there is no staff available to manage it:

> "For 80 years, New York Public Library staff shared the best titles for teens in an annual list called *Books for the Teen Age*.[57] In 2009, Books for the Teen Age became *Stuff for the Teen Age*, a multimedia, multi-format, targeted, and teen-tested list of the best of the year in teen books, music, graphic novels, movies, games, and more. In 2010, Stuff for the Teen Age became a blog" (NYPL, "Stuff," 2012).

This resource appears not to have been updated since 2010. The shift from "Books" to "Stuff" for the Teen Age as described above, is indicative also of the Teen Central Librarian's collection development philosophy, as she recently weeded the non-fiction collection, and replaced non-circulating books with what she calls "stuff" such as yoga mats, musical instruments, and a sewing machine—items which allow teens to have a tactile experience or, in combination with a how-to video from YouTube, teach teens a new skill.

Libraries across America run summer reading programs for children in their branches. While the American Library Association does not set the annual themes (the Collaborative Summer Library Program does), according to the ALA site, "Summer reading programs began in the 1890s as a way to encourage school children, particularly those in urban areas and not needed for farm work, to read during their summer vacations, use the library, and develop the habit of reading" (ALA, Library Summer Reading Programs, 1997–2012). A suburban librarian who serves as a middle school librarian during the school year, and a public YA librarian during the summer, uses social media to bridge the gap between school years during the summer, to encourage teens to

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[57] Which was a list started by the early teen librarian Mabel Williams at the New York Public Library.

continue reading—and is also able to promote books that do not fall within the school's required reading list. This connects to the idea of librarians as extenders of children's habitus described in Chapter 2.

Libraries have their own means of participating in books published for young adults. In part because of a fortuitous location in New York City, the heart of the publishing world, a teen librarian at the New York Public Library (Urban Teen Lib, interview, 2011) partners with an editor from a major transnational publishing house. The editor brings in a selection of manuscripts, including some unsolicited (unagented) manuscripts from the "slush pile" and teens read them out loud together with the editor and give their feedback. According to the librarian, the teens are eager to participate, and enjoy interacting with the editor. Teen feedback has helped shape the books. For example, the publisher changed the preliminary cover of one novel after a teen asked why all the faces on the cover were white.

Outside of library-sponsored venues and publishers' sites, recent online opportunities for teenage fans of young adult literature include review sites such as *Teen Ink*, *Teen Reads*, *Readergirlz.com*, *Weread.com*, *Amazon.com*, blogs, and fan sites. An examination of these is beyond the scope of this chapter, but could be interesting for future research.

5.4 Summary and Conclusions

Participating in a site like *Random Buzzers*.com lends teens agency in reviewing books designed for them. Teens are interpellated to "work" on such sites, and in the case of *Random Buzzers*, they are rewarded for their efforts by earning "Buzz Bucks," and by community membership. In exchange, the publisher gets free and unparalleled consumer

research and peer-to-peer reviewing, and creates a community of affect around the books it publishes—all for very little expense. The problem is that teens who participate as *Random Buzzers* only receive copies from one publisher—and generally, that is a publisher who can afford to participate in such programs. A new program, called "NetGalley," which provides digital copies of forthcoming titles to professional reviewers, may make galleys more accessible to a wider range of publishers (and subsequently titles), and this is a topic for future exploration.

Chapter 4 described how publishers' marketing strategies have changed from earlier strategies of building relationships with gatekeepers in order to reach teenage readers, to new strategies, in which publishers build relationships directly with young consumers in a disintermediated environment. One such disintermediated environment, Random House's *Random Buzzers* site, became the case study of this chapter. In this chapter, we have seen how teens' immaterial and affective labor is transformed into a powerful marketing and research tool for publishers, enabling the publishers to get teens to participate in marketing the products created for them. In Chapter 7, we will see how such user participation is taken to a new level, as fandom is transformed into labor in a case study of the *Twilight Saga* site.

CHAPTER 6: From Consumer to Prosumer:

Twilight Saga.com (2009–2012)—Fandom and the Lifespan of a Corporate Fan Site

Introduction

This chapter follows the lifespan of the *Twilight Saga* corporate-owned fan site,

analyzes how user participation has changed from 2009 to 2012, and reveals a cycle of

interactivity—from a publisher's initial control and contribution, to its decreased

involvement and subsequent loss of control. As this happens, consumer resistance

appears within, and power is—at least temporarily, until such point as the publisher either

refocuses its attention on the site or shuts it down entirely—in the hands of the consumer.

6.1 Commercializing Culture: Towards a Political Economy of Reading

In André Schiffrin's (2000) polemic, *The Business of Books: How the*

International Conglomerates Took over Publishing and Changed the Way We Read, he

recounts his own experience with the mergers and acquisitions in the publishing industry

of the 1980s, as his family-owned company (Pantheon) was absorbed by Random House

(later Bertelsmann). Schiffrin argues that such mergers lead to an emphasis on creating

commodity books—i.e., books in which the most important feature was their ability to

generate large sales. As a result of this climate, and an ever-shrinking market in which to

sell books, publishers are increasingly focused on finding the "next" *Harry Potter* that

will find room in Barnes & Noble's ever-decreasing shelf space, rather than texts that

might receive literary awards (which often do not translate into book sales). The rise of

transnational publishers combined with a shrinking marketplace for books has led to

commodification of books and readers as well. The *Twilight Saga* series, by Stephenie

Meyer, has been called the "next" *Harry Potter;* and in terms of its book sales,

international editions, and licensing program, it is certainly a phenomenon of similar

stature.

When consuming a product such as *Twilight*, readers are commodified via their

participation. No longer is it sufficient for readers simply to buy the product; instead, the

audience also becomes a product of value for the publisher—in this case, their value is in

their labor, and they are expected to actually work for the series. As argued in a chapter

entitled *Consumed by Twilight: The Commodification of Young Adult Literature*,

(Martens, 2010), "In the case of books, commodification occurs when the market value

(or net profit) replaces the inherent literary value of the book." (p. 243). A focus on

earnings power first commodifies books as literary products, and then commodifies

readers by having them work for the books they read—as peer-to-peer reviewers and

marketers, and as suppliers of user-generated content.

Mark Andrejevic (2007) writes that "the promise of interactivity" in mass media

brings the potential of changing mass culture from a "top down, homogenous, and

nonparticipatory" structure to one that is an active and participatory form of cultural

creativity (p. 28). What Andrejevic (2007) describes, is in effect, a shift from an active

audience to an audience of laboring, active participants which Toffler (1983) calls

"prosumers," or producer/consumers. As evidenced on *Random Buzzers* in the preceding

chapter, and as will be described in this chapter using *The Twilight Saga* site

(http://thetwilightsaga.com), participatory book-related sites represent a shift to an

audience of active, laboring prosumers, and are part of the trajectory toward

multiplatform books.

In Chapter 4, we saw how marketing has changed from top-down methods, of publishers targeting gatekeepers, to new methods of using digital technologies to create a disintermediated space in which teens can be reached directly by the publishers, and marketing becomes a collaborative, community effort between publishers, authors and teens. Chapter 5 examined Random House's proprietary *Random Buzzers* site, and how teens provide immaterial labor as peer-to-peer reviewers, marketers, focus-group subjects, and providers of consumer research within that site. In this chapter, Hachette expands upon the types of resources provided by fans in Chapter 5, by channeling brand reader fandom onto a corporate-owned site. Hachette's *Twilight Saga* fan site expands upon all of the types of immaterial and affective labor provided by *Random Buzzers;* but unlike *Random Buzzers*, which covers all books for teens published by Random House, *Twilight Saga* focuses only on one series, and on the brand readers of that series.

The Twilight Saga site, hosted by the Hachette Book Group (owner of Little, Brown and Company,[58] the publisher of *Twilight* books) is for fans of the *Twilight* series by Stephenie Meyer. As on *Random Buzzers*, participants on *The Twilight Saga* site, in this case *Twilight* fans, serve as peer-to-peer reviewers and marketers, and as providers of consumer research. But what is different here is that the participants have an additional role suggesting content, or even creating content—all within the publishers' proprietary "digital corral" (Andrejevic, 2007), one in which the boundaries are governed by the site owner's End-User License Agreement (EULA).

As such, the *Twilight* audience is put to work in all of the activities above, but also in creating extension stories of the books via fan fiction, and in generating and re-

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[58] Little, Brown is a subsidiary of Hachette Book Group, a transnational publishing company formed when the French company Hachette Livre, acquired Time Warner in 2006 (Hachette, "About," 2012). The publisher of the *Twilight Saga* is herein refered to as either "Little, Brown," or as "Hachette."

generating interest in the books. In doing so, *The Twilight Saga* site increases the options for participation to a level beyond what is possible on the *Random Buzzers* site, and toward the type of participation we will see next in Chapter 7, about a multiplatform book series. Multiplatform books are those in which a consumer must read across multiple media platforms in order to derive full meaning from the text. These books allow user participation in different forms, from playing games on a book-related website, to contributing content to books in a series.

Research on this chapter began in 2009, when popularity of the *Twilight* series was at its peak. As of this writing in 2012, all four books have been published,[59] and four of five movies[60] based on the books have been released. Now that the series is complete, and the publisher can no longer rely on the release of an annual blockbuster publication, *Twilight* has moved to become a backlist staple for Little, Brown, but certainly one with a renewable stable of readers. As we will see in this chapter, as the publishers' interest in the website wanes, the popularity of the series rests in the hands of the participants.

Methods used to gather data in this section include a case study analysis of Hachette's "official" *Twilight Saga* site, a comparative study of other online *Twilight* sites, examination and documentation of fan sites posted on stepheniemeyer.com, and of an anti-fan site. Comparison of *Twilight* books appearance on the American Library Association's (ALA) Best Books for Young Adults List (BBYA) and the *Teens Top Ten* list. Trade literature and Amazon rankings supported the research in this chapter.

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[59] 1) *Twilight:* book published in 2005, movie release in 2008; 2) *New Moon:* book published in 2006, movie release in 2009; 3) Eclipse: book published in 2007, movie release in 2010; 4) Breaking Dawn: book published in 2008. Part 1 of the movie was released in 2011, part 2 in 2012. Book publication dates are from Amazon.com, and movie release dates are from imbd.com.
[60] The last book in the series, Breaking Dawn, was made into two separate movies.

6.1 Commercializing Culture: Towards a Political Economy of Reading

As noted in Chapter 2, the Frankfurt theorists Horkheimer and Adorno criticized the mass produced "culture industry," which they encountered upon their arrival. For Adorno and Horkheimer, the audience was not dumb, but rather lazy, and it preferred predictable, formulaic cultural products. The political economy of contemporary publishing also prefers formulaic, one-size-fits-all products, and the goal is to find the next mega-phenomenon, blockbuster series. In describing the difference between a "citizen" audience (an educated audience seeking information) versus a "consumer" audience (seeking primarily to be entertained), Butsch (2011) writes: "Virtuous citizen audiences were expected to seek news and cultivation and act after calm deliberation. Mere consumers sought entertainment and self-indulgence, acted on emotion and impulse, and were invariably identified as lower class, women, children, and lesser races" (p. 154). Since the Frankfurt theorists, many others, including Garnham (1990), Schiffrin (2000), McRobbie (2003), Sonnet (2003), and Shimpach (2005), have written about the commodification of cultural products, and some, such as Smythe (1981), Meehan (2002), and Martens (2010), have written about the commodification of audiences. In the case of *The Twilight Saga*, with its best-selling (commodity) books, the associated website requires users' labor to support the publishers' sale of such products.

6.1.1 Gatekeepers' taste and teen taste: A conflict of interest?

Instead of winning traditional literary awards (given by gatekeepers such as librarians) as described in Chapter 1, *Twilight's* success is based on the transmedia world-building fortuitously enabled by the series, but also largely on recognition from its brand

readers, as books in the series appeared on BBYA lists and on the *Teens Top Ten* list (both of which are awards lists that include young adult voices). Its success came not only from sales of the books, but also from the associated movies and wide range of licensed merchandise, all of which pointed back to the books. Whatever the author's literary intentions may have been with the series, *Twilight* is arguably a product that entertains—and one that has been so successful in doing so that it launched a new genre in Barnes & Noble bookstores called "Teen Paranormal Romance." The series has parented numerous derivative books, which can be attributed to the fact that fans' appetite for more continues, even though the last book in the series has been published. It therefore epitomizes the phenomenon that is so attractive to the publishers' program.

The discussion of "culture" versus "entertainment" is a key topic not only among the Frankfurt theorists, but also among gatekeepers in the construction of children's literature, and such discussion of high "culture" versus low culture, or "entertainment," has deep historic roots. In Matthew Arnold's (1882) *Culture and Anarchy*, he associates "rowdyism" with the working class, whereas "our educated and intelligent classes remain in their majestic repose" (Arnold, 1882, para. 7). Culture vs. entertainment applies in this case study on the *Twilight Saga*. As "books," they belong to the inalienable cultural field. But the commercialization of this series, and its associated fandom, also places it in the realm of entertainment, and as such, there is a convergence of culture and entertainment within this property. The brand readers of this series participate within and beyond the rules of the site's EULAs, and eventually descend into subversive behavior, which we will see in a later part of this chapter.

Books in the *Twilight* series did not win any of the literary awards for Young Adult literature for which the juries consisted only of gatekeepers. But when teens were involved in the decision-making, as on the *Best Books for Young Adults* (BBYA) list or the *Teens Top Ten*, they did win. As we saw in Chapter 1, the BBYA list includes teen input, but the librarians (gatekeepers) make the final decisions about which titles are included or excluded. In the case of the *Twilight Saga*, only the first book in the series appeared on a BBYA list in 2006. However, when teens selected their favorite books on the YA Galley Project's *Teens Top Ten List*, the series did very well, which indicates a difference of perception about what is a "good" book. "In 2003, the ALA launched the YA Galley Project. Each year, approximately 20 publishers participate by sending free advance review copies (ARCs) to 15 libraries that each serves a two-year term. In exchange, teens provide the publishers with feedback ahead of publication, essentially giving teens an opportunity to help shape a novel—from suggesting new character names to proposing alternate endings. They also verify authenticity of characters' voices, actions, and surroundings, and as participants in the YA Galley Project they are eligible to nominate books for an award: the *Teens' Top Ten* list. The *Teens' Top Ten* list is the only awards list on which the books appearing are selected by teens only" (Martens, 2010, p. 248.). Each year that a book in the *Twilight* series was published, it appeared at the top of the *Teens' Top Ten* list as seen in Table 6.3 below, which shows the placement of *Twilight* titles in these two award systems during the period 2006–2009:

Table 6.1: How Twilight Titles Ranked on the *Teens Top Ten List* and *BBYA* lists (2006–2009)

Year	Title	Place on Teens Top Ten List	Appeared on BBYA List
2009	*Breaking Dawn*	#2	No
2008	*Eclipse*	#1	No
2007	*New Moon*	#1	No
2006	*Twilight*	#2	Yes

Note: Table modified from (Martens, 2010, p. 248)

Clearly, the series had enormous teen appeal (and less gatekeeper appeal). As we will see in this chapter, Hachette established its *Twilight Saga* site in an effort to engage this brand reader audience within a proprietary site. Its motivations were to seek users' contributions much as on *Random Buzzers*. This, in turn, would support its marketing efforts. Hachette most likely anticipated that participants would constitute what Tarde (1969, in Butsch, 2011) calls "a public," and Butsch (2011) calls a "citizen" audience. But by 2012, after the last book in the series was published, Hachette's audience declined from this citizen audience toward what Tarde calls a "crowd," and what Butsch calls a "consumer audience" that seeks entertainment, as will be described below.

Direct communication between publishers and their reading publics circumvents the gatekeepers (or guardians of cultural and moral values), allowing for a direct discourse between the publisher and the reader that is grounded in commerce, and allows publishers an opportunity to best control their brand. Because of the block-buster status of books in the *Twilight* series—in 2011, Diane Roback wrote in the trade journal *Publishers Weekly* that "sales of *Twilight* books, while still significant, cooled somewhat

last year—just over 8.5 million books sold in 2010 vs. 26.5 million in 2009 and 27.5

million in 2008" (Roback, PW, 2012). Clearly, at its peak, a media property such as

Twilight is so significant to the publisher that its value was worth safeguarding. When

researching in 2010, Little, Brown's marketing staff would not consent to be interviewed

about any *Twilight*-related activity, which provides evidence of how valuable this

commodity product was to the publisher. Yet once newer books replace such a property,

the publisher's interest dwindles. In its arc as a bestselling series, from books, to movies,

to licensed merchandise, *The Twilight Saga* has been exploited in more ways than most.

Now that the books have all been published, typically, the series would move from the

frontlist to the publishers' backlist. However, digital formats, and in the case of the

accompanying website which acts as a digital component of the series, as well as an on-

going licensing program (the last film will be released in November 2012) has revised

this practice into one that keeps a successful series active in the frontlist for a longer

period of time.

Because the website still has a significant number of active participants, and

serves as a way for new fans to become engaged with the series, the publisher is not able

to disengage. The website keeps the book series alive in a way that was not possible

earlier. This forces the publisher to continue to dedicate marketing resources (including

staff) toward what otherwise would be a backlist series, as all four books were published

as of 2009.

6.2   World Building: *Twilight*-style

The *Twilight* series by Stephenie Meyer represents a perfect example of such a commodity book, complete with its own world. The strength of the series from a commercial perspective, is in the world which it establishes, one open to interpretation by users and representable on multiple (commercial) platforms.[61] Another strength of the series in terms of its appeal is its flexibility. In response to a fan's question on Stephenie Meyer's website: "What does Bella look like?" Meyer responds: "I left out a detailed description of Bella in the book so that the reader could more easily step into her shoes" ("What Does Bella," n.d.). The fact that Bella is barely described in the books means that for the readers, Bella can look any way they want, including like the readers themselves. (A short plot summary of the books in the series is in Appendix G).

6.2.1   Crafting *Twilight* identities.

Henry Jenkins writes about the importance of "world building" in successful transmedia properties. Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight Saga* (2005) is such an example of fortuitous world building. While not planned as such, the milieu created by Meyer in her books translates smoothly onto multiple, intertextual platforms, from books, to film, to licensed merchandise, on which the basic plot stretches slightly into other dimensions in each new format, while always referring back to the original content. In 2009, at the height of the series' popularity, "Twi-fans" could acquire their own *Twilight*-based identity by purchasing lead character Bella's prom dress, wearing *Twilight* perfume, or

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[61] According to Meyer, the first *Twilight* book came to her in a dream ("Official Stephenie Meyer"). As a result of that dream, Meyer received an advance of $750,000 for a three-book deal (Valby, 2008), which represents an enormous investment in an unknown author, and an unusual commitment on part of the publisher. But as of 2009, 40 million copies of books in the series had been sold—just in the United States (Memmott & Cadden, 2009).

driving romantic lead Edward Cullen's car (Volvo is the official brand of Edward
Cullen). Through the consumption of Bella-like material goods, readers can construct
their own Bella-like identities.

6.3   *Twilight's* **"Wild West" Fandom on the Web**

According to Butsch (2011), "public ownership positions the audience as citizens,
while commercial ownership positions them as consumers" (p. 154).

6.3.1 Independent fan sites.

Initially, independently created Twilight-related fan sites on the web positioned
participants as engaged citizen fans, ungoverned by rules for participation other than
those they created themselves. These fans created sites around whatever personal aspect
of *Twilight* attracted them to the series. Compared to December, 2009, when there were
371 Twilight-related fan sites listed on Stephenie Meyer's website, by April, 2012
("Twilight Fan Sites," n.d.) there were 374 fan sites—just in the English language. While
three more sites do not represent a significant increase over two years and five months,
what is significant is that this fan activity seems to be on-going, now that all books in the
series, and all but one movie, have been released (the final movie, *Breaking Dawn* Part II,
is scheduled for release in November, 2012 ("IMDb," n.d.). But a careful analysis of
these sites, conducted in April 2012 (details are in Appendix H), demonstrates that
despite the fact that the links to the site are still provided, many are inactive and others
have disappeared entirely. The first twenty were opened, and then each subsequent 10th
site (the 30th, 40th, 50th, etc., for a total of 55 sites). Of these 55 sites, the first seven
were "active," (and active means that the link opened), with posts made during 2012.
Two were "active," but it was not clear when the most recent activity occurred. One was

"active," but all the internal links in the site were broken. Another one was "active," but content was no longer related to *Twilight*. Seven were inactive since 2008, three inactive since 2009, five since 2010, and seven since 2011. Twenty-one had completely vanished, and one now had content in the Cyrillic alphabet. Details and sample sites are in figure 6.1 below.

User-Generated Twilight Fan Sites

Sample "active" sites
- A Twilight Life
- Be Bitten — The Twilight Series Boards
- CafeMom: Fans of Stephenie Meyer and her Twilight series
- Edward Cullen the One and Only

Sample "inactive" sites
- An Edward and Bella Fan
- Perpetual Twilight
- TwiMamas
- Eternal Love

Sample "vanished" sites
- You Are Exactly My Brand of Heroin
- Be My Obsession
- Twi-Hards
- Third Epiphany (text now in Cyrillic)

Figure 6.1. Examples of *Twilight* Fan Sites and Their Current Status

The fact that so many of the sites had vanished by 2012 indicates that the brand reader fans of *Twilight* have either migrated onto Hachette's official site, in which the corporate site dominates fan participation, or that *Twilight* fandom has simply decreased since the height of the series.

6.3.2 From independent sites to the official site: The Edward vs. Jacob Debate[62]

Prior to the establishment of Hachette's *Twilight Saga* site, lively debates in online reviews of *New Moon* (the second book in the series) on weRead and Amazon.com dating back to 2006 and 2007 showed signs of a developing schism in the *Twilight* fan base as Twifans allied themselves with one of the two romantic heroes of the series—Edward the vampire or Jacob the werewolf. Evidence of this division is shown in the table below:

Table 6.2: Evidence of the Emergence of "Team Edward" vs. "Team Jacob" at Amazon.com

Edward Fans	Jacob Fans
"Thank Goodness. Don't get me wrong, Jacob is great. But, I (and almost every girl who has read the series) really like Edward." ("R. Young," February 11, 2007)	"If u [*sic*] re-read New Moon and forget about edward [*sic*] and see the situation more clearly, I bet youd [*sic*] like Jacob a LITTLE better. Im [*sic*] a jacob [*sic*] fan and tell me im [*sic*] crazy or whatever i [*sic*] dont [*sic*] care but seriously..." ("Sherrie James," July 30, 2007)
"If Bella chooses Jacob, I'll send Edward my number." ("iLeana," June 6, 2007)	"Jacob is just as devoted to Bella as Edward and much nicer. . . Bella is way to [*sic*] crazy about Edward." ("R. Johnson," August 1, 2007)

Table from Martens (2010), p. 252.

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[62] The next portion draws from Martens (2010)

In 2009, online fan sites echoed the fan division around the two romantic leads encountered in collaborative reviewing sites, such as weRead and Amazon.com. Amateur sites by fans allied themselves with one romantic hero or another by naming the sites after the preferred hero, as seen in "Team Edward Cullen," "Obsessive Edward Cullen Disorder," "Edward vs. Jacob," or "Team Jacob." The fan sites and online reviews, all freely accessible on the web, documented what fans liked and revealed alternative markets. Shimpach describes fan activity as a "source of free, reliable, and motivated labor" (p. 352), and clearly all of this activity would have been simple for Hachette's staff to monitor. Stephenie Meyer also keeps a list of the fan sites on her official website, stepheniemeyer.com, which indicates that she monitors fan activity as well.

"Although nothing on Hachette's *Twilight Saga* website indicates when it was launched, The Internet Archive's waybackmachine tracks the site to September, 2007, when Hachette first posted a quiz called "Who should Bella choose?" ("Internet Archive," n.d.). When the *Twilight Saga* website was launched, the Jacob vs. Edward discourse was already present on Amazon.com as evidenced by users' comments (see table below). Arguably, Little, Brown created the *Twilight Saga* website in response to user-generated content on the web, and this 'Who should Bella choose' quiz addresses the Edward vs. Jacob discourse. The *Twilight Saga* website bills itself as 'The official online destination for all Twilight fans' (*Twilight Saga*, n.d.), and in 2009, it [had] 250,000 members (*Twilight Saga*, November 20, 2009, para. 2), which represents a lot of experts providing free consumer research" (Martens, 2010, p. 252–253). As of May 2012, the site had nearly doubled to 499,355 members; although as with the independent fan

sites above, many of which no longer exist, it would be difficult to determine how many members are active contributors.

By 2012, most fan activity related to *Twilight* now occurs on the official site, and Team Jacob or Edward discussions have been buried on the Amazon site. A search for such activity on Amazon.com reveals few user reviews, but instead, reveals evidence of how authors and publishers (other than Hachette) use the *Twilight* brand intertextually as their own currency for recognition. A search for "Twilight Team Edward" on Amazon.com retrieved a self-help book entitled *Where's My Edward: Seeking a forever romance* by Laura Gallier, published by Destiny Image Publishing, a book which is ironically about seeking a healthy romantic relationship (unlike the one featured in *Twilight*). Another derivative work that attempts to capitalize on *Twilight*'s popularity (and eagerness of fans to extend the *Twilight* experience beyond the life of the series) is: *Edward or Jacob? Quick Quizzes for Fans of the Twilight Saga (Quick Quizzes for BFFs)* (unauthored Scholastic, 2010).

On autonomous *Twilight* fan sites, participation is by earnest, dedicated fans of the series, and centers around book-related content. On the corporate-owned site, participation centers around commerce—from the publisher pushing products, to the publisher extracting labor from the consumers. Links are provided to sites that offer copies of the books for sale, or opportunities to pre-order movie tickets, or links to the *Breaking Dawn* concert series (all of these links are broken as of May 20, 2012, which points to the looming mortality of the site). While there is still an emphasis on products available for sale, the publisher still seeks to extract labor from the fans in the form of consumer feedback, peer-to-peer marketing, and content creation.

6.4 From Subculture to Mainstream: How Hachette Attracted Twi-Fans[63]

Dick Hebdige (1979) describes subcultures as being removed from the mainstream, and some of the independent *Twilight* fan sites point to fringe-level obsessions with characters from the books, such as "My Brand of Heroin" (which also refers to a quote from the book). But Hachette's "official" *Twilight Saga* site converted the subculture of *Twilight* fandom, which existed independently on the Internet, into a mass-market, mainstream, commodified digital corral of content.

Communication between like-minded individuals builds community on the site. Fans are united around their affective relationship both for the *Twilight* series (even if they belong to separate "teams"), and for the series' author, Stephenie Meyer. Since the site promises access to Meyer (even in the most limited of ways, such as what are in 2012 outdated Q&A sessions with the author that appear on the site), the "official" billing interpellates participants. The additional "team" areas of the site allow participants to distinguish themselves from the masses of *Twilight* fans by allowing them to align with, and build community (or in some cases, warring factions) around, their favorite characters. By participating, users gain what Morley (2006) calls "cultural citizenship" around their favorite series, within a community of users.

The corporate owners leave the ". . . front door . . . wide open for those fans willing to play within the confines of the industry-set rules, but that legitimation reifies the subcultural existence of those not playing in the proper sandbox [anti-fan sites] and/or with the proper tools . . ." (Busse & Gray in Nightingale, 2011, p. 438), and until recently, the rule-breakers, such as anti-fans who prefer to criticize Twilight on the anti-

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[63] Characteristics of the dedicated fan have been parodied since William Shatner's skit of Star Trek fans on Saturday Night Live in 1986 (Shatner, SNL, n.d.).

fan site, TwilightSucks.com, are relegated to the subculture, or the fringe. Now that the series is at an end, and the last movie release is looming, *The Twilight Saga*'s future is uncertain; and as we will see in the next chapter, evidence exists that the publisher's control is disappearing, and being replaced by resistance.

6.4.1 *Twilight*'s digital corral: Guidelines for membership and participation in the *Twilight Saga* community.

Hachette offers participants specific rules and guidelines for their participation on the *Twilight Saga* site. For example, one such guideline gives Hachette rights to material uploaded by users. Guideline number 2 from, paragraph 3 (*TwilightSaga*, "Guideline 2," 2012) alerts those users (who read the guidelines) that: " . . . by submitting content to this Site, you are deemed automatically to grant us the perpetual, worldwide right to use, reproduce, modify, adapt, publish, translate, distribute, perform and display such content (in whole or in part) in any and all media, and to license others to do so. You also grant us the right to include with any such use your username." (*TwilightSaga*, "Guideline 2," 2012). With this rule, participants grant Hachette the right to repurpose their user-generated content free-of-charge, as it wishes and the publisher may choose to exploit it or remove it at any time. This becomes important in Chapter 7, in the context of a site that closes.

Despite the restrictions on the site's use, it is unlikely that many fans read the guidelines, which are obscured at the bottom of the front page of the site. The next section of this chapter explores the types of activities currently available to Twi-fans on Hachette's site.

6.5   What is there to do on the Twilight Saga site now?

By 2012, with broken links and dated content, much of the *Twilight Saga* site is beginning to resemble a digital mausoleum of *Twilight* fandom. Table 6.3 below demonstrates what sorts of activities are available on the site:

Table 6.3: Activities for Participants on the Twilight Saga Site

Tab Name	Activity Under Tab
Invite	Allows participants to invite everyone in their email contact lists to join the *Twilight Saga* site.
My Page	This is a page for participants on which they can blog, participate in discussions, and upload content.
Members	Provides information about current membership. As of May 23rd, 2012, there were 499,355 members listed.
Books	Provides a list of the original four books in the Twilight series, as well as spin-off products, such as movie companion books, journals, and notebooks.
Stephenie	Has two tabs – a link to "in the media," and a link to Meyer's own author site. "Q&As" has question-and-answer sessions (participants posed questions, and *Twilight*-related figures provided answers).
Q&As	The outdated Q&As were either from 2009 or were undated, and included one with Stephenie Meyer, one with Catherine Hardwick (who directed the first book-related film), one with Jodelle Ferland (who played the character Bree in the third movie), and an undated Q&A with Stephenie Meyer about Stephenie's book *The Secret Life of Bree Tanner* (which refers to a book published in 2009).
Discussion	The link on the "discussion" page led to an error page stating "Our apologies this page was not found."
Media	Under "Media," there are 1,286,992 photos uploaded by users, the publisher, etc., 34,434 videos (many of which have nothing to do with Twilight), music, audio books, and a link to "Asset Builder" which is "Coming Soon!").
Groups	The most vibrant tab on the site (description follows below)
Blogs	Under "Blogs," there are 33,092 total blog posts.
Links	Connects to "About," which is Hachette's privacy policy, and "Links," a newsletter which link is no longer active.

Previously, publishers would buy mailing lists of contacts to whom they could send publicity material. These contacts included reviewers, librarians, and others who promote books to young people. This process was expensive, because in addition to purchasing this list of contacts, material had to be prepared and then mailed. New efforts, enabled by technology, are far more cost-effective. Mailing lists can easily be constructed as they are on the *Twilight* site under the "invite" tab. By encouraging participants to "invite" everyone in their mailing list, this tab represents a way to quickly and inexpensively build an email database of potential *Twilight* fans, to whom the publisher can send future publicity emails.

Under the "My Page" tab, members can create their own user profiles within the site. The "Members" tab provides information about current membership. As of May 23rd, 2012, there were 499,355 members. (As of August 12th, 2012, there were 499,656 members, so membership is still growing, albeit slowly.) "Books" provides a list of the original books in the series as well as spin-off products. "Stephenie" connects to author-related information. The Q&A tab has not received any new material since 2009. Under the "Discussion" tab, the page had been disabled. Under "Media," there were over one million items uploaded by users, which represents an enormous amount of user-generated content for the publisher to sort through, and it would be useful to find out if Hachette does produce derivative products based on such user-generated content. "Blogs" has over 33,000 posts contributed by users, "Links" connects to Hachette's privacy policy, and to "Links"—a newsletter that is no longer active.

In contrast to the activities above, many of which have been discontinued by 2012, the "Groups" tab connects to the most vibrant online community of the site. The

primary groups, "Official Team Edward," "Official Team Jacob," and "Official Team Bella," continue to thrive, and it is here that there is strongest evidence of users' participation. Additional groups, such as "*Twilight* Mums," on which mothers discuss topics relevant to mothers (and not necessarily to *Twilight*, such as when to give your teens the sex talk), also remain active. As of April 24th, 2012, there were 20,111 members of the "Official Team Edward," and the most recent activity had taken place two days earlier, on April 22nd, 2012 at 6:00 PM.

Under the "Groups" tab, in defiance of the rules governing use of the site, users post insults in language that blatantly disregards the rules governing use of the site, and belittle members of other teams. Such insults are interspersed with more serious discussions, such as one on what happened to *Midnight Sun*.[64] "Official Team Jacob" has 9,507 members, and under this tab, the "Edward" vs. "Jacob" discussion continues into 2012. But above the contentious users' posts, "The Team Edward/Team Jacob Treaty" is posted—perhaps an attempt by the site owners to generate a peaceful (and more productive) discourse between the opposing fan factions: "Team Edward or Team Jacob should not make any rude, insulting, or threatening comments to one another. Team Edward or Team Jacob members should not post in each other's forum unless they have something positive to say" (Twilight Saga, "Official Team Jacob," 2012). Less interesting or contentious perhaps is the "Official Team Bella" site, which has 7,514 members. A recent post is a *dub step* remix from a song by Linkin Park called "Numb," which although it follows a current musical trend, and may be an attempt to convey the participant's cultural citizenship, does not have anything specifically to do with *Twilight*.

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[64] *Midnight Sun* is Meyer's unfinished, hacked work, which was a *Twilight* story told from Edward's perspective.

This also hints at a lack of monitoring on part of the site owners. Fan fiction appears on each of the "official" team sites.

6.6   Prosumer Fans

As Andrejevic (2007) writes, the idea of "mass" culture, which used to be top-down, is now partially in the hands of more people as co-creators. Thanks to participatory media, this should arguably lead to a positive experience on the part of consumers, which in turn, encourages them to return to the site to participate more; but it is not clear if fans are aware of how their participation is being used, or perhaps more importantly, whether they care that their content is being used free-of-charge for the corporations' benefit. The entertainment value perceived by the consumer in participating is obviously worth the exchange of labor.

As "prosumers" (Toffler, 1983), participating site members contribute to creative cultural production by: 1) providing a rich supply of user-generated content, from fan-fiction, to music, to pictures and videos; 2) by acting as peer-to-peer marketers (supplying email addresses of friends, and writing favorable comments within the site); and 3) by providing free consumer research for the publisher. In addition to collecting evidence of the participants' tastes and interest, the publisher is also able to solicit consumer feedback directly from its consumer base, from posting ideas for new *Twilight* products to requesting design input. By polling the audience, the publisher gets feedback directly from its fan consumers—those most likely to buy the products. This helps contribute to the prosumer model, in which the intended audience for future products gives feedback about such products—which if all works as intended, it will later buy.

One such example appears below, in which Hachette solicits feedback on a cover design of a forthcoming *Twilight* graphic novel.
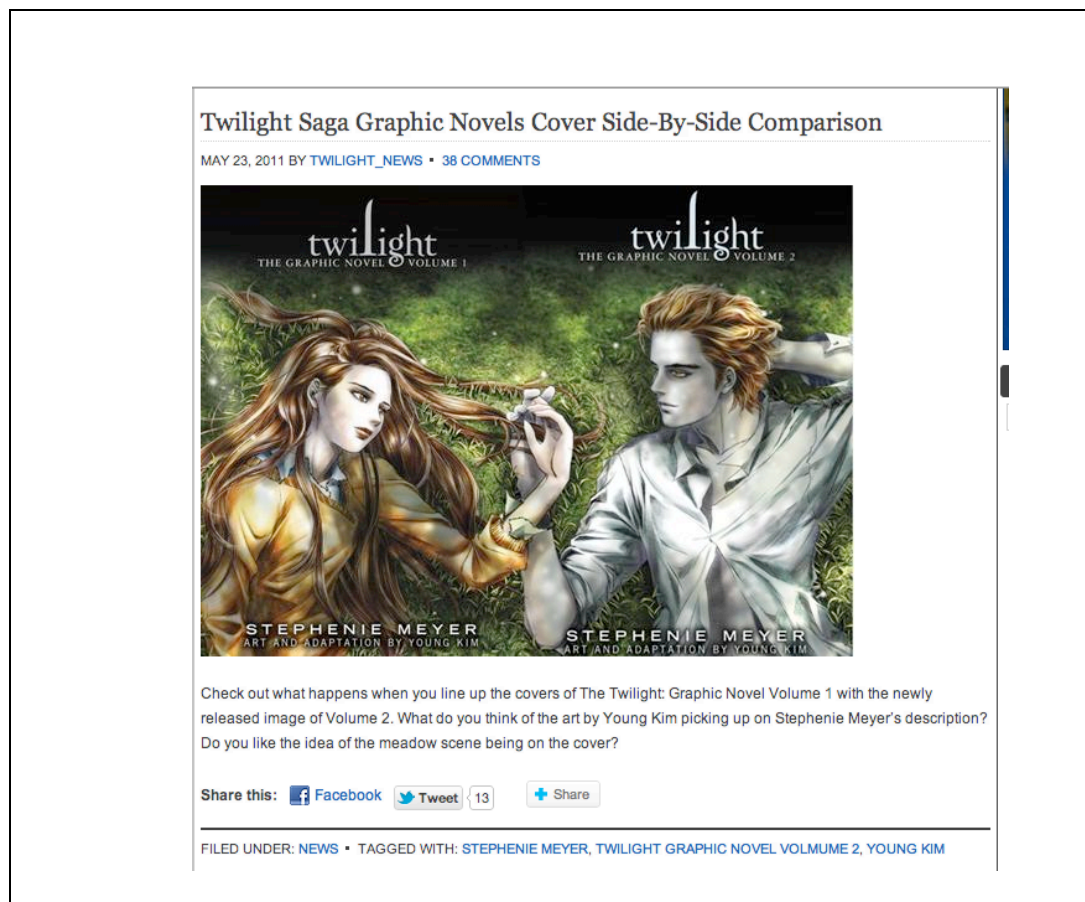
Figure 6.2. Soliciting Consumer Feedback on the *Twilight Saga* site

In the following example from April 2012, on the main page of the site which users see as they log in, the publisher asks the audience directly: "Do you like the idea of the meadow scene being on the cover?" Participants' answers are presented in Table 6.4:

Table 6.4: Free Consumer Feedback on the *Twilight Saga* site

"smitten_by_twilight": May 23, 2011 at 1:11 pm	*"Gina"* : May 24, 2011 at 10:52 am	*"Halek"*: May 23, 2011 at 1:31 pm
Beautiful art, best Edward I've seen yet IMHO.	Ohh it's gorgeous! And I agree-I would love to see it as a poster 😃	Looks awesome, and I hope that the image is made available as a poster. Young Kim has done a terrific job of adapting the book and illustrating the Guide with her style that has the sleekness of the Asian style but avoids excesses of exaggeration. It should endure as canonical imagery of the Twilight series. The meadow scene is the centerpiece of Stephenie Meyer's lasting contribution to the romance, supernatural, and vampire genres. I don't literally believe in the supernatural, but if I did I'd say that her dream of the meadow is of genuine vampiric inspiration. (I came to Twilight as longtime fan of the vampire genre with a lot skepticism, but I was won over by the first movie and the books.)

(Retrieved from Twilight Saga, "Forum," 4/29/12)

One reader, "Halek," provides commercial feedback, saying that she would love to see what she calls "the canonical imagery" of this illustration as a poster, which could indicate that she would purchase a poster if it were available. Since her comment is posted in public, other community members with similar taste and passion for *Twilight* might feel the same, and this could encourage the publisher to produce such a poster for sale. In addition, by posting the question on the front page of the site, all users see this as

they log in to the site. So in addition to the publisher being able to solicit feedback, the survey also serves as marketing for the forthcoming graphic novel. A final benefit of this survey, and its visible results directly from the intended market, is that when the publisher's sales staff brings sample material to the B&N buyer, the sales person can use this feedback to demonstrate that an audience already exists for this product.

6.7 "Here We Are Now, Entertain Us"[65]: Resistant behavior on *Twilight Saga*

With its EULAs, the publisher produces an obedient and useful audience (i.e., an obedient audience is one that observes the rules and guidelines of the site, and a useful audience is one that participates in a way that could be economically useful to the publisher). This is expected in exchange for its investment in maintaining the site. But by 2012, this once-vibrant site has slipped into a state of neglect, and the indications of participants' resistance arise, as the appearance of crowd-like behavior unfit for a public emerge. Once conceived as an online digital corral channeling *Twilight*-related content freely available on the web into a corporate site, by 2012, when all four books in the series have been published and four out of five related films have been released, the site is not as commercially valuable to the publisher as it was in 2009. Since the books in the series have all been published, and almost every spin-off imaginable has already been released, one would think that the publisher has to move on to promote other books on its list (and continue to look for the next big book that will replace the enormous hole left by *Twilight)*.

Yet neither fans nor publisher are prepared to relinquish it, and each have their own separate reasons for wanting to keep the space alive: the publisher seeks financial

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[65] "Smells Like Teen Spirit" by Nirvana (1991). Lyrics by Kurt Cobain, Krist Novoselic, and Dave Grohl.

gain through a perpetually renewable audience, a source of consumer feedback, community-built peer-to-peer reviewing, and possible ideas for other derivative works on a popular backlist title, while the fans seek a space in which they can continue their community-based and ongoing role-playing games, writing fan fiction, and in some cases, continued discrediting and belittling of one another.

As a consequence of the series' success, and because every year there is always a new potential *Twilight* readership, the publisher is forced to uphold the site, even as fans disregard the publisher's attempt to restrain them (via user guidelines), and abuse the site by breaking its rules. Clearly the site has gotten beyond the publisher's control, or beyond what the publisher wants to continue to invest in it.

Publisher input and engagement with fans is not nearly what it was in 2009, at the height of book publication and movie release (*Twilight* 2008; *New Moon* 2009; *Eclipse* 2010; *Breaking Dawn* (Part 1) 2011; *Breaking Dawn* (Part 2) 2012, dates retrieved July 24, 2012 from http://www.imdb.com/), and most fan content is contributed by fans writing fan fiction, participating in role-playing games, and engaging in group discussions. With less publisher supervision, what started as a digital corral aimed at controlling online *Twilight*-related activity has disintegrated into a Wild West of "rowdy" (Arnold, 1882) activity that is beyond the publisher's control. While *Twilight* remains a bestselling title (see table below), and the final movie will be released at the end of 2012, the publisher has turned its attention elsewhere.

Table 6.5: Evidence of The *Twilight* series' Continued Strong Sales

Title	Hardcover	Trade Paper	Mass Market	Kindle (Paid)
Twilight (2005)	#5,291 all books; #40 in Teen Horror	#34,183 of all books; (no other categories)	#3,718 of all books, #2 in "Spine Chilling Horror"	#2 in Kindle Store; #2 in "Teens Horror"
New Moon (2006)	#15,390 of all books; #100 of "Teen Horror"	#8,499 of all books; #58 of "Teen Horror"	#7,179 of all books; #4 in "Spine Chilling Horror"	#873 in Kindle Store, #5 in "Teens Horror"
Eclipse (2007)	#8,513 of all books; #59 in "Teens Horror"	#4,117 in Books; #37 in "Teens Horror"	#44,178 in books; #78 "Spine Chilling Horror"	#881 in Kindle Store; #6 in "Teens Horror"
Breaking Dawn (2008)	#2,688 of all books; #26 in "Teens Horror"	#26,938 of all books (no other categories)	#2,442 of all books, #22 in "Teens Horror"	#484 in Kindle Store; #1 in "Teens Horror"

Rankings from Amazon.com, Retrieved 7/24/12 from http://www.amazon.com/

Based on the frustrated tone of revised rules posted on the site, it is evident that

the publisher has been forced into a position of moral stewardship on the site. One can

imagine a few junior staff members exhausted from babysitting the online activity there.

The fear of anarchy on the site forces the publisher to maintain enough staff presence, but

does not allow for as much engagement as it did at the site's inception. This is

demonstrated by decreased publisher activity under the site's tabs, and by evidence of a

loss of control. In addressing rule breakers (or potential rule breakers), the publisher's

moderators (or "Mods") are parental in tone, as if they are scolding misbehaving

children. The paratextual elements of the rules include bold, underlined text, and use of

all uppercase letters, which reinforce the stern tone of the first rule, which is delivered as

a shout:

> "The fighting, drama, threads that intentionally or unintentionally create
> conflict MUST STOP. The initial boards were removed because **fans**

wouldn't play nice. Our rules are rules that WILL BE ENFORCED. You risk temp to perm ban if you cannot adhere to them, no matter WHAT the circ***tance. No more warnings. We suggest you read the rules before posting blogs, comments, posts, replies, pix, etc."
(http://thetwilightsaga.com/page/site-rules, 4/24/12)

And the sixth rule:

"TheTwilightSaga.com was designed to be a home all things Twilight! Discussions and groups related to Twilight or closely related subjects are strongly encouraged. And while we appreciate that you are also fans of other things (like the many and varied works of Aaron Spelling? Seriously?) to keep the site focused and manageable groups not related in some reasonable way to the Twilight Saga will be closed." (http://thetwilightsaga.com/page/site-rules, 4/24/12)

And it is also clear that the level of supervision that would be required—despite the rules—is insufficient. In response to fans breaking rules by posting sexual content, a desperate request under "moderator announcements" states:

Hi all –

Just a quick note about role play characters and profiles:

Listing yours or your characters' sexual status is not allowed on this site. This means listing or mentioning whether or not you or your character is a virgin, how far you've gone, etc. This is considered sexual content, not to mention that it's not safe to do.

If you have this information on your profile, please remove it. If you've been posting this information in your character info on your role plays, please go through your posts and delete it. We are issuing warnings and bans for this.

There is no reason for you to mention anything about being a virgin unless you're planning on sexual role play, which is also not allowed, and is grounds for a permanent ban.

Thanks-
Mods

(*Twilight Saga*, "Moderator," 12/2/10).

Unfortunately for the Mods, as soon as they are able to contain misbehavior in one section of the site, it crops up elsewhere. The participants on the *Twilight Saga* site are not interested in being a refined public. Their behavior is crowd-like: they seek entertainment, not enlightenment. Throughout the site (especially in the Edward and Jacob groups) there is plenty of nastiness in between the nicer comments, as evidenced on the screen shot below (taken 4/29/12):

Figure 6.3. Excorporation (Fiske, 1989) on the *Twilight Saga* site (Twilight Saga, "Official Team Edward," 4/15/12)

Despite the publisher's best efforts to establish the guidelines for use, as soon as the publisher turns its figurative back on the site, evidence of users' subversive behavior emerges. As such, the remaining activity on the fan site tends to be user-led, and it echoes the material that existed freely on the web prior to the construction of Hachette's proprietary site. The French social theorist Gabriel Tarde's (1969) distinctions between "publics" and "crowds" was described in Chapter 2. Butsch (2011) describes a difference in demographics between "publics" and "crowds," arguing that the ". . .latter were invariably described as women, children, inferior races, and subordinate classes, while higher-class, northern and western European men were considered of strong enough character to be good citizens" (Butsch, in Nightingale, p. 153). While they certainly are not "ill-informed" because of their status as expert fans, by the late stage of the *Twilight Saga* site, participation on the *Twilight Saga* site becomes a convergence of publics and crowds. Building on Fiske, teenage excorporation (in the case of *Twilight Saga*, primarily females) happens as users reappropriate portions of the site, creating communities of transgressive interactions that extend beyond the EULAs.

With an emphasis on commodity books that have their own related websites, the need of the publisher to use traditional marketing techniques is reduced. As described in Chapter 4, publishers rely more on authors' efforts to market themselves and on teens as peer-to-peer reviewers, all on social media and publishers' websites. Already in 2009, at the American Library Association conference, there was not a single *Twilight* product on display in the Little, Brown booth. Little, Brown seemed focused on promoting its other forthcoming products. This could indicate, perhaps, that thanks to the associated site, the *Twilight* series is at the point where the participatory "prosumers" are doing all the work.

6.7.1 Beyond the *Twilight* Corral

A combination of events has occurred. While *Twilight* remains a strong seller, the books have all been published, and all but the last film has been released. Other transmedia properties, such as *The Hunger Games,* have replaced *Twilight's* status on bestseller lists as "The Most Popular" teen property. Hachette's *Twilight Saga* site has been successful in establishing itself as the official *Twilight Saga* site, decreasing independent fan activity on the web. While the independent *Twilight* fan activity has faded, the anti-fan site, *TwilightSucks.com,* remains active, but has expanded into a Tumblr presence. The *Twilight Sucks* Facebook presence is also alive and well with over 143,000 "likes" as of 4/29/12, and postings from April 2012.

As the marketer at this study's large publisher (Chapter 4) noted, not only are books changing with technology, but the platforms for this activity are ever-evolving. Publishers' websites are being replaced by book-related social media sites, currently such as Facebook and Tumbler, as social media represents a "push" at the consumer, rather than forcing the consumer to "pull" information from a site. Despite the fact that the *Twilight Saga* site has grown beyond the publisher's control, there is no evidence so far that Hachette plans to cancel it.

6.8 Summary and Conclusions

Chapter 6 has examined how publishers' interactive book-based sites encourage teens to contribute their own book-related content. Through the lens of the *Twilight Saga* site, this chapter demonstrates how publishers expanded their use of user-generated fan content within a proprietary, "official" site designed for fans of the *Twilight* series. This site enabled a direct communication between the publisher and its brand readers, and in

doing so, it commodified both the books and their consumers. Before Hachette's site existed, freely created online fan content represented a "Wild West" of unregulated activity, from fan sites, to anti-fan sites, to fan fiction sites. In contrast, Hachette's official site established a controlled, "digital corral" (Andrejevic, 2007) of fan activity, which could be moderated—and exploited—by Hachette, as a source of peer-to-peer marketing, consumer feedback, and user-generated content for future derivative products. Of course this site was intended for those fans who behaved in appropriate ways, a "public" seeking information about a series, and served as contributors to such series, rather than for any unruly crowds not willing to abide by the site's rules and regulations. As books in the *Twilight* series have gone from being blockbuster frontlist titles, to backlist staples, the publisher's attentions have moved on to promoting new books, Hachette's interest in this series has waned, and subsequently there has been increased evidence of fans' transgressive behavior on the site. While the publisher's moderators have made desperate, pleading attempts to encourage users to comply with the site's rules and regulations, clearly the enforcement of these has become impossible, and the previously "public" atmosphere within the proprietary digital corral is slowly slipping back to an online Wild West of "crowd"-like activity.

The next chapter will examine how publishers expand their exploitation of their reading consumers beyond peer-to-peer marketing as on *Random Buzzers*, beyond information gathering as in the *Twilight Saga* site, and asks them to contribute as co-authors, as is the case with *The Amanda Project*, which is a multiplatform book series integrated with a participatory website for teenage girls.

CHAPTER 7: Reading *The Amanda Project*—a Lifecycle of a Pioneering

Multiplatform Book (2009–2012)

Introduction

Together, the case studies of Chapters 5, 6, and 7 demonstrate a progression of

how publishers are using technology to engage readers in book-related activities on

publisher-owned sites. Chapter 5 focused on the *Random Buzzers* site, and how readers

became critics and peer-to-peer marketers of Random House titles. Chapter 6 used the

lens of Hachette's *Twilight Saga* site to demonstrate the process of fandom. By

channeling fan content into its own proprietary site, Hachette is able to co-opt such user-

generated content for its own marketing and creative purposes. This chapter builds upon

the models for participation established in Chapters 5 and 6 to show how economic

frameworks converge with cultural frameworks. It uses a case study of *The Amanda*

Project, in which publishers, initially Fourth Story Media and subsequently also

HarperCollins, create a multiplatform book series. This chapter explores *The Amanda*

Project, which consists of a traditional book series (printed paper pages encased in a

cover) and an integrated, interactive website which extends the narrative into a virtual

epitext. Also covered herein are findings about what happens to the reading experience as

books move into digital formats.

The Amanda Project is an example of a pioneering multiplatform book series for

girls, one in which publishers attempt to create a top-down, proprietary product which

merges books with technology and relies on user-generated content to create a literary

product for young people—and in doing so, redefines traditional notions of books and of

authorship, blurring lines between author-reader, and producer-consumer. This new

model, an extension of the form analyzed in the previous case studies in Chapters 5 and 6, connects to the political economy of the publishing industry, which favors literary cultural products which will ideally appeal to the largest possible number of readers in order to maximize sales, while simultaneously saving money such as author royalties for the cultural production of books for young readers. But as we will see in this chapter, while Fourth Story Media and HarperCollins' efforts are innovative and interesting, in the end, this series was not successful, and the reasons for this will be explored herein.

Compared to the old configuration of the field of children's publishing, from the beginning of the 20th century until 2007, in which young adult books were selected for teen readers by adult reading experts including editors and librarians, studies of the *Random Buzzers* website and the *Twilight Saga* website from 2009 to 2012 revealed a new model of selection. On these sites, a disintermediated, "bottom-up," peer-to-peer mechanism of determining distinction had been established directly between readers and the publisher. Traditional dissemination methods of getting books into the hands of young adults included librarians as key intermediaries between publishers and teens, serving as guardians of culture and a filter of taste; but these new online, participatory sites represent a disintermediated space, in which publishers can communicate directly with young adult reading consumers, and in which teens' labor around books—especially their work as reviewers and as peer-to-peer recommenders of books—establish new methods for determining distinction in the field of young adult literature.

Previously, librarians and publishers shaped the field of children's literature, and it is important to understand the collaborative relationship between librarians and publishers to understand how the field has evolved. *The Amanda Project* attempts to

capitalize on teens' autonomous preferences by publishing a series that directly incorporates their writing by soliciting their consumer feedback, their user-generated content, and their peer-to-peer reviewing and marketing.

Methods used to gather data in this section include: interviews with two assigned readers of *The Amanda Project*, a focus group interview of ten teenagers, online analysis of *The Amanda Project* website, document analysis of the books, use of supporting literature from the trade, web analytics using Alexa.com, use of Amazon.com's bestseller ranking system, and analysis of laws protecting children online, especially the Children's Online Protection Act of 1998 which governs use of sites such as *The Amanda Project*.

7.1 Analog Precursors to Multiplatform Books

Transmedia products, which include books such as *Harry Potter* or *The Twilight Saga*, exist simultaneously on multiple media platforms as books, as films, and as licensed merchandise, all of which can be enjoyed independently of the others. And like transmedia products, multiplatform books also exist on multiple media platforms. But in contrast to transmedia products, in multiplatform books, technology integrates content across interrelated platforms (examples of which might include printed books, various manifestations of content on the Internet such as interactive websites, blogs, YouTube videos, and also collector cards, games, derivative consumer products and related shopping sites), and require a reader to participate with the content simultaneously via more than one such platform in order to derive maximum meaning from the text.

Multiplatform books have emerged from a tradition of interaction in a particular type of books for young readers. Eliza Dresang's "Radical Change Theory" "identifies three technology-influenced digital age principles or characteristics that can be used to

examine, explain, and predict some changes in books and youth reading behavior: Interactivity, connectivity, accesss" (Dresang & Kotrla, 2009, p. 94). Dresang has argued that this applies not only to digital books, but rather that the synergy between reader and text must create something out of their interaction. Following this argument, there are certain print-based or "analog" books which implore the reader to interact with the text. Dresang would label those books "digital age books" whereas others, such as Roderick McGillis (1996), might label them post-modern books; and because of their required interactivity, they could be considered precursors to multiplatform books. Such books combine a "highly interactive reading experience with vivid visual appeal, intertextuality, and multiple layers of meaning" (Dresang & Kotrla, 2009, p. 93). According to Dresang & Kotrla (2009), twisted fairy tales, such as those popular in the 1990s, fit in this category of "digital age books." One such book is John Scieszka and Lane Smith's *The Stinky Cheeseman and Other Fairly Stupid Tales* (1992)*,* which puts a spin on the traditional tale of the Gingerbread Man. Instead of a delicious cookie running from various would-be captors, a far cheesier and less-appetizing version escapes the hands of his creators.

Print-based "digital age books," such as twisted fairytales, refer intertextually to other works that came before—readers must be familiar with the original story in order to understand the humor and plot twists—and always have an interactive element in which the reader is expected to respond to the printed book in words or actions, or in the case of digital integrations of the books, in the readers' own continuation stories in online formats from fan fiction to websites to wikis and increasingly across social media sites. In the case of the *Stinky Cheeseman*, paratextual elements from the title page, to the table

of contents, to the ISBN number, become book characters that address the reader directly. Text is super-sized, inverted, and otherwise playfully designed in a way that demands a non-linear reading, which in turn implores the reader to interact (generally by shouting at the characters and their silly behavior).

Other print precursors to multiplatform books include: Bantam's "*Choose Your Own Adventure*" stories by Edward Packard (Packard, "Biographical Note," n.d.) which were popular in the 1980s and 1990s, and which allowed readers to choose a particular path for the hero or heroine, as well as derivative products by publishers from Disney to SeaStar Books, all of which give the reader agency and provide interaction with the story.

Authors and publishers have been able to create a plethora of new avenues for reader interaction in the digital realm. Published in 2006 by Running Press, *Cathy's Book: If Found Call (650) 266-8233* had phone numbers and websites which extended the book into epitextual environments on which readers could interact with the story at different points in the text. Scholastic's *39 Clues* series (Amazon.com, n.d), launched in 2008, uses collectors' cards, an interactive website, games and contests to expand upon print-based stories. Because this series is for children between the ages of 8 and 12 years old, laws such as the Child Online Privacy Protection Act (which will be described later) apply, and the amount of interaction is limited. *The Amanda Project,* for children aged 13 and up, allows new levels of interaction. Reading *Amanda* requires the types of multiliteracies described in the next section.

7.1.1 Reading in digital formats.

As technology changes books, reading changes, too. A novel must no longer be strictly defined as pages of text bound in a casing with a decorative cover and/or jacket,

and deriving meaning from text which no longer requires just "literacy," but instead, it requires multiliteracies. Ruth Sylvester and Wendy-lou Greenidge (2009) define four such multiliteracies including: 1) "technological literacy," or the skills needed to use a computer; 2) "visual literacy," or the ability to decode and comprehend "icons on the tool bar, navigating the Web, and encoding images in multimedia projects" (p. 284); 3) "Media literacy," the ability to "access, evaluate, and create messages in written and oral language, graphics and moving images, and audio and music"; and finally, 4) "information literacy," the ability "to find, evaluate, analyze, and synthesize information" (p. 284). All of these literacies combined have added to the skill set that was required to read traditional texts in order to be able to read in digital formats. In addition, what Dawnene Hassett and Jen Scott Curwood (2009) define as "multimodal" aspects of texts—the visual and interactive elements of texts—represent a non-traditional, *non-linear* form of reading. In such works, "cross-referencing elements, evocative graphics and images…extend, and often replace, the printed word as the primary carrier of meaning" (p. 271), and it is no longer sufficient to rely on text alone. "…Multimodal texts take on dynamically interactive elements, as readers (not authors) choose where to look and how to engage with certain aspects of the text" (Hassett & Curwood, 2009, p. 271). *The Amanda Project* is one such multimodal text, and in addition to reading print-based texts, in order to derive maximum meaning from such texts readers must go online and participate in the website, which in turn requires the types of multiliteracies described in this section.

7.2 Origins of The Amanda Project

Books such as the *Amanda Project* also have a social element, as it is now possible to engage with other readers of the same text via social media including websites, blogs, YouTube videos, and Facebook pages, blurring fiction with reality and leisure with labor. Reading multiplatform books and certain digital formats requires more work than simply opening a book; and as we will see in this chapter, the readers of this study had some interesting responses to leisure reading of such multimodal texts.

7.2.1 Constructing *Amanda.*

The first book in what was originally intended as an eight book series, *The Amanda Project: invisible i* [sic], was published in 2009 by HarperTeen. It was, according to the author credit on the cover, written by Stella Lennon, or according to the author's credit on the title page, by Melissa Kantor, who writes to teens as the series' author on *The Amanda Project* site. Yet despite two "author" names, its copyright is in the name of the publisher, Fourth Story Media. This means that the book is a work-for-hire, in which the author is paid a flat fee for writing the book, and the publisher controls all rights and book-related income with no additional money due to the author. This follows the 21st-century model of series production established by the Stratemeyer Syndicate, an early book packager. Stratemeyer's famous *Bobbsey Twins*, *Hardy Boys*, and *Nancy Drew* series were mass-produced books that followed a basic plot recipe, and were written by a stable of work-for-hire writers, all of whom published under a series-specific pseudonym (Laura Lee Hope in the case of the *Bobbsey Twins*, Franklin W. Dixon in the case of the *Hardy Boys*, and Carolyn Keane in the case of *Nancy Drew*[66]).

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[66] Rehak, Melanie. *Girl Sleuth: Nancy Drew and the Women Who Created Her.*

The Amanda Project adds a twist to this traditional model of creative production, as it uses work-for-hire authors and adds the element of users' contributed content in its books (see Appendix I). If this were to become a successful model for a series—in which the first book was written by a work-for-hire author, and subsequent books in the series were written by user-generated content and the publisher's editorial staff—it would establish a new model of literary production. This collective authorship is an expansion of what Williams (1977) called a "trans-individual" (p. 195) effort. Authorship becomes a collective effort between a work-for-hire author, publisher, and "prosumer"-readers. As stated in Chapter 2, Foucault (1977) writes that modern definitions of authorship are about copyright, ownership, and the law, and he asks whether we have arrived at the point where "discourse would circulate without any need for an author" (p. 138). A collaborative work, such as *The Amanda Project,* has potential to fall into this category, because its premise was to create a series using work-for-hire authors combined with virtually anonymous user-generated content.

As a book series integrated with a website, *The Amanda Project* extends the reading experience beyond the books themselves. While the books can be read independently of the website, the site expands upon content in the book, adding details about characters—meant to originate from both the publisher and the reader—and adds a participatory element on which readers can develop their own storylines, which, according to the website,[67] might be incorporated into future books in the series[68]:

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[67] While the site does not otherwise make it clear who is running it, contact information provided on the website indicates that the site is run by Fourth Story Media, not HarperCollins:
The Amanda Project, 115 South Street, 4F, New York, NY 10038, 212-513-0359
mailto:contact@theamandaproject.com.

[68] A prior model for such participation existed in comic creation, which is a topic for future research.

"Amanda's story will be published as an eight-book series—and each book will include writing from readers like you" (*Amanda*, "Tell Me More," 2012). The website echoes some of the book design, with a photograph on the home page that features a girl with her face obscured. In 2009, a *YouTube* video on the site with female voiceovers interpellated prospective readers, telling them to read the books, learn more about the characters on the website, and even write a story, which if it were good enough, would be published. By 2012, the video appeared on the site, on Amazon.com (Amazon.com, "Amanda Video," n.d.), and was also available on a smartphone by scanning the Quick Response code (QR code) on the cover of the books. By participating on the site, teens socialize with other readers of the series, and share as community members in *The Amanda Project*. According to the website in 2009, readers could contribute their own stories, plotlines, and artwork, which HarperCollins would then incorporate into future books in the series. Unlike the analog precursors to multiplatform books, or other books which incorporated technology, such as *Cathy's Book* (described earlier), *The Amanda Project* represents the first instance in which readers are actually able to influence the outcome of future books in a series for a widespread audience.

7.2.2 COPPA: *Amanda* and the law

One of the problems with earlier multiplatform book series such as *The 39 Clues* (launched in 2008), which is targeted at children between the ages of 8 and 12, is that children's online participation is restricted by laws such as the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act of 1998 (COPPA), which limits interactivity between children and a site's owners. COPPA defines a "child" as "an individual under the age of 13" (FTC, "COPPA," 1998), and sites that seek to have children under 13 participate on a website

must first obtain parental consent. It seems that the creators of the website were not

initially aware of this law, as in a 2008 *Publishers Weekly* interview, Lisa Holten, the

founder of Fourth Story Media, describes *The Amanda Project* as " an interactive,

collaborative fictional mystery series for girls aged 12[69] to 14" (Andriani, "Lisa Holton,"

2008). But as the project was developed, it seems that the site owners became aware of,

and decided to comply with, COPPA. Subsequently, the site's privacy policy (which is

copyrighted 2010), reads as follows:

> "If a user under the age of 13 attempts to register, the account will automatically
> be flagged as a pending and limited membership account and we will inform the
> child that parental consent is required to activate a full membership account.
> Depending on the level of activity the child wishes to obtain, a parent's consent is
> required by accepting our "Notice to Parents" e-mail. A more detailed description
> of the level of activities is presented in the "Notice to Parents" e-mail that parents
> receive from us. Until this level of verifiable parental consent is obtained, the
> child will only have access to certain features of the site and have limited access
> to TAP"
>
> <div align="right">(The Amanda Project, "Privacy," 2010)</div>

7.2.3 Branding *Amanda*.

As we saw in Chapter 6 in the case study of the *Twilight Saga* site, *Twilight*

became popularized first by reader fans, who were responsible for the brand's success as

they built its popularity from the bottom up and expressed the desire for related products

in the marketplace, which the publisher then created or licensed in order to fill consumer

demand. With *The Amanda Project*, Fourth Story and HarperCollins attempted the

opposite—to establish a brand around a book series before it had attracted a dedicated fan

base, by getting users to participate in the series via the related website. In 2012, such

participation included contributing (and commenting on) stories, posting clues about

Amanda's disappearance, assuming identities as her friends or classmates, answering the

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[69] Emphasis is mine.

post of the week, uploading content to the "Zine," participating on the debate threads, taking quizzes, and playing games. Compared to the *Twilight Saga* site, which demonstrates the level of participation by posting the number of group members next to each group, there is no evidence of how many members there are on *The Amanda Project* site (this is discussed in more detail later in this chapter).

The Twilight Saga was a fortuitously flexible transmedia product, as described in Chapter 6. But the *Amanda Project* is intentionally flexible (in order for users to be able to contribute and alter the plot. The books are about three previously unacquainted ninth graders who become united in their quest to find their mutual friend Amanda, who has mysteriously disappeared. Amanda leaves clues for the teens all over their homes and school, and together with help from the online Amanda-reading community, they have to piece together the clues in order to find her. Each of the first three stories is told from the perspective of one of these friends, the fourth from an additional friend who knew Amanda in childhood. Amanda is a chameleon—one minute dressing like Audrey Hepburn, the next like a hippie. As we saw in Chapter 6, Stephenie Meyer chose to keep her descriptions of Bella vague, so "that the reader could more easily step into her shoes" (Meyer, "What Does Bella Look Like," n.d.), but descriptions of Amanda are frequent and precisely rendered—in ever-changing ways. In this way, as with Bella, there is an Amanda identity for every reader.

In the case of *Twilight*, popularity of the series led to a successful licensing program, including clothing which could be purchased at the store Hot Topic. Although *Amanda* never became especially popular, as evidenced by the Alexa analysis discussed later in this chapter, Fourth Story and HarperCollins attempted to instill a similar

commercial component to the site, perhaps as a shortcut to branding. In 2009, a link in the *The Amanda Project* site allowed members to shop at a store so that they could dress like Amanda. Shopping connects to the idea of consumption as a feminine activity, particularly in the realm of shopping for fashion (Seiter 1995; Fiske 1989; McRobbie 1982). Seiter (1995) has written about connections between marketing toys and labor, and how girls' toys historically have been created around essentialist views on women's work, from a 1928 advertisement for a toy kitchen, to 1950s toys related to cooking, childcare, and shopping (shopping baskets). By the 1980s, Seiter found that toys for girls "were miniatures of [products] their mothers were actually using, inculcating brand loyalty in household purchasing at an early age" (Seiter, 1995, p. 76), and throughout Seiter's work, she demonstrates connections between gender and shopping.

Shopping on *The Amanda Project* site is closely related to branding, because shopping activities result in users providing consumer research and promotional opportunities for the associated retailers. In 2009, "Users can enter the 'Amanda brand,' by participating in a competition to design an outfit for Amanda by using new clothing from a 'vintage-inspired' online store called ModCloth, almost like dressing a virtual paper doll" (Martens, 2011, p. 13). By 2012, the partnership with ModCloth seems to have vanished. Now purchases are limited to *Amanda Project* t-shirts, buttons, and other simple items most likely produced by the publisher. While there seems to be a new partnership in place with a different store called Plum Willow, and there is another competition for readers to create an Amanda-inspired outfit from this store, no link is posted to Plum Willow as there was to the ModCloth online store in 2009 (although arguably, if users are going on Plum Willow's site and browsing long enough to create an

Amanda outfit, this activity does serve as free advertising for Plum Willow). The problem with the Plum Willow paper doll on *The Amanda Project* site is that even though it appears on the website and not in the books, it represents the equivalent of bringing advertising into books, like the much-criticized *Cathy's Book,* in which the publisher made a deal with Cover Girl Make-Up and incorporated careful descriptions and specific names of lipsticks and other make-up into the text of the book. Here, not only does Plum Willow get to advertise its clothing in an innocent paper-doll format disguised as play, but Plum Willow gets free consumer research by asking participants to post about their favorite outfits.

Compared to the *Twilight Saga* site, where there are hundreds of discussion participants on popular topics, or 20,101 members of groups within the site as there are on the Official Team Edward page (Twilight Saga, "Official Team Edward," 2012), on *The Amanda Project* site recent topics (June 2012) have between one and 72 responses, demonstrating that a far smaller participatory market exists for this series.

7.2.4 Laboring for Amanda: Attracting affective and immaterial labor.

On the *Twilight Saga* site, girls participate because they already love the books and the characters, and the site allows them to continue their *Twilight* experience in-between books, or after the series has ended. *The Amanda Project* site has an additional challenge, because in order to be successful, it must attract the same feelings of affect that the *Twilight Saga* site generated, yet it must do so with a series that has not been popularized by readers. It attempts to do so by establishing ways of building community around participation, as girls build online friendships and exchange personal information in a shared experience that centers around *Amanda*.

The Amanda Project site members are encouraged to post personal details about themselves in their biographies which are shared with other members, from their favorite music, to their idea of a best "first date movie," to what they like to eat for breakfast, to answering prompts such as "I sometimes pretend to:" or "I am completely indifferent to:" or to answering questions such as "Do you believe in revenge?" or "Would you do something if you couldn't tell anyone?" or "Do you find the need to clean your room before you do your homework?" or to fill in the blank: "Book that changed my life:" or "Best book I pretended to read, but didn't:" (*The Amanda Project*, "Members," 2012).

This type of sharing is reminiscent of an earlier era of pen-pals, in which children would write letters to virtual strangers and share information about themselves. *The Amanda Project* encourages a similar sharing of personal information for community and relationship building in a shared, online, and social space. In participating, users create identities for themselves, and find like-minded people within the site. As with the pen-pal experience, which would expand letter-writers' horizons by connecting children in different geographical areas, participants on *The Amanda Project* site claim to come from all English-speaking countries in which the transnational corporation HarperCollins has divisions, and users identify as coming from countries as dispersed as Australia, England, Wales, Canada, and the United States.

Contributing around books in a social space, by means of readers' continuation stories, their own clues, and own book-related ideas on a corporate website, constitutes a form of social reading. The difference now is that social reading can occur asynchronously in digital environments across borders and time zones.

Dresang's and Kotrla's studies on children and reading, such as one at Florida State University with middle school students and digitally designed non-fiction texts, showed that in the case of non-fiction, many students responded favorably to digital formats (Dresang & Kotrla, 2009, p. 102). This also corresponds to the preferences of teenagers interviewed as part of a focus group, who claimed to like reading non-fiction in digital formats. Those creating multiplatform works of fiction for young readers anticipated that readers would respond as favorably to reading fiction as other readers did to reading non-fiction in digital formats (as in Dresang & Kotrla's study above); but in the case of *The Amanda Project*, this did not succeed.

Multiplatform books offer possibilities for social reading and for establishing individual agency for each reader centered around book-based activity, and for individual meaning making around these texts. In addition, the EULAs theoretically provide an environment which appears to be safe in the eyes of parents and caretakers, primarily by capitalizing on the cultural capital associated with reading. While the site incorporates elements of gaming, its overall foundation is in reading first, which makes it appealing to the gatekeepers—at least upon an initial glance. A deeper look at some of the darker user-generated content posted on the site, which will be examined later, might change their minds.

Acknowledging Participants

The Amanda Project's publisher acknowledges user-generated content in the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th books in the series by "thanking" contributors in an appendix at the back of the book, but only via their user names, which essentially means the contributors are recognizable only to those who know them by their usernames. The following example of

user credits is from *Shattered* (2011) and is "written" by Nia, a character from the book,

This extends the fictional line into the non-fiction paratext of the book:

> "A Big Round of Thanks
> I could not have recounted my story in such detail without the help of
> everyone on the site. You are my eyes and ears, and do not think that any
> observation, no matter how small, ever went unnoticed.
>
> Herewith, an index of your amazing contributions.
>
> --Nia[70]
>
> Many thanks to:
> Punkeddrama (page 17)
> OMGitsDalia (page 27)
> Zephyr (page 56)
> M. Katty (page 74)
> LittleStar (page 77)
> Squanky Donkey (page 84)
> Mary_Dee (page 84)
> Lemongreen (page 109)
> Loicamar (page 114)
> BlueRoseGrey (page 114)
> Raemcellen (page 119, page 210)
> Thelittlelion (page 120)
> Blackbird (page 141)
> Madibee (page 153)
> Animangaroo (page 174)
> TwilightMist (page 193)
> Sabrina10 (page 208)"

Just how these users contributed material is unclear. While "Nia" refers to this list

as an "index," searching on the pages listed yields no further clues as to exactly what

material was contributed by users, or written by the "author." A three-page epilogue

(after the "thanks") called "How I Met Amanda," seems to be a user-contributed story of

how "Stef Stone" met Amanda one rainy day. A bio states: "Olivia Moore [aka Stef

Stone] is a high school senior in Oregon, and hopes to be a writer one day. In her free

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[70] Nia is a character in the book, and one of Amanda's friends.

time she enjoys playing tennis, writing for her school newspaper, and spending time with her labradoodle, Micalene. She loves reading, and *The Amanda Project* is one of her favorite book series." As a senior in high school, Olivia (aka "Stef Stone") would be far beyond the target age of *Amanda Project* readers, which also feels inauthentic. Is she really a reader, or someone hired by the publisher? On the website, there is evidence of frequent contributors and respondents on the site in the "Zine" and "Debate," such as Rebelle, AngelOfMusic, and claudia. In some cases, they seem to be directing the conversations or offering frequent feedback to users, which raise questions about their identities—are they eager fans, or agents of the publisher, working to maximize users' contributions?

7.2.5 *Amanda'*s rules: Enforcing and resisting.

As on the *Twilight Saga* site, there is evidence of participants subversively circumnavigating the rules and guidelines of *The Amanda Project* site, as will be seen in this section. In this context, such circumnavigation and transgressive behavior hints at the type of resistant behavior John Fiske describes in his writings on homeless men who excorporate the dominant message in the movie *Die Hard*, and on Madonna fans who interpret messages of female empowerment from her sexualized persona. It is important to consider that participants on the Amanda Project site are primarily young teenage girls.

In late stages of *TwilightSaga.com* (2012), Hachette's moderators made desperate attempts to enforce the rules. On *The Amanda Project* site, rule enforcement focuses more on censoring language than it does on censoring content. For example, users have found that improper language is edited out of uploaded content with the term "[Removed]," in its place. Yet users have found ways around this, for example by

substituting symbols for letters in the middle of words readily identified as vulgar

language, by posing words as a question, or by using words that have double entendres.

One user tests the limits of the site by asking about whether or not s/he is allowed to say

[examples of vulgar language]. Members posting to each other (or those posing as

members) also warn each other of language to use or not to use. As such, it seems that

censorship on the site is automated and done by algorithm—by Robocop—rather than by

human moderators.

Content is not censored in the same way that individual words are. It seems that as

long as a reader is not using vulgar or sexual language, almost any content is acceptable.

A disturbing post from a self-described 12-year-old "cutter"[71] who describes serious

family problems of infidelity and divorce (as evidenced in Figure 7.1 below) is not

removed:

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[71] A cutter here is one who intentionally harms his or herself.

Figure 7.1. Unsupervised Online

This raises the question of how far the owner's responsibility extends in a site designed for young readers. The poster above does not include any vulgar language, but does describe personal problems that reflect real-world issues that are far beyond the sanitized content of the books in the series. In addition, the poster self-identifies as a 12-year-old (#10 above), which is younger than 13, the site's approved age for participation.

The site owners disengage themselves from responsibility for this type of content in their privacy policy, placing the primary responsibility for supervision of minors on parents as follows:

> "TAP uses both technical filters and moderators who supervise what happens on TAP in order to offer a nice and safe environment. The moderators also answer members' reports of unpleasant and unsuitable behavior but we still urge all parents to be actively involved in following their children's activity on the Internet. *However, we cannot block all conversations and materials containing objectionable content on TAP.*[72]
>
> If you become aware of objectionable behavior or content on TAP, we encourage you to contact us immediately at mailto:abuse@theamandaproject.com
>
> (*The Amanda Project*, "Privacy," 2010)

It is not clear to whom the site owners are writing; but chances are, they are addressing those who might be interested in monitoring a child's Internet activity, rather than child participants themselves.

Aside from legal age restrictions, in terms of determining what the appropriate age is for the site, one reader (the first of two readers who were assigned the books by the researcher, and later interviewed) of the series felt that the book was written for a younger audience. The characters are all 9th-grade high school students, which means that the plot is better suited to a middle school audience (since children generally like to read about other children who are older than they are). In this case, the actual readers of the series might more plausibly be 10–12 year-olds, which would mean that the actual age for participants of the books and website is actually younger than the appropriate (and legal) age of site users.

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[72] Italics are mine.

In addition, while user-generated content might initially have been more closely monitored by site owners at the beginning of the series in 2009, by 2012 this is no longer the case. In the post in Figure 7.2 from May 1, 2012, in item #10 on the list, the writer self-identifies as a twelve-year-old (and thereby outside of COPPA's allowed age), which could be an indication that content on the site is not carefully monitored by the site owner's gatekeepers. As of June 7, 2012, quasi-inappropriate content (certainly for the youngest readers) reigns free, as participants excorporate the site with unintended uses, and receive only mild verbal scolding by the moderators (compared to what was found on Twilight Saga.com). Another example of such content (uncensored by moderators)—in this case poetry from TheRiverFlows—follows here:

> *If I Was Gone*
>
> If I jumped, would you mourn, or say that I didn't deserve to be here anyway?
> If I hung, would you cry, or bury me personally?
> If I overdosed, would you tell that it was drugs that did it, or say it was a tragic accident, a young life lost?
> If I finally made that one cut too deep, would you go after me, or deny that It was your fault?
> Dedicated to you, mom.
>
> (TheRiverFlows, 2012)

This example reads like a suicidal cry for help, and because the poem still appears on the site, it seems unlikely that this 12-year-old's mother (to whom the poem is dedicated) is supervising her child's posts. This post is disruptive to the publisher's motives in two ways: first, by being a posting from a self-described 12-year-old (and thereby below the official—and legal—age of 13); and second, by having nothing to do with the *Amanda Project* series.

As on the *Twilight Saga* site, there is plenty of evidence of online squabbles and hostile language among participants, such as the one in Figure 7.2 below, in which a popular contributor threatened to leave:

Figure 7.2. Hostility on *The Amanda Project* Site (BlueRoseGrey, 2011)

This evidence of hostility manages to appear on the site despite the fact that the site's user guidelines specifically direct users to respect one another:

> **"DON'T BE A HATER**
> You know what that means. Follow the golden rule and treat everyone like you'd like to be treated. RESPECT one another" (*Amanda Project*, "Guidelines," 2010)

The site moderators in *The Amanda Project* are using the same kind of scolding language used by moderators of the *Twilight Saga* site in Chapter 6 in response to a similar crowd-like behavior, and as on the *Twilight Saga* site, it seems that they are largely ignored.

> The Posting Guidelines also ask users not to:

> ". . . **POST ANYTHING OFFENSIVE OR VULGAR**
> Again, you know exactly what that means. No profanity or foul language. And nothing sexual, racist, or hateful" (*The Amanda Project*, "Guidelines," 2012)

The "protective" algorithm used for the site will miss a word like "shiz" in line 6 of Figure 7.2 above, which demonstrates how users work around the rules; but it is less effective with double entendres, as described below. There is plenty of evidence on the site of members either asking about what words may or may not be used, or complaining about members who use vulgar language. There are also examples of members discussing censored language among themselves. In a story contributed to the Zine, the term "[removed]" appears, and in 36 responses from readers, they debate what that missing word was:

Figure 7.3. Censoring Content

Clearly the site owner is using filtering software to arbitrarily remove words of questionable content, including any that could have multiple meanings. However, as in the case above, this results in over-censoring, which makes readers skeptical about how the site actually is monitored. Despite mild evidence of moderators' presence on the boards, it seems that the site owners are relying on the guidelines (which are most likely not read by participating teens) and by a policing algorithm to control online behavior—with mixed success.

In spite of the negative exchanges on the site, as of June 2012, the site owners still initiated weekly calls for participation on the first page of the website, by posting a clue and asking readers to respond. The series has not been as successful as was initially anticipated, and evidence of a decreased publisher presence on the site—and of the publisher not monitoring it as closely as it initially was—is evident. As with *Twilight*, this also points to a change in the publisher's strategy—one that perhaps does not emphasize *The Amanda Project*, but instead demonstrates a shift in the publisher's attention away from this experiment.

Bad behavior on *The Amanda Project* site is an unplanned consequence of multiplatform books. Graffiti-like transgressions on online boards, to attempted use of vulgar language, to hostilities among participants, to posts of questionable content such as the suicidal poetry (albeit without vulgar language), may all have been unanticipated by the publisher at the outset of the project. As on the *Twilight Saga* site, but especially in the case of *The Amanda Project,* which just was not as successful as may have been expected, it might just not be worth the publisher's efforts—or may simply have been beyond their capabilities—to maintain the site. In addition, the type of revelatory fan activity that appeared in the site at the end, as described herein, had far more to do with the participants' personal interests than with anything related to the corporation's intent for the site (for users to contribute to and promote *Amanda),* and as such represents users' excorporation of the site (Fiske, 1989).

7.3 Feminizing Participation via *Amanda*

In Chapter 2, following Fiske's (1989) "Gendered Domains," reading could be considered an "indoor" and therefore a "private" and feminine activity. But multiplatform books connect the act of reading books to the Internet, which constitutes a "public" and consequently masculine, or "outdoor" space. By bridging books (private sphere) with the Internet (public sphere), *The Amanda Project* colonizes a new hybrid space and feminizes it. While there is evidence of users who self-identify as male, such as "Rogue" who claims to be a brother of another participant called "Rebelle," the paratext of both the website and the books—which include extensive use of the color pink, large pictures of

girls on the book covers and on the front page of the website, flowery designs in the marginalia of the books which is repeated on the website, and a shopping component on the website—indicates that both books and website are primarily designed to attract girls. On *The Amanda Project* site, girls have creative agency as peer-to-peer marketers and as content creators of related works, or of their own original work, which they choose to upload onto the site. The next section will describe what makes girls participate.

7.4 Publishers' Assumptions, Teens' Perceptions

As a way to bridge conflicts between children's interest in gaming, and gatekeepers' interest in reading, publishers are lauding multiplatform books as ways to raise readers out of children raised on gaming, who might prefer digital formats over traditional printed books—and also as new digital profit centers.

As discussed in Chapter 4, certain publishers are making assumptions about digital formats, but their assumptions may not correspond to what young people want, or to how they perceive leisure reading. While *The 39 Clues*[73] multiplatform book series for children ages 8–12 incorporates a book series with a website and collectible gaming cards, and the multiplatform precursor, Running Press's *Cathy's Book: If Found Call (650) 266-8233* (Stewart, 2006) asks readers to respond to clues in the book by calling a number, *The Amanda Project* is the first book series to be conceived as a multiplatform series of books integrated with a website that asks readers to contribute content via the site, effectively to serve as collaborators in the series. As the originator of the *39 Clues* series at Scholastic, it makes sense that Lisa Holton would pursue other multiplatform projects beyond her tenure at Scholastic. According to an interview in *Publishers Weekly,*

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[73] *The 39 Clues* is a series of books by assorted authors. The first book in the series, *The Maze of Bones* (2008) was written by Rick Riordan and published by Scholastic Press (Amazon.com, 2012).

"Before launching Fourth Story, Holton became obsessed with all things digital . . .[and] spent the last year 'living at game conferences'" (Deahl, 2009, para. 12). Like the "large publisher" interviewed for this dissertation (see Chapter 4), Holton has definite opinions about how young people interact with technology, which she has applied to her book-based projects: "As each new generation comes up, they interact with technology and the Web in a totally different way than adults do. And what we call multitasking is not, to them. They move in and out seamlessly. They can be listening to music, chatting with their friends, looking at something online, reading. They did not grow up pre-Internet. I continue to think about where books fit into their lives" (Andriani, 2008, para. 3). The publishers here are convinced that young readers are multitasking while reading—and already immersed in multiple media platforms—whether or not the "books" they read are as well. *The Amanda Project* was started at Fourth Story Media, but before publication of the books, it was sold to HarperCollins.

While those creating digital formats for young people are quite convinced of their mission as evidenced by Lisa Holton's quote above, which describes the beliefs of one producer of multiplatform books for young people about how young people engage with texts, findings from interviews of two assigned readers and a focus group of 10 teens, conducted for this study to examine this idea, revealed some surprising attitudes about their leisure reading preferences.

7.4.1 Teen readers of *The Amanda Project.*

Two teens were assigned to read the books, and then interviewed afterward (protocol is in Appendix D). The first was a thirteen-year-old female who attends a private school in the Southeastern United States. After reading *The Amanda Project* and

looking at the website, she described the books as "inauthentic," saying that the characters in the books played "a lot on typical teenagers' stereotypes." She thought that the books would appeal more to middle-school-aged children than to high-school-aged children, because the characters in the book are only in ninth grade ("A" interview, February 5, 2012). As a reader who prefers to read non-fiction over fiction, she felt that the site was interesting, and might attract those who like "those types of books [i.e. fiction]," and if there was a non-fiction book that she liked (such as a true-story) with a related website, she might be interested in participating. "A" gets her book recommendations from friends, parents, Amazon.com, and B&N. "A" is not active on many social media sites, and does not use Facebook or Tumblr, but she corresponds with friends via email and AIM. In general, when she goes on websites, she does not read the End User License Agreements, and she was not aware that content posted on *The Amanda Project* site could be used by the publisher.

Another 13-year-old girl, "O", who attends a public school in the Northeastern United States ("O" interview, November 5, 2011), thought that the site was "cool," and liked how readers could get feedback from each other; but like "A," she also thought the story was too young for readers of her age, even though she is a year younger than the characters in the book. She said that she was not confident about her own writing skills, and as a self-described shy person, she liked that readers could participate anonymously, as she feels that a "lot of teens feel like they'll be judged" by their peers (which in fact they are anyway, as evidenced by the inter-member squabbling described above). "O" usually gets book recommendations from her school librarian. While she thinks online book-related discussions are interesting, "O" has never posted information online because

she thinks that her "parents don't want her [to post] information online." She is aware of privacy issues and, like "A," does not frequent social networking sites (in her case, because her parents do not allow her to). Also like "A," "O" does not read EULAs of sites, but she is aware of them. "O" thought the Amanda story was interesting, and hopes that the next book will say more about Amanda's parents. She thought that "Amanda is weird—so out there," and hopes that "they clear things up in the next book" ("O" interview, November, 2011).

7.4.2 Teen focus group on digital reading.

A focus group interview (protocol is available in Appendix H) was conducted during August 2011 with ten high school students, comprised of five males and five females, all between the ages of 13 and 17. These teens were all volunteering in the library to fulfill a service requirement for graduation, as required by their high school, and were recruited by the librarian. The library was in an affluent suburb in the Northeast, Half of the teens owned some sort of digital reading device (including iPads, Nooks, or Kindles). When asked about how they participated in books online, several of these teens had participated in fan fiction (mostly *Harry Potter*)*,* and none had heard about *The Amanda Project*.[74] Some had read books in the *Skeleton Creek* series by Patrick Carman, which requires readers to read approximately twenty pages and then watch a video on a website. Some of the teens read other people's reviews on Amazon.

When asked what else they were usually doing when they read for pleasure, contrary to publishers' expectations about teens reading in digital formats, this focus

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[74] The teen librarian had bought a copy of the book for the library because of all the initial hype, but had not been impressed with it. Tellingly, as teen readers confirmed, she was also unsure of where to shelve it: whether it belonged in the children's section or in the teen section.

group interview provided contradictory evidence. Rather than being constantly

multitasking, as Lisa Holton, originator of *The Amanda Project* views teens (as described

above), these teens preferred to do their leisure reading uninterrupted. They teens did not

like to go on Facebook or the computer while reading. They just read, and most read at

bedtime. The participants of this study saw leisure reading as something best conducted

in print formats, perhaps because print enabled a type of escapism not possible with

digital devices.

Sample responses from this group of teens about reading on digital platforms

follow in Table 7.1 below:

Table 7.1: Teen Focus Group Responses to Reading in Digital Formats

Focus Group Process	Answers
After asking who reads on digital devices, individuals were asked about the devices they named. In response to a question about how he liked reading on his Nook, one male teen said:	"Yeah, it's ok, I mean I still like regular books better."
Another male teen described how he liked reading on his iPad:	"Not so much, I just don't—it's not satisfying to me. It's just like—you feel like—it's like you're researching kind of when you're on a computer kind of thing—doesn't seem real. I just like regular [print] books."
Reasons why they preferred print formats over digital connected to tactility. One male teen said:	"I definitely like being able to turn a page and like fold down a page to make a book mark [they like to see evidence of their progress as they read]."
A female teen said:	"I like the smell of books!"
A male teen said:	"Yeah, I like new books."
Smell was seconded by another female teen:	"Yeah, you get that smell!"
In response to what else these teens do while reading, teens responded that they did not do anything else because they read [fiction] in order to relax. A male teen said:	"You're in your comfort zone [when you read]. Comfy wumfy."
Another male teen said:	"You're also like into the book so don't want to do anything else—you want to keep reading and just find out what happens."
Another male teen said	And if the phone rings: "You kind of ignore it—can't someone else take the phone? And then you get the evil look why didn't you pick up the phone it's right there?"
View of the future (understands implicitly that print will disappear)	"I feel like these new technologies are not really appealing to our generation right now—because we were reading these [print] books when we were younger—I'm pretty sure that by the next few generations—books will be gone."

(From Martens, 2011, Teen Focus Group)

These findings point to a discrepancy between publishers' assumptions about how teens read (see Chapter 4, and Lisa Holten's opinions above), and how these young people perceive of their own reading preferences. When speaking of digital formats, the teens expressed almost nostalgic sentiments about the materiality of printed books, praising sensory components of reading, like the smell of books, or the ability to fold down a page. But these readers also expressed resistance to the notion of a book without borders that required participation on multiple media platforms.

For book recommendations, these readers tended to look on library shelves. If a book they liked came from a particular spot on the shelf, they looked in the same area for others by the same author or in the same genre. One gets recommendations from her mother. Like the assigned readers of *The Amanda Project* above, no one in the focus group reads EULAs before participating online. When asked what motivates someone to participate, for example in fan fiction, they think that teens are willing to contribute content to "see their name in print," for "fame," for the pleasure of "getting published." One teen thought that people write fan fiction "because usually when people write fan fiction it's because they want to change the story because they're not really satisfied with it, so to get that satisfied feeling with the story, they write their own" (Focus group interview, August 2011).

Granted this group of ten teens represented a small segment of the overall teen population, and the results are not generalizable. The fact that these teens were library volunteers, and as such, likely to be a bookish group compared to the teen population at large, might have skewed the findings in favor of printed books. But overall, while the focus group teens were nominally interested in digital formats of reading, especially in

cases of school work or non-fiction reading, when it came to their leisure space, they were critical of attempts by publishers to capitalize on their participation. The two girls assigned to read *The Amanda Project* felt that it was full of stereotypes, and they did not automatically embrace these highly commodified products. Perhaps leisure reading in print formats represents a form of resistance to these readers—a way to temporarily block technology from their lives, to remove themselves from the pressures of always being available on Facebook, via email, or by phone. As Janice Radway's (1984) romance readers read to escape the monotony of their daily lives, these young adult readers could arguably be carving out print reading time as a way to escape pressures presented by technology and by multitasking. The resistance among this group was not gendered, but it might be age-based. More research with a larger sample would be needed in order to see if this phenomenon is limited to library volunteers, or to this particular suburb, or if it is farther reaching. In addition, the same study with a group of teens in five years might produce different results as technology in books becomes more prevalent. But the focus group interview did reveal something about what—at least this particular group of teens—think about reading.

7.5 Alexa Analysis: Comparing Case Studies

It soon became apparent that there were problems with the series (some hints included: the series was cancelled after the fourth book; none of the teens that I talked to had heard of it, so I had to assign readers; and librarians did not know where to shelve it). As a result of these problems, *The Amanda Project* was not likely to become popular on the scale of blockbuster bestsellers for young adults. Web analytics were used in order to compare participation on the case study sites of this dissertation and also on a site known

to be popular among young people, Stephenie Meyer's official site (stepheniemeyer.com, n.d.). Alexa.com, owned by Amazon.com, was founded in 1996, and crawls the web in order to create snapshots thereof (Alexa, "Technology," n.d.). According to Alexa data, the comparison showed that the stepheniemeyer.com site generated far more traffic than *TwilightSaga.com*, or *Random Buzzers*. *The Amanda Project* site performed far worse in terms of traffic. Ironically, while *The Amanda Project* book series is intended for teenage girls, the primary users are women with children and grad school degrees.[75] Details appear in Table 7.2. below.

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[75] The description of the core audience for *The Amanda Project* site leads me to make certain assumptions about a particular frequent site visitor.

Table 7.2. Comparison of ranking and demographics of *Random Buzzers.com*,

TwilightSaga.com, and *stepheniemeyer.com*

	Random Buzzers Site	Twilight Saga Site	The Amanda Project Site	Stephenie Meyer's Official Site
Global Rank (determined by a combination of page views and visitors)	396,006	266,251	4,237,703	75,782
Local Rank (US)	19,809	92,581	n/a	19,136
Reputation (based on # of sites linking in)	215	985	120	4,307
Audience Snapshot	Mostly female, ages 18-24, most have children, most have no college education, most browse from home.	Mostly female, 18-24 year-olds. Most have college. Most are browsing from home or school. Those with children are commensurate with general population.	Mostly female, age group 25-34 is underrepresented, males are underrepresented, those with grad school degrees are overrepresented, people with children are overrepresented.	18-35 year-olds. females "greatly" overrepresented, Males are "greatly underrepresented." People with children are overrepresented. Most browse from home, and those with some college are overrepresented.

Data compiled April 20, 2012, from Alexa.com

In the "Global Rank" numbers above, websites are ranked in terms of how many views

they get globally. A lower number indicates a higher rank, which places

stepheniemeyer.com in first place among these, *Twilight Saga* in second place, and

Random Buzzers in third place. *The Amanda Project* ranked literally millions of sites below the closest one at number 4,237,703 of all websites globally. The number of sites linking in indicates how many other sites point to these particular websites. Again, *The Amanda Project* had only 120 sites pointing to it, compared to 4,307 pointing to stepheniemeyer.com.

7.6 The End of Amanda: The Life Cycle of a Multiplatform Book (2009–2012)

As indicated by the Alexa results above, *The Amanda Project* was not getting many views. As Fiske (1987) writes, "The attempt to produce a culture for others, whether that otherness be defined in terms of class, gender, race, nation, or whatever, can never be finally successful, for culture can only be produced from within, not from outside" (p. 517). According to Fiske's theory, *The Amanda Project* essentially failed because it never succeeded in building enough of a fan base of "culture produced from within" to make it successful.

This study was conducted at an early stage of the digital transformation, as print formats began bridging into online and e-reader formats. Multiple longitudinal studies would better confirm whether publishers' projections about children's emerging reading habits materialized, or whether young readers will actually resist using e-readers and digital formats for leisure reading. What can be determined already as a result of this study is that a poorly written series will not succeed, whether it is solely in print or in an attractive multiplatform format. The teen readers of *The Amanda Project* who were interviewed for this study were overall not impressed, and especially felt that the series was too young for them. *Kirkus Reviews*, a prime (gatekeeper) review journal of books for young readers, described the first book in 2009 as follows: "The ending has no

resolutions for any of the story lines, which bodes well for the series but not for frustrated readers who have sat through 300 pages to get there—but they can play at the website, right? A baldly predatory attempt to get into teens' wallets" (*Kirkus*, "Predatory Attempt," 2009). User reviews on Goodreads[76] are mixed, ranging from "it just didn't come together, " to "Way to cliche [sic]" to "better than I expected" to "pretty good" (Goodreads, "Pretty Good," 2012).

In addition to a weak plot, the series also struggled to establish itself initially. The first book, *invisible i* [sic], was published in 2009, but the second book, *Revealed,* was not released until June 2011. The third, *Shattered,* was released in December 2011, and the fourth, *Unravelled*, was released in June 2012. While the first book came out first in hardcover, subsequent books in the series went straight to paperback, which was perhaps a harbinger of the demise of the series. As only hardcover books are covered in review journals, publishers usually prefer to release books in hardcover first, with paperback editions following a year or more later.

The series was initially intended to be an eight-book series, but perhaps in view of production problems and mediocre reviews, the third book has a note in the back: "The Amanda Project Concludes with *Unraveled . . .*" (Valentino and Stolarz, 2011) indicating that the fourth book would be the last in the series.

An indication of how the books in the series are selling can be seen on Amazon Best Sellers, which ranks books in terms of sales numbers (Amazon.com, "Rankings," 2012). Rankings of the first three books in the series compared to all books sold by Amazon.com (including adult titles) as of June 12, 2012 is indicated below:

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[76] Goodreads, a social book reviewing site, was launched in 2007. For more information, please see: http://www.goodreads.com/about/us

Table 7.3. Comparing Sales of Books in *The Amanda Project* series

Title	Amazon.com Ranking Number (of all books sold)
Book one: *invisible i*	520,341
Book two: *Revealed*	480,443
Book three: *Shattered*	402,996
Book four: *Unraveled*	315,682

Amazon.com rankings are from August 13, 2012, and the most recent editions

(paperback) were ranked.

In comparison, the mass-market paperback edition of the first book in the *Twilight*

Saga, Twilight, is ranked as number 4,897 of all books sold on Amazon.com.

Another challenge for the publishers is that technology is constantly changing and

evolving. In 2009, publishers worked on creating book-related websites for popular

fiction; but by 2012, the users they wanted to attract had migrated onto Facebook or

Tumblr, as evidenced by the *Twilight Saga* site in Chapter 6. The problem with "pull"

media, such as websites, is that readers have to remember to go onto these sites. With

"push" media, such as Facebook, updates automatically appear in users' newsfeeds. *The*

Amanda Project's Facebook page (only one) has 4,654 likes as of May 30, 2012 (and

increased to 4,669 on June 12, 2012). Compared to *Twilight*-related Facebook pages, of

which there are hundreds (a further examination could be a source of future research), the

Twilight Saga book Facebook page alone has 3,701,966 "likes" as of May 30, 2012, and the movie has 33,781,321 "likes."

Already experienced with multiplatform books as the publisher of *The 39 Clues*, *Skeleton Creek*, and in 2012 *Pottermore*,[77] Scholastic, one of the big seven transnational publishing companies,[78] and the only that focuses exclusively on the juvenile market, has emerged as a leader in digital formats for young readers. In 2012, Scholastic launched *Storia*, its online imprint and store for book-related web applications (apps) (O'Brien, *Endgadget*, 2012). It remains to be seen whether readers will eventually embrace digital formats as much as publishers hope that they will; but at a time when publishers must branch into new areas in order to seek profits that elude them from print formats, digital formats have become the venture of the moment.

The immaterial labor on this site modeled by the publisher, was in the end, not accepted by enough readers to warrant keeping the site alive, and it was "closed" in June 2012 (as shown in Figure 7.4). On June 16, 2012, The Amanda Project's moderators posted the following letter to its participants:

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[77] *Pottermore* is J. K. Rowling's online continuation site for fans of Harry Potter, launched in 2012.
[78] The publishers are (in order of size): Random House Inc., HarperCollins Publishers, Macmillan, Penguin Group USA, Simon & Schuster, Hachette Book Group, Scholastic (Kelley, *Guide*, 2012)

This week's mystery | Tell your story... | Quiz: Who are you?

JUNE 16TH, 2012

DEAR FRIENDS OF AMANDA,

In June 2009, we launched The Amanda Project website with 150 "beta girls."

Over the next four years, we welcomed tens of thousands of girls from around the world who have contributed hundreds of thousands of pages of stories, poems, art, songs, comments, and theories—about Amanda, about themselves, and about life in general.

In the process, The Amanda Project became much more than a fictional hunt for a mysterious missing character. It became a unique experiment in collaborative fiction, a vibrant online magazine, and most importantly, a community of talented writers and artists who supported each other in their creative work.

Each one of you has contributed to making the site the remarkable place that it is; together, you have produced an original work of art that is unlike anything else in the world—either online or off.

For those of us working behind the scenes it has been a great privilege to serve you. We started out leading the project by creating the site; but you quickly took over and led us to places we never would have imagined going.

Monday, we publish the very last story. The final book in the series, *Unraveled* by Cathleen Bell has just come out bringing the series to an end. Our adventure together will come to a close.

We'll post instructions if you want to take down your profile and your work. Otherwise it will remain up on the site, so that people can always come to The Amanda Project and see what we did together.

We can't thank you enough for taking this wild ride with us.

Warmest wishes,

The Amanda Project Team

Figure 7.4. The End of *Amanda* (Amanda, 2012)

The letter to the readers indicates that the site will remain up, yet it is unclear if it

will be in the publisher's best interest in the long run to keep the site running. To do so

would require an ongoing investment in moderators, given the tendency for users'

excorporation (as evidenced on the *Twilight Saga* site), or users' resistance as seen on

The Amanda Project site. Of course the reader participants of *The Amanda Project* were

not pleased with this decision, as demonstrated in Figure 7.5 below:
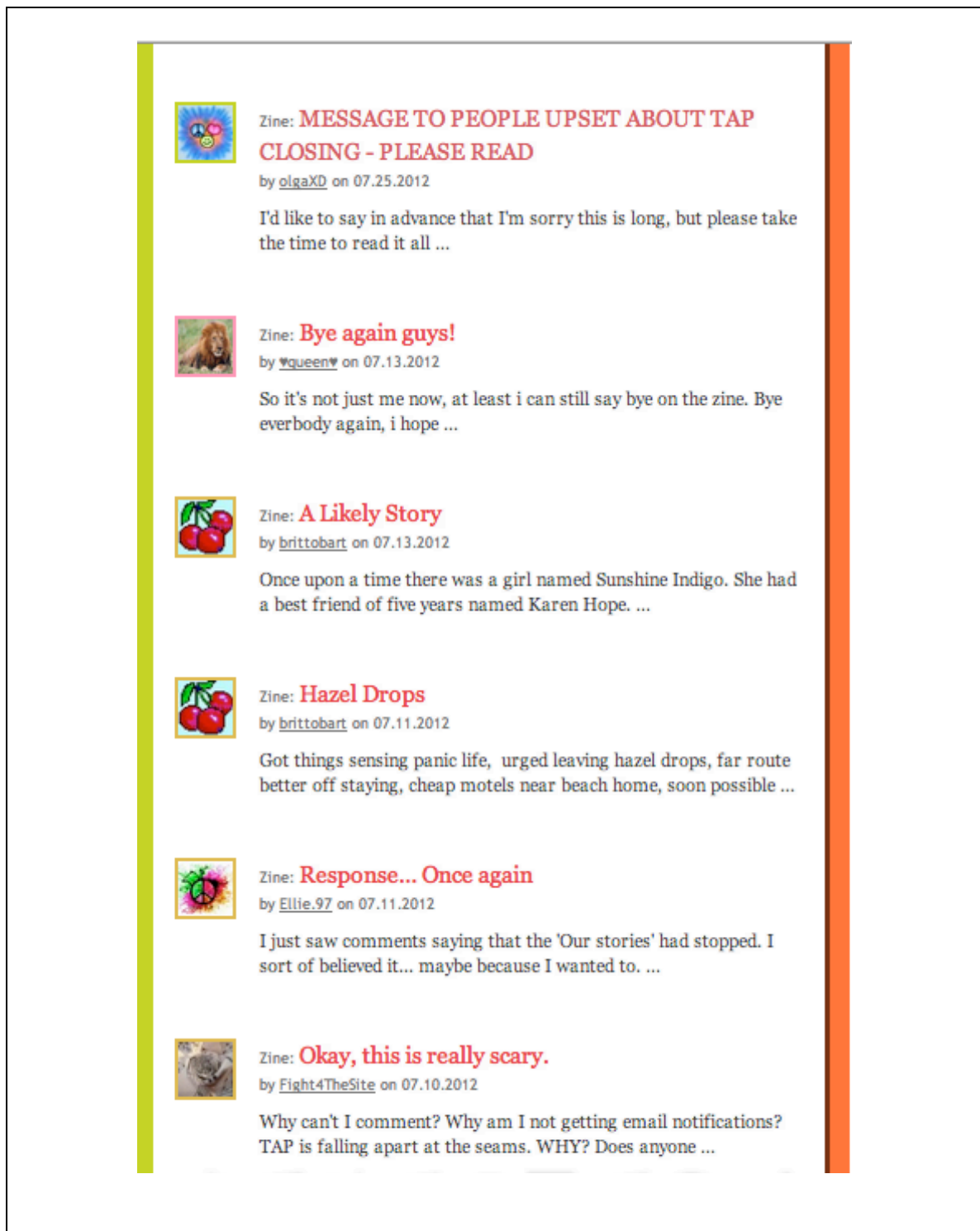
Figure 7.5. Readers Respond to Publisher's Decision to End *The Amanda Project*

These responses from teens seem heartfelt and sincere, and express a sense of dismay that the site is ending. An appropriately named member called "Fight4theSite" writes: "TAP is falling apart at the seams. WHY?" which validates the sense of community that exists on the site among its members (even if that community is too small for the publisher to remain engaged), and this sense of community seems to be what draws readers back to the site. Regardless of the fact that the site owner's letter stated that the site would be kept up, participants are already experiencing limited access to it. The participants are expressing their uncertainty about what will happen to the site, and are frustrated about not being able to participate in the same way. Like the teens interviewed for this chapter, who claimed never to read EULAs, the site participants probably do not read EULAs either, and therefore do not understand that they have neither ownership nor control over content they have posted, or even their discussion board conversations. Friendships and communities established through the site can vanish at any time, all at the discretion of the publisher. This emphasizes the ephemeral quality of participating in digital platforms, and highlights the ultimate control that the publisher has over its proprietary site.

7.7 Summary and Conclusions

Multiplatform books are expensive not only to start up, but also to maintain. The field of publishing is a business first, and a cultural institution second; and if a book series such as *The Amanda Project* is not profitable, it will not survive. As print editions of books go out of print, eventually a publisher's stock of such books is pulped and recycled. However, as seen with digital formats of books in Chapters 6 and 7, and in

cases where a book builds an audience as with *Twilight*, the accompanying websites must continue to be maintained long after the initial popularity of the sites and related books has waned. This represents a larger than usual financial investment in a series for a publisher. With a book series that was not contributing to the publisher's economic goals, the owners of *The Amanda Project* site decided to be proactive in terminating their responsibilities.

Despite the unfavorable response to *The Amanda Project* and its inability to achieve even enough longevity for all eight books in the series to be published, in all likelihood some version of multiplatform books is here to stay. Publishers, such as Scholastic with its Storia imprint, have already made enormous investments in these new products. Yet in regard to readers' consumption of books during this transition, as we move from print to digital formats, something about teens' leisure reading experience seems to be missing in the transition. Perhaps the answer to this lies in book history, but this is for one of the many future projects arising out of this dissertation. Ersatz fan culture constructed by a publisher, at least in the case of *The Amanda Project*, is not nearly as effective as the type of grassroots fan culture that arose organically around a popular series such as the *Twilight Saga*. An Alexa analysis and Amazon.com sales rankings both revealed *The Amanda Project* to be virtually insignificant as far as the world of Young Adult books is concerned, and apparently the site owners (who most likely had their own access to paid web analytics) agreed and decided to terminate the site. Future research with other such "top down" projects should be examined to see if fan culture could be established—perhaps around a stronger (i.e., better written) series.

As Fiske (1987) writes, in creating cultural commodities, two economies are at play—the financial and the cultural. While *Amanda* had strong support from the financial economy that established it—via the printed books, the associated website, and the marketing campaigns on part of the publisher, within the cultural economy what is exchanged and circulated cannot be bought: "meanings, pleasures, and social identities" (p. 506. In order for a cultural commodity to be successful, it must be accepted into the cultural economy. Unfortunately for *Amanda*, this did not happen. While there was plenty of financial economy involved in *The Amanda Project*, part of the reason for its demise is that the cultural economy—the could-have-been-fan readers—never embraced it; and in a case in which economic and cultural frameworks collide (Fiske, 1987), unsuccessfully in this case, economics will prevail.

Previously, librarians had the coveted access to teens, which publishers sought in order to market books to this population, which in turn placed librarians in a powerful position as arbiters of taste. In addition to their access to teens, librarians also served as primary reviewers and awarders of books, and as such they could help influence the success of a book. New technologies of production are shifting configurations of how books are disseminated to teens, and how literary content is produced and packaged.

7.7.1 A note on preservation.

While it is possible to archive websites and digital files, it is not yet clear what publishers are doing to preserve digital portions of multiplatform books. If in fifty years, a doctoral student wants to research early 21st century multiplatform books, will he or she be able to do so? In the case of books like *Skeleton Creek* where the printed book represents half of the story, what happens when the technology evolves beyond our

current websites and links, and the videos are no longer accessible? Ironically, it seems that despite the latest technological advancements, the printed book may just be the version of the story that survives—which should please the resistant teens of the focus group.

The next and last chapter summarizes the findings of this dissertation, and discusses research that will arise out of it.

CHAPTER 8: Discussion of Findings and Future Research

Introduction

The primary goal of this dissertation was to examine how technology is changing books and the reading experience for young readers at a time in which books and book-related content are migrating from print to digital formats, with associated changes in the field of cultural production for young people. Using a case study approach, this process is situated within book production as it shapes the cultural field, and this transformation is situated within a broader context of young adult literature as a field of cultural production, which has been shaped by publishers, librarians, young readers, and the materiality of books, and is examined via the research questions 1 through 4.

In 2009, at the outset of the study, a plethora of online opportunities for teens to participate in the books they love had begun to appear. Publishers were creating interactive websites for young adults centered on their teen publishing programs, such as Random House's *Random Buzzers* site. Readers had created their own fan sites and anti-fan sites round popular books such as those in the *Twilight Saga* by Stephenie Meyer, which prompted *Twilight's* publisher to copy this model, as it created a proprietary online environment centered on books in the series for their teen consumers and channeled user participation onto its proprietary sites. Around that time, a new configuration of the field was emerging with developments of multiplatform books. Such books are print-based, but require participation across a range of media in order to derive full meaning from the text. For example, in 2008, Scholastic launched *The 39 Clues* series for 8 to 12 year-olds,

which consists of books, a website, and collector cards, and a participatory multiplatform book series for teens, *The Amanda Project*, consisting of books and an integrated website, was launched in 2009 by Fourth Story Media and HarperCollins.

All of this was happening at a time when e-Readers and iPads were becoming more prevalent in the marketplace, and when the dominant bookstore chain, Barnes & Noble was in the process of reformatting their stores and exchanging space previously used for physical books, to areas for NOOKs and related accessories. As noted, in order to study the emerging phenomenon of multiplatform books, the research of this dissertation was placed within historical and contemporary frameworks examining how the field of children's literature was shaped since its early days at the beginning of the 20th century, how children's books were marketed, and how teens participated in the books published for them. Four layers of participation in the field of cultural production for young people were examined, including: 1) publishers; 2) librarians; 3) the teen participants, and 4) the changing materiality of books. This concluding chapter will explore the overall research goal of this dissertation, and address in turn each of the research questions, present a synthesis of the findings, identify limitations of this research, and introduce areas for future research.

8.1 Context for the Study and Overall Goal

Starting at the turn of the 20th century, the field of children's literature was created synergistically between publishers and librarians. Until about 2007, publishers' primary way of getting books into the hands of young people was by building close relationships with librarians who served as cultural filters of content. In the 1980s and 1990s, as mergers and acquisitions in the publishing industry turned family-owned businesses into

transnational corporations, publishers emphasized bestselling commodity books, and the

rise of transmedia books—book-based products that could extend across multiple media

platforms (preferably owned by the same transnational corporation), are a form that has

expanded with the addition of digital technologies and social media. Since 2007, such

technologies have enabled a direct, disintermediated relationship with young people via

the Internet. Publishers, books and their authors increasingly have an online presence,

which young readers can access via various social media platforms. Multiplatform books,

which combine books and technology, redefine books for young people from literary

products infused with cultural capital, to products that straddle the worlds of culture and

entertainment.

In order to study this phenomenon, methods included interviews with veteran and

contemporary book marketers, interviews of veteran librarians and contemporary

librarians, interviews with two teens who had been assigned to read *The Amanda Project*,

a focus group interview of ten teens, observation of teens in the library, document

analysis of the Young Adult Alternative Newsletter (published from 1973-1979) and the

Young Adult Library Services Association Blog (YALSA Blog), and document analysis

of three progressive case studies: *Random Buzzers*.com, *Twilight Saga*.com, and *The

Amanda Project*. Webanalytics from Alexa.com supplemented these case studies, as did

Amazon.com's Best Sellers Rankings, and trade literature provided context (methods are

discussed in detail in Chapter 3).

While contemporary publishers interviewed for this dissertation still insisted on

their need for building close relationships with librarians, a disintermediated relationship

between publishers and their teen consumers, enabled by technology, is challenging

established models of dissemination. The next section revisits the research questions of this dissertation.

8.2 How the Research Questions Addressed the Goal

The research questions were designed to address the overarching goal of examining how technology is changing books and the reading experience for young people, through the lens of participants in the field—producers (or publishers); critics and disseminators (or librarians); consuming readers (or teens); and finally, the materiality of the books themselves. The following four research questions guided the study:

1. Within the emerging configuration (after 2007) of the field of cultural production for young people, how is the use of technology (represented herein by the phenomenon of multiplatform books) providing a disintermediated relationship between publishers (producers) and young readers, and how is this relationship changing the producers' role in the field? And to nest this question in a historical context, how was their role different before 2007?

2. How is the new configuration of the field of cultural production for young people (again represented herein by the phenomenon of multiplatform books and the technological innovations which lead to them) changing the role of the critics and disseminators of young adult literature compared to the historically established model?

3. How does technology (again represented herein by the phenomenon of multiplatform books and the technological innovations which lead to

them) establish an audience of participating <u>readers</u> around interactive,

book-related sites, and how does this shift in literacy compare to how

forms of reading were studied historically, prior to technological

interventions?

4. How is technology changing the <u>materiality</u> of books for young readers

compared to materiality in earlier configurations in the field? And what

does a visible, material audience mean to the overall field of cultural

production for young people?

Multiplatform books are a new phenomenon. *The Amanda* Project case study of

Chapter 7 is about one of the pioneering multiplatform books, and the first to include

users' content within books in the series. The first book in *The Amanda Project* was

published in 2009, and the series ended in June 2012, just as research for this dissertation

was completed. This dissertation is situated within that empirical context.

By examining the influence of technology on each of the four layers of the

research questions (producers, critics and disseminators, readers, and materiality), and by

nesting these questions within a historical and contemporary comparative framework,

much was revealed about how the field of cultural production known as young adult

literature is changing at a moment when books are changing from being defined primarily

as a print medium, consisting of pages encased in a binding, to texts that incorporate

technology and move beyond the page and into epitextual elements.

In this complex multiple method study, findings are integrated in a historical and

interpretive narrative and critical analysis. The analysis is presented in chapters 4, 5, 6,

and 7. Chapter 4 is about marketing to young readers in the digital age, and describes

marketing efforts in the new configuration of the field of publishing for young readers, which is integrated with technology, and enables a disintermediated relationship between publishers and teens. In order to provide historical context for marketing books to young people, this new configuration is compared to traditional marketing methods. Chapter 4 sets the stage for the next three chapters (chapters 5, 6, and 7), which are the progressive case studies of this dissertation. Chapter 5 is about Random House's *Random Buzzers* site, which was a peer-to-peer reviewing site established in 2007, which encouraged teens to participate in books created for them. Chapter 6 is about Hachette's *Twilight Saga* site, also from 2007. On this site, brand reader fan participation builds upon the type of contributions possible on *Random Buzzers*, but adds additional layers by enabling fans to participate in fan fiction and book-character related role-playing games. The last case study is about *The Amanda Project*, a pioneering multiplatform book project of a book series integrated with a website, which was started in 2009. *The Amanda Project* encourages participation as on Random Buzzers (peer-to-peer reviewing and marketing), and fandom as on *Twilight Saga*, but in addition, asks readers to contribute as prosumers—co-producers of books, which they can later consume.

8.3 Synthesis and Discussion of Findings

Question 1: the Publishers

Technology has allowed publishers to establish a disintermediated relationship with young adult consumers, and communicate directly with them in the context of recent technological developments. Traditionally, librarians were the primary gatekeepers responsible for getting books into the hands of teens in the context of print culture. Publishers built relationships with librarians in order to reach teens, and librarians served

as guardians of culture and filters of taste, using their purchasing power as the ultimate

mechanism for quality control. In a disintermediated environment, the publishers have a

direct relationship with teens via online websites, and can market any products at teens,

including commodified cultural products, as shown in the case studies of chapters 5, 6,

and 7. In addition, technology provides transparency for publishers on a population that

previously was ephemeral and difficult to reach. By enabling them to build interactive

websites, which provide a rich source of evidence of reader preferences, engagement, and

a record of fan activity. In this context, the publishers' economic model changes as sites

also serve as a transparent mechanism of peer-to-peer reviewing, through contribution of

reviews of the books and storylines characters property over the content as readers are

encouraged to contribute content in various forms, as described in this dissertation's case

studies. The websites End User Licensing Agreements govern use of the site, and enable

publishers to repurpose such user-generated content as they please, earning intellectual

property rights over the content.

At the time of this research, publishers interviewed were fully committed to

various online efforts. From across the spectrum of a small, medium-sized and large

publishing company, the "large publisher" of Chapter 4 had the most resources, the most

elaborate teen website of the three interviewed, and an extensive digital publishing

program. The medium-sized publisher relied on a few staff members to extend the lives

of book-based characters into social media spaces, including Twitter and facebook. And

even the smallest publisher, with a very limited marketing budget, was devoting time to a

website, facebook marketing, and to authors' book trailer videos, which could be posted

on the publisher's site and other spaces, including commercial sites, such as

Amazon.com. The publishers' discourse around technology was focused on the benefits and its future implications in book-related products.

However, as was found in this research, the benefits from publishers' participatory websites around books came with unanticipated problems. In both the *Twilight Saga* and *The Amanda Project* case studies, both of which were studied from 2009-2012, there were some unexpected consequences of teens' participation. For *The Amanda Project*, the years 2009-2012 represent the entire online lifecycle of the series. In both *Twilight Saga* and *The Amanda Project*, as the sites aged and activity decreased, publishers, focused on the economic capital of the books they publish, turned their resources toward new books on their lists, and left algorithms to serve as electronic moderators governing the sites.

Two economies converge in creating cultural commodities—the cultural and the financial, according to Fiske (1987). In the case study of *The Twilight Saga*, as the series went from being a blockbuster bestselling series in 2009, to a slightly quieter (but still strong selling) backlist series in 2012, the publisher needed to continue to incur expenses related to the site, as it needed staff to create fresh content (beyond user contributions), and staff to moderate the site.

In the case study of *The Amanda Project*, the series never gained the popularity needed to sustain the site in a way that justified the publisher's investment in it. In both *The Amanda Project* and *Twilight Saga* cases, when the financial economy is not enriched, the cultural economy of the sites is at risk. And in both cases, as the sites slid into neglect, users' transgressive behavior arose on the sites. The less evidence there was of moderators' presence on the sites, the greater the users were able to "excorporate"

(Fiske, 1989) portions of the site, and reclaim portions of the sites for their own interests.

As much as the prior example of marketing to teens in the era before social media was

challenging, marketing to teens post-2007 includes its own challenges. While the benefits

are far reaching in terms of transparency of interests, consumer feedback, peer-to-peer

marketing, and user-generated content, which can be repurposed by the publisher, what

detracts are the arduous efforts needed to keep the sites under control.

If books related to a site have become backlist staples, then it remains in the

publisher's interest to keep the site active, as every few years, there is a fresh generation

of readers for books such as those in the *Twilight Saga*, and the publisher avoids

alienating its existing readership by closing down the site, as happened in the case of *The*

Amanda Project. In order to maintain these sites at a productive level, publishers must

dedicate staff and resources to maintain them, and in the political economy of publishing,

if the cost of supporting a site is not supported by sales of the books on which the sites

are based, the cost to maintain such sites becomes prohibitive. As shown in the

maturation of both *Twilight Saga* and *The Amanda Project*, when such sites are not

maintained with full engagement of the publisher (beyond the automatic maintenance

provided by algorithms), the sites descend into fora of rowdy, crowd-like behavior (such

behavior is described under the third research question). Once the site owners lose

interest and move on to other projects, they have to continue to make sure content

appearing on the sites is content that benefits the books they are selling, and this can be

done in three ways: 1) by appointing full time moderators; 2) by using algorithms to

moderate; or 3) by taking the sites down. In the case of *Twilight Saga*, Hachette

implemented moderators, although based on the frustrated tones described in Chapter 6,

in which they implore members to stop various kinds of unruly behavior, it was clear that the publisher was losing control. In anticipation of the fifth and final movie to be released in Fall 2012, the *Twilight Saga* site will most likely remain up as a promotion vehicle, at least until the movie is released. In the case of *The Amanda Project*, Fourth Story and HarperCollins decided to terminate the site in June 2012, shortly after publication of the fourth and last book in the abbreviated series.

In disintermediated online spaces a layer of gatekeeping by parents, teachers, and librarians is removed, and publishers are able to communicate directly with teens, thereby encroaching upon a space traditionally occupied by librarians. In doing so, how distinction is determined in the field of cultural production of books for young people is redefined. Publishers still seek the approval of the gatekeepers by stressing that reading comes first in these products (see Chapter 4). Authors and publishers are quoted in the media about how they are merely using the entertainment vehicle of gaming to bring non-readers back to books, but multiplatform products, which bridge gaming with reading, allow a commodification of books that appeals to the economic goals of the publisher, but also the cultural goals of the gatekeepers. By producing books that draw on gaming, yet still highlight the value of books as being infused with cultural capital that improves people's minds, publishers are able to create book-based products that can appeal to gamers as well as to readers. Yet readers' reactions yielded some unexpected results as described below. Traditionally, teens represented an ephemeral market, hard to define as a population, challenging to create products for, and problematic to market to, but the new configuration of publishing provides easy access to the teen population, and enables a way to turn readers into prosumers. However, this new configuration favors the largest

publishers with the most resources, which also means that a limited selection of books (only from the largest publishers) is presented to teen readers.

Question 2: the Librarians

Since its inception, the field of children's literature was constructed synergistically between the library and the publishing house. Children's librarianship came first, at the turn of the 20th century, and included librarians such as Anne Carroll Moore who served at the New York Public Library from 1906-1941. Then as publishers recognized a market for children's books via the library, they formed children's divisions within their houses, starting with Louise Seaman Bechtel at Macmillan in 1919. The fields of children's librarianship and children's publishing evolved in tandem, as librarians guided distinction in books, by serving as those who reviewed and awarded books for the young, and as those who had access to this population. Both children's librarianship and publishing evolved as gendered fields, in part because essentialist views on women determined that women were best suited to work related to children, but also because reading came to be considered a gendered activity (see Chapter 2 for a discussion on reading and gender).

An overarching discourse that weaves through the work of librarians of different eras, is their role as enablers of social change in providing "life tools" for teens. While the definition of such "life tools" changes though the decades—from early Progressive Era librarians' goals of improving children's minds, to 1950s librarians goals of creating peace and understanding through books, to 1970s goals of providing information that would help teens make better life choices, to contemporary goals of providing new experiences, access to information and resources—a version of this goal repeats.

Recognizing teens as a population between childhood and adulthood, another thread across the research is librarians' desire, since the early days of the field, to provide teens with a voice. From including teens in reviewing and in library programing choices in early 20th century, from Margaret Scoggin's *Circulatin' the News* pamphlet which included peer-to-peer reviews of young adult books for teen readership, to *Best Books for Young Adults Committee* and the *Teens Top Ten* list to giving teens life experiences to which they might not otherwise have had access, since the inception of the field, young adult librarians have served as extenders of young peoples' habitus—providing access, expanding minds, and enriching lives.

Conducting a comparative document analysis on the Young Adult Alternative (YAAN) newsletter of the 1970s and on the YALSA blog of today, a marked difference in how librarians defined their role from the 1970s to today, was that in YAAN, it was evident that librarians of the 1970s had a major role as *de facto* social workers, providing information to teens which would improve their lives by enabling them to make informed life choices. In contrast, on the YALSA Blog, the main theme was technology, and the librarians posting on this blog describe teaching young people about technology as a primary way to improve young peoples' lives—what is new, how to use it, which digital tools can improve their lives.

So far there is cautious acceptance between publishers' digital efforts and the reception from librarians. *Kirkus Reviews* called the first book in *The Amanda Project* "predatory," accusing it of attempting to coerce money from children, but an editor of *School Library Journal* writing about digital literary products for young people, thought that despite the overly commercial digital products currently on the market (no products

were named, but in 2012, this field was still emerging), he was thought there was enormous potential in this market, and looked forward to seeing high-quality digital products in the future (Grabarek, SLJ, 2012). And one librarian interviewed for this dissertation was enthusiastic about these new formats, as she supported anything that connects reading and young people (Urban Librarian, 2011). Ironically, while contemporary librarians are well-versed in all things related to technology (as evidenced from those participating on the YALSA Blog), compared to young adult publishers, librarians have had mixed success in successfully using social media tools in libraries in order to reach young adults, and their efforts correspond most closely to efforts by the "small publisher" of this dissertation.

By enabling a direct discourse between publishers and their teen audience, the disintermediated online spaces created by the publishers, which allow teens to review, recommend, and collaborate on the books that are created for them, are encroaching upon the spaces once dominated by librarians, and challenging young adult librarians' role as those who determine taste in books for young people, and at least as far as certain books, such as those with an established fan base, replacing them with the teens themselves.

Question 3: The Teens

The agency that comes with participating on publishers' sites, and the "voice" that is afforded there, is on initial appearance, far louder than any teen voices were via library-based programs such as the *Best Books for Young Adults* committee, or the *Teens Top Ten* list. In contrast, participating in online sites owned by publishers, such as those

related to the bestselling *Twilight* series, provides readers opportunities to extend the experience of a popular series while waiting for the next book to be published. In participating, they also construct themselves as a visible, participatory audience, leaving written evidence of their reading via their comments on publishers' websites. Yet the teens are commodified as participants because they are expected to participate as fans of the cultural products they are consuming themselves. Their fandom is commodified as they contribute their immaterial and affective labor in reviewing, marketing, and even co-constructing these products, which they then are able to later buy, as we saw in the three case studies of this dissertation, in Chapters 5, 6, and 7.

An unexpected finding was that teens were able to participate on these book-related sites in transgressive ways, by excorporating (Fiske, 1989) elements from the sites, and participating on their own terms, operating outside of the End-User-Licensing Agreements which govern use of these sites, and was not necessarily what the publishers intended. In the case of the *Twilight Saga* site, such outlaw behavior consisted of verbal skirmishes between members, which especially focused on allegiances toward one fictional character (Edward) or another (Jacob), and of members posting transgressive content in the forms of words and insinuations of a sexual nature on fan fiction or role-playing sections of the site. On *The Amanda Project* site, unruly behavior consisted of participants bickering and exchanging insults, using vulgar language, but also of users posting content of a deeply personal level—depictions of cutting and suicidal fantasies, but also of users younger than the age of 13, which is the age required for participation based on the Child Online Protection Act of 1998 (COPPA).

If in the case of the *Twilight Saga* site, that the owners had originally intended to corral the devoted fans of the series who were participating in their own sites elsewhere on the web, and channel their love for the series and their affective, immaterial labor onto a corporate-owned site, the site has now captured more of a resistant participatory audience, whose digressive behavior becomes a laborious nuisance to the publisher. Publishers' efforts become focused more around regulating behavior on the site, and less on adding fresh content. As a result, portions of the *Twilight* site have become an online necropolis of suspended participation.

But in the end, the site owners have the ultimate control, as was evidenced by the demise of *The Amanda Project* site. Participants have limited control over the content they post. When a site owner decides to take down a site, such content can disappear. The online friendships and community building, encouraged by site owners within the confines of the digital corrals of the sites, can also be deleted at the publishers' discretion, as happened with *The Amanda Project* in June 2012, when the publisher decided to close the site, and notified members via a letter posted on the front page.

Starting from an initial assumption of generational literacy related to digital platforms, like the publishers who have embraced e-formats and digital platforms, interviews with teens in the focus group challenged initial assumptions. While these teens asserted that they preferred digital formats when reading non-fiction, especially textbooks or homework, they claimed to prefer print books for leisure reading, because they liked to be lost in a book (reading undisturbed without having to check a phone or a computer), liked the smell of books, liked being able to fold down a corner of a page—all of which indicates, that to them, reading printed books represents a form of resistance. Being lost

in a book while reading, putting down cell phones, and moving away from the computer, the iPad, or the e-Reader, seemed an important way for these teens to reclaim quiet time and resist the multitasking required in their everyday lives. Despite the publishers' enthusiasm for e-Formats, it seems that the transfer from print to digital is not as smooth or immediate as may have been predicted.

Question 4: Materiality

Before 2007, "materiality" applied to the physical presentations of books themselves. But now, as publishers of books for young readers are increasingly using digital technologies and social media to establish disintermediated relationships with such readers, the materiality of books becomes twofold. First, multiplatform books and participatory websites exist as material platforms with associated technology and user-generated labor; and second, for the first time, a reading audience is made visible via "material" contributions on websites, and via their user profiles, which reveal whatever information participants choose to share about themselves. The institutions that support book-related activities, including publishers and booksellers, have made significant efforts with e-reading and digital formats, from the largest publishers' participatory sites, to smaller publishers efforts with book trailers. The case studies of this dissertation present new ways in which materiality appears in digital formats as related to books, from the *Random Buzzers* website, which is essentially a site that enables peer-to-peer reviewing around young adult books, to *Twilight Saga*, which is a best-selling series with a supporting website, which serves as a digital extension of the book series. On this site, fans can contribute in visible, online communities related to this series, from writing fan fiction, to joining fan groups related to their specific interests from the series, from those

organized around the "Official Team Edward" and "Official Team Jacob," to

participating in role-playing games. *The Amanda Project*, as a book series integrated with

a website, is a series that goes from print, to digital, and back to print as participants act

as collaborators in the series by posting their own storylines, character developments, in

an online forum. This content, which contributes to future books in the series, is then

printed into future books.

Tangible evidence of the shift to digital formats can be seen with a visit to Barnes

& Noble, as this chain store has removed many books and all DVDs from their stores,

and is filling this space with items related to its e-reading platform, the NOOK.

Publishers, such as Scholastic, have launched imprints dedicated to E-books, and e-

reading platforms are becoming more accessible.

The second way that digital formats provide evidence of materiality is in reading.

As Alexandra Alter (2012) wrote in the *Wall Street Journal*, "For centuries, reading has

largely been a solitary and private act, an intimate exchange between the reader and the

words on the page," (Alter, "Your E-book," 2012). Publishers' websites add an online

written component to reading, through which readers' taste can be determined, and as

such, the reader is no longer "implied" (Iser, 1978). Digital readers are highly visible

through their trackable e-reading platforms, but as seen in this research, also through their

participation on book-related sites. Publishers are able to gather (and then because of the

EULAs of their proprietary sites, also repurpose) valuable feedback from readers, which

can be applied towards shaping future books in a series, or to other works. An active,

participatory, and visible audience exists across these websites, capable of being tracked

by the detritus of comments, content, and peer-to-peer reviews scattered across them—

but such visibility exists only as long as the publishers want to maintain the site. Materiality in digital formats creates a visible audience around reading, but this materiality is potentially ephemeral, and exits at the whim of a publisher. As seen in Chapter 7, once the publisher of *The Amanda Project* was no longer interested in maintaining the site, it closed it. *Amanda* participants who dedicated their labor in support of the series quickly found that they no longer had access to content they had posted. While the site owner claims content will remain on the site: "We'll post instructions if you want to take down your profile and your work. Otherwise it will remain up on the site, so that people can always come to The Amanda Project and see what we did together" (Amanda, 2012). Despite the publisher's assurances, participants quickly complained that they no longer had access to portions of the site (see Chapter 7, Figure 7.5.).

It is not clear whether or not websites around highly commercial products such as *The Amanda Project* are archived, which—despite promises such as the one above: "people can <u>always</u> come to The Amanda Project . . ." (Amanda, 2012) raises important questions of access for future researchers of the phenomenon of multiplatform books for young readers.

8.4 Contributions of this Research and Implications for Theory

This interdisciplinary work contributes to the understanding of the field of cultural production of children's literature, at a point of transition from print to digital formats, as seen through the lens of multiplatform books. Scholarly interest in this work could come from: 1) those in fields such as book history, who are interested in the comparative and changing configurations of cultural production for young people, and those interested in studying theories on reading in digital formats including evidence of a reading audience and of readers' resistance; 2) those researching young adult literature and librarianship; 3) those interested in the political economy of the publishing industry as the field hovers on the cusp of a major transformation from print to digital formats; 4) academics in the field of library and information science who are interested in the history of, and changing role of librarianship for young people; 5) scholars from media studies, as this book-related research builds upon existing studies of immaterial and affective labor in parallel studies in fields of entertainment, especially music and television; and 6) from those who study audiences, as this research includes fandom, resistance, and a visible audience around reading, enabled by digital technologies; 7) cultural studies of readers and resistance, building on the work of John Fiske and applying it to young adult readers; 8) gender studies, as it examines children's publishing and librarianship as gendered fields, and as the activity of reading as a gendered activity.

In addition, library practitioners and those who publish books for young readers are expected to be interested in this research.

8.5 Limitations of this Research

Limitations of this dissertation include time constraints and a small number of interview subjects (especially in the teen population), which means that the results are not generalizable. More subjects would have contributed to this research, as would a larger range of participants across demographics.

Another limitation was that even though this research started at the height of the series, just as the second book in the series was published, and despite recruitment efforts from librarians, I was unable to find young adult readers who had actually read *The Amanda Project* on their own. Instead, I assigned the book to two teenage girls, and after they read the book, I interviewed them. The fact that I was unable to find readers points to the fact that the series was not able to establish a following on its own, which later was confirmed when the eight-book series was terminated after the fourth title was published.

Two out of three case studies of this dissertation, *Twilight Saga* and *The Amanda Project*, were projects with heavy girl appeal. It would have been beneficial to include series with more boy appeal, such as *Skeleton Creek*, and to interview both male and female tweens or teens who had actually read such series on their own to compare participation across genders, and to study whether or not a gendered readership exists in digital formats in cases in which the books are not gender specific.

The focus group interview subjects were a diverse group of teens, equally divided between males and females, but their community was an affluent suburb, which is perhaps why 50% of the group owned an e-reading device. A broader study should be conducted across socio-economic levels, comparing results in communities with even broader adoption of e-readers—and in communities where there are none.

Because of limitations of time and budget, I was not able to study historical evidence of teens' participation in library-based activities. Future research might look at ALA archives, to read copies of Margaret Scoggin's teen review pamphlet "Circulatin' the News," or to see if there are archives of Best Books for Young Adults committee meetings. As such, teens' historical voices here are represented through the voices of the librarians.

The actual publishers of the case study sites declined requests for interviews for this dissertation. When I contacted the marketing department of Hachette, despite a personal introduction from a high-ranking editor at the firm, an interview request was declined, because at the time, the publisher had instituted a policy of not discussing *Twilight* with anyone outside of the company. By interviewing a small, medium-sized, and a large publisher instead, I was able to get perspectives on how technology is changing the publishing industry, especially in regard to young adult publishing, but it would have been useful to interview the publishers whose digital platforms were the subjects of this dissertation.

More emphasis on the role of bookselling and its influence on the field of cultural production would have been useful. In Chapter 1, I describe the early days of the field, in which the bookstore was part of the synergy between librarians and publishers, as in the case of Bertha Mahoney's bookstore in Boston, which included design elements from Anne Carroll Moore's Children's Room at the New York Public Library. Writing about the contemporary era, in Chapter 4, I describe how in an ever-shrinking marketplace where publishers can sell books, the B&N buyer becomes extremely powerful, able to ask publishers to change elements of books (from cover design and beyond) before he or

she will commit to buying copies for the nationwide stores. And in Chapter 6, I describe how Hachette could use feedback received on its *Twilight Saga* site to demonstrate evidence of a market for a potential product, which in turn could be presented to a buyer. There is much more to research from the booksellers' angle, but this connects to the next limitation, which is time.

In Chapter 1, a more extensive analysis of the YALSA blog is necessary, but time constraints did not make this possible. As such, an in-depth comparison of the Young Adult Alternative Newsletter of the 1970s, compared to the contemporary YALSA blog, will become a topic for future research.

Since multiplatform books and publishers' participatory websites are an emerging phenomenon that have not been widely studied, a longitudinal study should be conducted, comparing results of this study with readers two years from now, or five years from now, to see if leisure reading migrates more smoothly to digital platforms.

Finally, this research comprised historical and contemporary facets of publishing, librarianship, teen participation, and materiality of books. As a rich and ambitious project, it was necessary to explore diverse dimensions of what is a complex and non-linear field in order to deepen librarians' perspectives on a contemporary response to multiplatform books, and to examine how publishers' interactive sites are encroaching on the terrain traditionally maintained by librarians. As such, there is much room for much future research arising out of this dissertation.

8.6 Areas for Future research

Dimensions of future research arising out of this dissertation are outlined below:

Historical Dimensions

In order to compare ideologies within the field of young adult librarianship during different temporalities, an in-depth comparative study of the YAAN Newsletter and the YALSA Blog would make an interesting cultural history of librarianship, as would a study of archives related to teen participation in book reviewing via library-based programs.

Research on how the (gendered) field of children's literature was constructed during the 20th century is another area for future research. After interviewing veteran librarians and a veteran marketer for this dissertation, I want to study more about the history of how the field of children's literature was constructed between publishers and librarians during the 20th century. An oral history project is currently underway in partnership with the veteran marketer, in which we will interview publishing veterans who have contributed to the field over the last 50+ years of children's publishing.

Digital Dimensions

Work in the digital dimension should involve longitudinal studies on the case studies of this dissertation. While *The Amanda Project* has officially ended, ongoing, longitudinal research in both this site and also the *Twilight Saga* site is necessary to see how participants eventually cope with removal of the sites, and especially in the case of *The Amanda Project*, what is done to archive the site and its user-generated content.

Work tracking publishers' efforts in digital realms could include studying individual efforts of publishers. For example, the medium-sized publisher interviewed for this dissertation had creative ideas for using social media on a budget, blurring lines between fiction and reality by giving book characters their own facebook pages and Twitter feeds. Future work might involve tracing the "lives" of such characters, and such

work would contribute to evolving studies on the digital turn in the field of cultural production for young people. While similar phenomena could be studied in books for adults, and a comparable study could be done with literature for adult readers, at the time of this research, teens were contributing extensive amounts of book-related online content that provided rich data to study to a degree that was not the case with their adult counterparts.

Dimension of Resistance

Based on the teens' (of this dissertation) resistance to leisure reading in digital formats, longitudinal studies would be useful to see whether such formats are eventually adopted by the next generation of teens—and whether publishers continue to explore digital realms of content.

8.7 Conclusion

At a time in which traditional formats of books are transitioning from print to new digital formats, this dissertation seeks to understand how technology is changing books and the reading experience for young people. By applying historical and contemporary frameworks to four dimensions of influence in the field: publishers, librarians, the teen consumers, and materiality of books, it seems that we are at a point at which a transition to digital formats is inevitable. Publishers have embraced digital formats, and have found ways to encroach upon the spaces traditionally occupied by librarians, translating them into marketing venues. Yet problems exist as well within these commodified corrals of content. Within these communities of production, in which traditionally established roles such as "publisher," "author," and "consumer" blur, changes are also required in the workforce, as these websites are active around the clock, and labor blurs with leisure

within the community of production—on part of the publisher, the author, and the reader. As demonstrated in Chapter 7, establishing an ersatz fan culture without fan involvement is challenging if not impossible. Despite the appeal of multiplatform books, and the way teens can experience agency in participating, the convergence of the financial economy and the cultural economy on these sites leaves much to be desired from the readers' perspective. Readers' resistant behavior on publishers' interactive sites, as well as questions about leisure reading in print compared to digital formats, raise important questions about the future appeal of digital formats, especially as it seems that in the transition from print to digital, something about the leisure reading experience is lost.

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APPENDIX A: Analysis of YAAN Content

Young Adult Alternative Newsletter 1973-1979 Carol Starr, Editor

15-Oct-73	Vol. I, No. 5	Polacheck, Jan	Canton, OH	In-service training for YA workers on controversial material: "[Poster includes] Pregnant, VD, Drugs, Suicide Prevention, and with each caption is a phone number to the proper agency"	Social Worker Role	"The meeting was a howling success."
15-Oct-73	Vol. I, No. 5	Rogow, Roberta	Paterson, NJ	On using a "DuKane Filmstrip viewer" to show Yas filmstrips		"The most popular one, without a doubt, is the 'On Our Block' series, stories set ion an inner-city street, featuring a Peurto Rican family and their friends."
15-Oct-73	Vol. I, No. 5	Cordon, Myrt	Modesto, CA	needs jigsaw puzzles on modern art.		
15-Oct-73	Vol. I, No. 5	Timme, Polly	Madison, WI	New program for library with monthly speakers - teens will video tape, and program will be shown on local cable.		
15-Oct-73	Vol. I, No. 5			"Additional Teen Creative Writing Pamphlets"		one example: "'*Insight*' -- Michael Garrison, Baldwin Public Library, 351 Martin Street, Birmingham, MI 48012. Semi-annual; includes prose fiction with occasional poetry or humor, some art. Available upon request." ANOTHER: "'*Seven Hills Review*' -- Hortense Meister, Head of YA Services, The Public Library of Cinncinnati and Hamilton County, 800 Vine Street, Cincinnati, OH 45202. Either semi-annual or quarterly; includes book reviews, poetry, fiction and art work. Available upon request (I think)."

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	Vol. I, No. 5			"Freebies"		list of resources available free-of-charge, from "You Can 1. *Get it At the Library--Information on VD*" to 2. "GREAT -- <u>G</u>othic - <u>R</u>omantic - <u>E</u>xciting, <u>A</u>dventurous - <u>T</u>reats," or 3. *Poems to Read Under a Tree* or 4. "Serials of the Countercutlure," "The Emerging Independent Woman," Comuunes," "Black Life Styles," Self-Sufficiency Through Handicrafts"
15-Oct-73	Vol. I, No. 5			Random Notes		*T-shirt available "The U*N*A*B*A*S*H*E*D Librarian" for $2.50; subscription to Booklegger Magazine* "which will emphasize social change topics and creative life styles." Another example: "Young Adult Services Roundtable of the Florida Library Association has started a newsletter, *"The Bo Tree"*. M. Mosley, Jr. is the editor; he may or may not put you on his mailing list. Another: *"Say It So It Makes Sense"* - which is described as a quarterly newsletter of the Institute of Family REsearch and Education about getting inter-generational communication about "love, morality, sex, birth control, VD, drugs, and other areas of vital concern to our youth."

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15-Oct-73	Vol. I, No. 5	Rovenger, Judith	Ossining, NY	Random Notes		"When I first started here two years ago I envisioned myself going out into the ghetto areas, the drug centers, etc. saying 'the library has something for everyone' kind of crap. And although I still attempt to reach out to non-libe-users, most of my enrgies are taken up by kids that directly contront me. Ossining has about 20,000 pop. It has a more or less separate baclk and white community . . . " Problems describing conflict in the city, and in library users, problems with "town hoods," kids stealing, But turned it around - provided legal aid - lawyers speaking about legal rights of minors, started collecting rock music (reflecting patrons' interests), "the need arose for more counseling services to these kids -- legal aid, drug counselling, runaway info, jobs counselling, etc. and as we began to gather more information, more kids began to make use of these services . . ." Librarians of Westchester County pooled resources and created a paper called "Consciousness III" with info for teens.
15-Oct-73	Vol. I, No. 5	Campbell, Patty	LA, CA	Suggestions for Setting up School Visits	on importances of outreach to school libraries and a how-to list.	
15-Oct-73	Vol. I, No. 5			Classified Advertising	Job listing	
15-Oct-73	Vol. I, No. 5	Starr, Carol		"Please do copy --- just give me credit!"		

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15-Oct-73	Vol. I, No. 5	Starr, Carol		"An elephant: A mouse built to government specifications." "Would that fit ALA??!"	Cheeky tone	
15-Jan-74	Vol. II, No. 1	Ellsworth, Susan M.	unknown	"An Open Letter to Wendy Towner"	Social Worker Role	About role of librarian in promoting social awareness of drug abuse: "I believe in the idea of a librarian -- especialy a budding librarians till in library school -- working on the hotline as they are able to organize (and catalog) references, evaluate and provide information, etc.
15-Jan-74	Vol. II, No. 1	Geltman, Harriet	Wayne, NJ	YA section is for "recreational and interest reading, not reference and resarch." YA reference part of Adult ref -	Collectio n	
15-Jan-74	Vol. II, No. 1	Van Gieson, Marilyn	Hawaii State Library		Social Worker Role, Meaning of Newslett er	thanks to newsletters, now including speakers "from several social agencies working with teenagers." providing books on teen health. "We are awaiting more newsletters as they are the means for us to know what others are doing in the field."
15-Jan-74	Vol. II, No. 1	Garrison, Michael	Birmingha m, MI			Interest in his "INSIGHT" magazine.
15-Jan-74	Vol. II, No. 1	Chelton, M.K.	New Carrollton, MD		Collectio n	Use wine rack to display school newspapers. Make posters with a projector. Cooperative with school librarians.

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						1. Alternatives in Print: An Annual Catalog of Social Change Publications (1973); 2. California Directory of Alternative Schools; 3. Jumping the Track: High School Students; 4. Girl and Allen Ginsberg Talk About Speed;5. High School Feminist Studies; 6.Girl Sleuth: A Feminist Guide to Nancy Drew and Her Sisters; 7. I'm Running Away From Home But I'm Not Allowed to Cross the Street: A Primer on Women's Liberation; 8. New York State Abortion Directory; 9. Craft Manual of American Indian Footwear; 10. How to Publish Your Very Own Underground Newspaper; 11. Witches Liberation and Guide to Covens; 12. Directory of High Sample Packet of 10 High School Underground Papeprs; 13. "Directory of High School / Junior High School Underground Papers [This is more of a list - other than first, none are reviewed.] But then one is reviewed: "...let me tell you about a book to avoid at all costs: *Your Future in Library Careers* by Alpha Myers and Sara A Temkin . . .This book si so incredibly bad, I find it hard to believe it was really published in 1973. It is written by two female librarians from the East Coast -- one a professor the other an assistant public library director. Be glad you are not professionally connected with either one of htem! The writing style is sticky-sweet and on the level of a mentally retarded eight-year-old (well, almost). The book is rift with an MCP* attitude and seems hell-bent on insisteng that all you single female
15-Jan-74	Vol. II, No. 1	Starr, Carol		Book Reviews	Last review reflects conflict with Starr's voice about women's rights and a changing world, vs. these authors very tradition al (sexist) views on women in the workplac e.	would-be librarians will find plenty of attractive men in your work (well . . . maybe one . . . but
15-Jan-74	Vol. II, No. 1			Freebies		Another list of pamphlets by other librarians

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					How to use them in library	
15-Jan-74	Vol. II, No. 1			"Cassette Use in Pulic Libraries"		Assorted librarians on the use.
15-Jan-74	Vol. II, No. 1			News from State YA Organizations		
15-Jan-74	Vol. II, No. 1			Random Notes		note on book to film, "The Roadrunner's Report" a six page newsletter of children's and YA library activities, Bumper sticker for sale: *There's More to Libraries Than Meets the Eye"*; NCTE combating censorship
				YA BEST BOOKS 1973		"Books that run the gamut from prison reform to how to be beautiful by using inexpensive items such as avocados, food coloring and vaseline are included on this year's annual list of "Best Books for Young Adults -- 1973. Even teens are nostalgic as exemplified by Joyce Maynard's *Looking Back: A Chronicle of Growing Up Old in the Sixties*. But the list also reflects young people's concern with contemporary problems such as the plight of the American Indian, mental illness, women's liberation, right to life or death, drugs and the rock scene. Also for the first time, the list will have a cover designed by a high school student."
				People-to-people index		a resources of librarians and their expertise, plus phone numbers so that they could be contacted.
15-Mar-74	Vol. II, No. 2	Timms, Polly	Madison, WI	YA at Madison (Wisconsin) Public Library		description of room and of collection. Programming: Since there is a lot of programming for youth in Madison, the library is not always successful. "Movies are ever popular. Young adults are wary of and don't like gimmicks. They use the library here fro school work, they use the Young Adult area for recreational reading and listening, vocational information, and tehy come ot hte movies on Saturdays. But they don't want to be conned into a library."

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15-Mar-74	Vol. II, No. 2	Cynthia Biard	Bay Area Young Adult (BAYA) Librarians	Report from the Bay Area Young Adult Librarians' January 1974 Meeting on Public-School Library Cooperation		complaints already then about school librarians being phased out in elementary and middle schools. In support of getting ILL established between school lib and public for greater access. Need for "salesmanship" on part of librarian as librarians are getting what is left after P.E. budgets are fulfilled (p. 4)
15-Mar-74	Vol. II, No. 2	**Ruth Lonsberry**	Lansing MI	Letters to the Editor		success with puzzle tables and 8-track tapes
15-Mar-74	Vol. II, No. 2	Roberta Rogow	Paterson, NJ	Letters to the Editor		"YP [young people?] section in paterson public library s, to all intents and purposes, no more - will be integrated with adult.
15-Mar-74	Vol. II, No. 2	Ann Maczuga	Phoenix, AZ	Letters to the Editor		"Establishing "phonograph" collection, and asking for recommendations of records.
15-Mar-74	Vol. II, No. 2	Mary K. Chelton	White Plains, NY	Letters to the Editor		how to select music for a collection beyond "depend on the kids"?
15-Mar-74	Vol. II, No. 2	Marianne Fairfield		Picture books for young adults		"I work with junior high more than high school kids. I agree with Margaret Edwards that Young Adult Service is the library bastard. That means that junior high service was cloned, and has neither mother nor father." and then a list of picture books that work with those in-between kids. including "Theodore and the Talking Mushroom (Lionni), The Lorax, Seuss, others by Peet, Mayer, Yuri Suhl, Tomi Ungerer.
15-Mar-74	Vol. II, No. 2	Carol Starr		editorial		celebrating expanded attention on YA services from Wilson Library Bulletin, American Libraries (column by Richard Peck), Booklist, PW. Asks readers to "define young adult!" "Like the definition given in the YA Task Force on Young Adult Services: 'Adolescence can be defined as that period in a person's development when he no longer sees himself as a child but other people do not see him as an adult." (p. 6)

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15-Mar-74	Vol. II, No. 2	Carol Starr		Midwinter YASD report		call to arms to support YASD: "the sixth largest divison of 13, gets the lowest rate of expenditure." Asks others to write to Robert Wedgeworth, Exec Dir ALA.
15-Mar-74	Vol. II, No. 2			Freebies		*Proyecto Leer Bulletin* - Bib of Spanish and Portuguese mags, comics, books for children, young adults and adults. Others include information on Halloween fun, "good Reads," and a host of items on social work: "Abortion/Birth Control," "VD Handbook," "Birth Control Handbook,"
15-Mar-74	Vol. II, No. 2			Collaboration between publishers and librarians		under "Random Notes:" "Bantam has a new person, Roger Cooper (Bantam Books, 666 Fifth Ave, 10019) in the School Division, whose main job is PR with YA librarians. He would like contributions for ideas on how Bantam could help, including hardback titles which have been overlooked in paperback printing. Titles must have a mass market appeal since the initial printing is 35,000 copies. He would also welcome comments on covers which librarians have found to be less than successful on their books."
15-Jun-74	Vol. II, No. 3			Conference highlights ALA - YASD programs		
15-Jun-74	Vol. II, No. 3	Joy Macari	Dublin, CA	Active Listening for the YA Librarian		librarian did training program with local crisis intervention switchboard: Hotline. Wanted to meet people who care about teens. Offered support via library - and learned about active listening.
15-Jun-74	Vol. II, No. 3	Joni Brodart	Fremont, CA	Watercouch in the library		most popular plae in the library.
15-Jun-74	Vol. II, No. 3	Guy Wilson	Oxon Hill, Maryland	"Folk Jams at Oxon Hill"		folk music in the library
15-Jun-74	Vol. II, No. 3	Jan Ballard	Orlando, FL	"Rock Periodicals"		recommended magazines for thos with music interest

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15-Jun-74	Vol. II, No. 3	Robert Gurn	Buffalo, NY	"You Act - Young Adult Cable Television"		program community tv
15-Jun-74	Vol. II, No. 3	Sara Siebert and Linda Lapides	Baltimore, MD	Film Reviews from Pratt		
15-Jun-74	Vol. II, No. 3	Jana Varlejs	Montclair, NJ	Letters to the Editor		film programs for teens/tweens
15-Jun-74	Vol. II, No. 3	Patty Campbell	Los Angeles, CA	Letters to the Editor		about library book at "Equicon" Star Trek Convention
15-Jun-74	Vol. II, No. 3	Diane Ray Tope	Raleigh, NC	Letters to the Editor		reporting on bringing Pscyhologist to a conf at the North Carolina State Conf called "Understanding Youth: The Pscyhology of Adolescence" in which Dr. Bilie Corder advocated for making books on sex avail to teens on open shelves so that they don't have to ask for them.
15-Jun-74	Vol. II, No. 3	Christine Kirby	Orlando, FL	Letters to the Editor		Comics and paperbacks - pbs are mainstay of YA - cheap, less storage space,
15-Jun-74	Vol. II, No. 3			"Junior High Corner"		added this section - poems by Nancy Kennel
15-Jun-74	Vol. II, No. 3	Sally Keehn	Severna Park, MD	Slide tape presentations in the library		
15-Jun-74	Vol. II, No. 3			Freebies		
15-Jun-74	Vol. II, No. 3			Professional reading		recommendations for librarians - Black Literature for Adolescents, Books for Yong Adults: Alternatives to A Separate Piece, Literature Is. . .
15-Jun-74	Vol. II, No. 3			Random Notes		"Literature for the Adolescent Reader" - grad seminar at Kean College NJ and YASD; New York Comic Art Convention same time as ALA; "VD Blues" - available on 16 mm for $30 for 3 day rental; Booklist asking for opinions on doing away with the separate YA section, and just asterixing YA books throughout magazine.

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1-Sep-74	Vol. II, No. 4	Jan Ballard	Orlando, FL	Rock Record Reviewing Resources			review of magazines related to rock music
1-Sep-74	Vol. II, No. 4	Michael Stipek	Denver Public Library	on music selection			tips - who are your users; budget; source; user suggestions
1-Sep-74	Vol. II, No. 4	Pratt Library	Baltimore, MD	Film Reviews from Pratt			
1-Sep-74	Vol. II, No. 4	Jan Ballard	Orlando, FL	Care and Feeding of Young Adults			Packet with guidelines of what to do as YA libraryians -$24. "Their list of books for YA Librarians to read (49 titles) does not include Margaret Edward's Fair Garden and the Swarm of Beasts . . .
1-Sep-74	Vol. II, No. 4			ALA/YASD highlights from ALA			topics: censorship in YA; Business news; Topof the news; Upcomign SF convention for YASD: sexism in adolescent lives and literature
1-Sep-74	Vol. II, No. 4			List of Feminist Resources			"SHARE: Sisters Have Resources Everywhere"
1-Sep-74	Vol. II, No. 4	Mary K. Chelton	Westchester, NY	Letters to the Editor			Good sex title: Everything a Teenager Wants to Know about Sex . . .and Should"
1-Sep-74	Vol. II, No. 4	Alice J. Sedgwick	Manitowoc, WI	Letters to the Editor			Realism in YA Literature - ALA "Loving Choices" list as a guide -
1-Sep-74	Vol. II, No. 4	Pamela Myhre	Wayzata MN	Letters to the Editor			Comix exchange
1-Sep-74	Vol. II, No. 4	Margaret C. Michel	Annapolis, MD	Letters to the Editor			Teens (12-16) voting for favorite books: Exorcist; Go Ask Alice; Outsiders; That Was Then, This is Now; Pigman; Lisa Bright & Dar; Are You there God? It's me, Margaret; Mr. and Mrs. Bo Jo Jones; My Darling, My Hamburger; Jonathan Livingston Seagull. Babysitter course.
1-Sep-74	Vol. II, No. 4	Elmer Spurrier	Dundalk, MD	Letters to the Editor			Booktalks
1-Sep-74	Vol. II, No. 4			Freebies			quick reads: a list of skinny books
1-Sep-74	Vol. II, No. 4			Random Notes			

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1-Sep-74	Vol. II, No. 4	Carol Starr		Other things worth looking into		Natioanl Directory of Runaway Centers; ALGOL: A Magazine about Science Fiction; forthcoming bovies, publishing plans; an "Are You VD Free" button available -
1-Sep-74	Vol. II, No. 4	Carol Starr		Professional Reading -		Science Materials for Children and Young Adults
1-Sep-74	Vol. II, No. 4	Carol Starr		People Notes (Upward-Bound YA Librarians)		Cindi Klinck - Head Librarian in Kentucky; Judith Rovenger: Sossinging - teaching assistantship in bibliotherapy at Columbia University Graduate school of library science
15-Jan-75	Volume III, No 1	Carol Starr		Right On Women: Bay Area Young Adult Librarians Meeting November 26, 1974 at which five high school women prove that they have, indeed, Come A Long Way -- Period.		"women on the move" - high school organization of concerned women students (young feminists who have had an artilce in MS magazine, programs including a visit by Anais Nin, etc.) girls reaciting to being told "Stanford is aboys school, don't bother to apply" or recommended to go into nursing instead of medicine - uncovering discrepancies in athletic funding - $5,900 for boys vs. $900 for girls - (page 1).
15-Jan-75	Volume III, No 1	Jan Stuter	Marysville, CA	Letters to the Editor		most popular '45
15-Jan-75	Volume III, No 1	Susan Ellsworth	Riverdale, MD	Letters to the Editor		"Hustle Book" resource directory - "an example of the kind of thing young adult librarians concerned with referring young adults to community resources should avoid." Sloppy, misleading, irresponsibly indexed.
15-Jan-75	Volume III, No 1	Betsy Short	New Carrollton, MD	Letters to the Editor		warning of recent censoring of Shirly Jackson's film The Lottery for being "anti-christian, anti-American, and anti-Parent."
15-Jan-75	Volume III, No 1	Mary Moore	Modesto, CA	Letters to the Editor		set up Youth Advisory Board - reps from local high schools. Concert & Jam session, macrame, astrology, tarot, etc.
15-Jan-75	Volume III, No 1	Mavis Richards	Republic of Singapore	Letters to the Editor		"Teen News" - reviews and writings by teens at their library.

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15-Jan-75	Volume III, No 1	Joan Taub	Leonia, NJ	Letters to the Editor		How to get speakers?
15-Jan-75	Volume III, No 1	CarolAnn Witten	Orange County CA	Young Adult Library Volunteers		success story with teen volunteers- desire to give teens voices.
15-Jan-75	Volume III, No 1			Film Reviews from Pratt		(regular column)
15-Jan-75	Volume III, No 1			Junior High Corner		success story with programming for younger teens
15-Jan-75	Volume III, No 1		San Diego, CA	YA Day At California Library Association 1974 Convention		
15-Jan-75	Volume III, No 1			Passport: "A collection of student reviews of contemporary books"		desire to give teens voices
15-Jan-75	Volume III, No 1			Freebies		
15-Jan-75	Volume III, No 1			Professional Reading Hot Line News: Books into Movies, Television, and Paperbacks		
15-Jan-75	Volume III, No 1			Random Notes		Inside-Outside: a newsletter on library services to youth and adults in prisons, jails, and detention centers; guide to women's films; Youth grants from the NEA; Careers working with horses; Journal of Social issues,
15-Jan-75	Volume III, No 1			Youth News		Youth in Revolt - "new gap between working youth who have not gone to college and the nation's social institutions.
15-Jan-75	Volume III, No 1			National Runaway Hotlines		The National Runaway Switchboard, Peace of Mind - referral services for runaways

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APPENDIX B: YALSA Blog Analysis

YALSA Blog Analysis http://yalsa.ala.org/blog/page/2/

We can ALL be Movers & Shakers	ALA M&S list	April Pavis		10/31/11
Preparing for the Winter Blahs	library usage down	Kristen Bodine	Colorado	11/30/11
Tweets of the Week		Linda W. Braun		10/28/11
The Technical Reference Librarian		Mairead Duffy		10/27/11
ALA conferences	saving money			10/27/11
App of the Week	Pride and Prejudice and Zombies: The Interactive eBook	Rebekah Kamp		10/26/11
New Blogger, YALSA's New Research Agenda		Hannah Gomez	Boston, MA	10/26/11
iPad, wePad, Programs with Teens		Audrey Sumser		10/25/11
Bringing Your Library to Your teens	Mobile Branch at local comic con	Mimi Curtis		10/24/11

YALSA Blog Analysis http://yalsa.ala.org/blog/page/2/

Planning Programs that are Age-Appropriate for Teens	about a podcast: "One of Jennifer's main points was that teens want input in their library—they want to feel like they have a voice." what to do about audience of diff ages - imp. Of collaboriating with teens.	Kristen Bodine		11/21/11
Happy Minecraft Day!	celebrating release of game	Erin Daly		11/18/11
Tweets of the Week		Linda W. Braun		11/18/11
YALSA's new website		admin		11/17/11
App of the week	"Silent Film Director" - like "instagram" for videos	Wendy Stephens		11/16/111
Fit: Body & Mind	in response to article on relationship between fitness and academic excellence, school library got 2 stationary bikes.	Km Anderson	Champaign, IL	11/14/11
NaNoWriMo	national novel writing month and teens	Gretchen	New Canaan CT	11/14/11
A Day in the Life	description of hectic day school library	mk Eagle		11/14/11
Teens and social networking, what is the latest?	about latest PEW Report	Linda W. Braun		11/12/11
Tweets of the Week		Linda W. Braun		11/11/11
App of the Week	safeGdriver	Erica Gauquier		11/9/11
Research Roundup		Hanna Gomez		11/7/11
ALA conferences	staying fit during conference	Kelly Czarnecki		11/5/11
Texts and Teen Writing Skills	about NYT articles-texting detrimental to writing	Jessica Fessler		11/5/11
Tweets of the Week		Linda W. Braun		11/4/11
App of the week	Textastic: code editing app	Linda W. Braun		11/2/11
Teen Tech Week	new website			11/1/11
YALSA President's report	Teen read week	Sarah Flowers		11/1/11
Celebrating National Gaming Day with Teens		Sarah Ludwig	Hamden, CT	11/1/11
Thinking about Advocacy and Lobbying, Again		Linda W. Braun		10/31/11

YALSA Blog Analysis http://yalsa.ala.org/blog/page/2/

2011 The Year That . . .		Linda W. Braun	Boston, MA	12/13/11
Teen Tech Week				12/12/11
Photography: Capturing Teens in a New Light		Kelly Czarnecki	Charlotte, N.C.	12/9/11
Tweets of the Week		Linda W. Braun		12/9/11
Teen Tech Week				12/8/11
Embedded Librarianship	getting teens into the library	Jacqui Milliern	Rural, Midwest	12/7/11
App of the Week	Cambox (video and beabox creations)	Erin Daly		12/7/11
YALSA Podcast #103	Graphic Novels in your School Library	Matthew Moffett		12/6/11
The Reason for the Season	What to do with teens over break	Mimi Curtis	unknown	12/6/11
Research Roundup	on teen culture	Hannah Gomez	Boston	12/5/11
Tweets of the Week		Linda W. Braun		12/2/11
YALSA President's report		Sarah Flowers		12/1/11
ALA conferences				11/30/11
Benefits of ListServs	"in hopes that you might join the ranks of young adult librarians who can't seem to stop talking about their job"	April Pavis	unknown	11/29/11
Teens and information literacy	about Wired magazine article by Clive Thompson about teens and internet illiteracy	Audrey Sumser		11/29/111
Finding time when you don't have any		Heather Botelho	unknown	11/28/11
Call for papers: LRRT		Hannah Gomez		11/28/11
Tweets of the Week		Linda W. Braun		11/25/11
App of the week	Taptu - DJ Your News	Rebekah Kamp	Belgrade Community	11/23/11
YALSA Podcast #102	Megan Honig of YALS (editor in chief)	Matthew Moffett		11/22/11
Perfect for Holiday Giving	Michael Printz Award Calendar	Linda W. Braun		11/22/11
Curation isn't just for museums	about "storify"	Linda W. Braun		11/22/11
Being an Advocate for Copyrights	teaching teens about copyright abd citation	Mairead Duffy	unknown	11/21/11

YALSA Blog Analysis http://yalsa.ala.org/blog/page/2/

Content summary	Subtitle	Author	Author's location from their user profile	date of post
Youth Participation in programming	"Volunteers @ Your Library"	Audrey Sumser	Cuyahoga, OH	Dec-11
Tweets of the Week		Linda W. Braun	Boston, MA	1/8/12
Tweets of the week				12/30/11
Tweets of the week				12/23/11
App of the week	Immersedition	Wendy Stephens	New Market, AL	1/4/12
App of the Week	Skitch			12/28/11
App of the week	Netflix			12/21/11
Books-for-Teens	mission - books for at risk teens			1/8/12
YALSA election	Judy Nelson			1/3/12
ALA conferences				12/29/11
ALA conferences				12/28/11
ALA conferences				12/27/11
Fund raising				12/27/11
Teen Tech Week				12/28/11
Keeping in touch via technology		Rosanna McGinnis		12/27/11
Youth Participation in programming	"Learn, Quest, Play: Think Big"	Kelly Czarnecki	Charlotte, N.C.	12/22/11
YALSA President's report		Sarah Flowers		1/3/12
App of the Week	Gift Giving Special (Bibliophilia)	Linda W. Braun	Boston, AM	1/3/12
Learning as I go	about being a new librarian: about listening to teen patrons. Comments about teens as a population "ageing out," having too much energy - "beasts!",	Abby Porter	unknown	12/21/11
Teen Tech Week	about activities for teens with tech			
YALSA Podcast #104	Badges for Lifelong Learning	Matthew Moffett	Fairfax County (VA?)	12/20/11
In Memoriam: Dorothy Broderick	"There's something in my library to offend everyone": Parner of Dorothy Broderick!	Sarah Flowers		12/19/11
Tweets of the week				12/16/11
App of the Week	Michael Jackson the Experience HD	Erica Gauquier	Darien, CT	

APPENDIX C: Consent Forms

Marianne Martens Doctoral Candidate School of Communication & Information Rutgers University (SCILS) New Brunswick, NJ martens@rci.rutgers.edu tel: 908-821-7077	Dr. Marija Dalbello School of Communication & Information Rutgers University 4 Huntington Street New Brunswick, NJ 08901 dalbello@scils.rutgers.edu tel: 732-932-7500 x 8215

Consent Form to Participate in a Research Study

Title of Study: A Historical and Comparative Analysis of Multiplatform Books for Young Readers (working title)

Researchers Marianne Martens (P.I.) and Dr. Marija Dalbello

About this Study: You are invited to participate in a research study that is being conducted by Marianne Martens, who is a graduate student in the Department of Communication, Information, and Library Studies at Rutgers University. Before you agree to participate in this study, you should know enough about it to make an informed decision. If you have any questions, ask the investigator. You should be satisfied with the answers before you agree to be in the study.

Background/Purpose: The purpose of this study is to examine young adult literature, from its early history, to the emergence of interactive, multiplatform books. Your participation in this study will involve being interviewed for no more than sixty (60) minutes about your experience with young adult literature. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you prefer not to be interviewed, or if you do not want your answers included in the study, that is entirely your choice.

Benefits: While there are no direct benefits to you of participating, your participation will expand on an overview of the field of young adult literature, which will help us understand how books are created, marketed, and read today.

Risks: I do not anticipate that participating in this study will pose any risks to you.

Confidentiality: This research is confidential. The research records will include some information about you and this information will be stored in such a manner that some linkage between your identity and the response in the research exists. Some of the information collected about you includes your gender and

information about your work. Please note that we will keep this information confidential by limiting individual's access to the research data and keeping it in a secure location at Rutgers, under lock and key. The research team and the Institutional Review Board at Rutgers University are the only parties that will be allowed to see the data, except as may be required by law. In addition, a professional transcription service may be used to transcribe recorded data. If a report of this study is published, or the results are presented at a professional conference, only group results will be stated. All study data will be kept for three years.

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may choose whether or not you participate, and you may withdraw from participating at any time during the study without any penalty. In addition, you may choose not to answer any questions with which you are not comfortable.

If you have any questions about the study or study procedures, you may contact me c/o The School of Communication & Information, Rutgers, 4 Huntington Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901-1071, or email: martens@rci.rutgers.edu, or phone: 908-821-7077, or you can contact my faculty advisor, Dr. Marija Dalbello at the same address, or email: dalbello@scils.rutgers.edu, or phone: 732-932-7500 x 8215.
If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research subject, you can contact the Institutional Review Board (a committee that reviews research studies in order to protect research participants). Please contact the IRB Administrator at Rutgers University at:
Rutgers University, the State University of New Jersey
Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects
Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
3 Rutgers Plaza
New Brunswick, NJ USA 08901-8559
Tel: 848-932-0150
Email: humansubjects@orsp.rutgers.edu

You will not be paid to take part in this study, and may withdraw from the study at any time. If you have any additional questions, you can reach Marianne Martens via email at martens@rci.rutgers.edu.

Thank you for your consideration.
Sincerely yours,

_____

    _____

Marianne Martens   Date:

I have read this letter and understand the terms of it. I have had a chance to ask questions, and understand that I may be in touch with the researchers if I have additional questions. I hereby consent to participating in this study:

_____
_____
Name: Date:

For the purposes of this study, I consent to the interview being recorded.

_____
_____
Name: Date:

CC: Researchers' File   Initial here: _____

Parental Consent Form

Marianne Martens	Dr. Marija Dalbello
Doctoral Student	School of Communication and
School of Communication and	Information
Information	Rutgers University
Rutgers University	4 Huntington Street
New Brunswick, NJ	New Brunswick, NJ 08901
martens@rci.rutgers.edu	dalbello@rutgers.edu
tel: 908-821-7077	tel: 732-932-7500 x 8215

Parental Consent Form

Title of Study: A Historical and Comparative Analysis of Multiplatform Books for Young Readers (working title)

Researchers: Marianne Martens and Dr. Marija Dalbello

About this Study: You/your child is invited to participate in a research study that is being conducted by Marianne Martens, who is a graduate student in the Department of Communication, Information, and Library Studies at Rutgers University. Before you agree to participate in this study, you should know enough about it to make an informed decision. If you have any questions, ask the investigator. You should be satisfied with the answers before you agree to be in the study.

You are being asked to allow your child to participate in a research study. Taking part in this study is entirely voluntary. Please take your time in deciding whether or not your child may participate. This form provides a summary of the information the researchers will discuss with you. If your child takes part in this research study, you will keep a copy of this form. Be sure to ask any questions you have about the research study.

The purpose of this study is to examine young adult literature, from its early history, to the emergence of interactive, multiplatform books. You/your child's participation in this study will involve being interviewed for no more than sixty (60) minutes about his or her experience with young adult literature. Your child's participation in this study is completely voluntary. If your child prefers not to be interviewed, or if you do not want his or her answers included in the study, that is entirely your choice.

Benefits: You/your child have been told that the benefits of taking part in this study may be educational and entertaining, and will provide information about the

field of young adult literature. However, you may receive no direct benefit from taking part in this study

Risks to subjects: We do not anticipate that taking part in this study will pose any risk to the participants. The interview will be conducted at a location of your choice.

Confidentiality: This research is confidential. The research records will include some information about your child, and this information will be stored in such a manner that some linkage between your identity and the response in the research exists. Some of the information collected about your child includes his or her age, gender, and reading habits. Please note that we will keep this information confidential by limiting individual's access to the research data and keeping it in a secure location in Rutgers, under lock and key. The research team and the Institutional Review Board at Rutgers University are the only parties that will be allowed to see the data, except as may be required by law. In addition, a professional transcription service may be used to transcribe recorded data. If a report of this study is published, or the results are presented at a professional conference, only group results will be stated. All study data will be kept for three years.

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may choose whether or not your child can participate, and you may withdraw your child from participating at any time during the study activities without any penalty to your child. In addition, you/your child may choose not to answer any questions with which you/your child are not comfortable.

If you/your child have any questions about the study or study procedures, you/your child may contact me c/o The School of Communication, Information and Library Studies, Rutgers, 4 Huntington Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901-1071, or email: martens@rci.rutgers.edu, or phone: 908-821-7077, or you can contact my faculty advisor, Dr. Marija Dalbello at the same address, or email: dalbello@rutgers.edu, or by phone at 732-932-7500 x 8215.

If you have any questions regarding your/your child's rights as a research subject, you can contact the Institutional Review Board (a committee that reviews research studies in order to protect research participants). Please contact the IRB Administrator at Rutgers University at:

Rutgers University, the State University of New Jersey
Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects
Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
3 Rutgers Plaza
New Brunswick, NJ USA 08901-8559
Tel: 848-932-0150

Email: humansubjects@orsp.rutgers.edu

Your child will not be paid to take part in this study, and may withdraw from the study at any time. If you have any additional questions, you can reach me, Marianne Martens via email at martens@rci.rutgers.edu.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,

_____   _____

Marianne Martens   Date:

Parent's or Guardian's Statement:
I have read this letter and understand the terms of it. I have had a chance to ask questions, and understand that I may be in touch with the researchers if I have additional questions. I hereby allow my child
(name:)_____to participate in this study.

_____   _____
Parent's or Guardian's Name (printed):   Date:

_____   _____
Parent's or Guardian's Name (signed):   Date:

For the purposes of this study, I consent to the interview being recorded.

_____   _____
Parent's or Guardian's Name (printed):   Date:

_____   _____
Parent's or Guardian's Name (signed):   Date:

CC: Parents
       Researchers' File

Child's Assent Form:

Marianne Martens Doctoral Candidate School of Communication and Information Rutgers University 4 Huntington Street New Brunswick, NJ martens@rci.rutgers.edu tel: 908-821-7077	Dr. Marija Dalbello Associate Professor School of Communication and Information Rutgers University 4 Huntington Street New Brunswick, NJ 08901 dalbello@rutgers.edu tel: 732-932-7500 x 8215

Child's Assent Form

We are asking you to be in a research study to help us learn about young adult literature and multiplatform books. It is your choice if you want to be in this study. You can say yes or no, and whatever you decide is ok.

If you decide to take part in it, you will be asked a few questions about what types of books you like to read, and about your online participation on book-related sites. This will take no more than sixty (60) minutes.

Please talk this over with your parents before you decide whether or not to participate. We will also ask your parents to give their permission for you to take part in this study. But even if your parents say "yes," you can still decide not to do this. If you don't want to be in this study, you don't have to participate. Remember, being in this study is up to you and no one will be upset if you don't want to participate or even if you change your mind later and want to stop.

Confidentiality: This research is confidential. The research records will include some information about you and this information will be stored in such a manner that some linkage between your identity and the response in the research exists. Some of the information collected about you includes your age, whether you are a boy or a girl, and your reading habits. Please note that we will keep this information confidential by limiting individual's access to the research data and keeping it in a secure location in Rutgers, under lock and key. The research team and the Institutional Review Board at Rutgers University are the only parties that will be allowed to see the data, except as may be required by law. In addition, a professional transcription service may be used to transcribe recorded data. If a report of this study is published, or the results are presented at a professional conference, only group results will be stated. All study data will be kept for three years.

If you decide you want to be in the study, but change your mind later, that is ok. You can stop being in the study any time. If you have any questions, you can ask them any time.

You can ask any questions that you have about the study. If you have a question later that you didn't think of now, you can contact me through the contact information listed on top of this form or you can contact my faculty advisor, Dr. Marija Dalbello through the contact information listed on top of this form.

If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research subject, you can contact the Institutional Review Board (a committee that reviews research studies in order to protect research participants). Please contact the IRB Administrator at Rutgers University at:

Rutgers University, the State University of New Jersey
Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects
Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
3 Rutgers Plaza
New Brunswick, NJ USA 08901-8559
Tel: 848-932-0150

Email: humansubjects@orsp.rutgers.edu

Signing your name at the bottom means that you agree to be in this study.
You and your parents will be given a copy of this form after you have signed below.

Also, you agree that this interview may be recorded.

Signature of researcher: _____   Date: _____

Child's statement:

The researcher explained the study to me, and I decided I want to be in it. I know that I can stop if I change my mind, and I can ask any questions.

Child's printed name:_____
          Date:_____

Signature of child: _____   Date:_____

Parent's printed name:_____   Date:_____

Signature of parent:_____   Date:_____

CC: Child and parent,
        Researcher

APPENDIX D: Interview protocols (publishers, librarians, young adults)

The Librarians: Protocol for semi-structured interviews with contemporary librarians

I. Your career choice: How did you decide to work (or end up working) with teens?

II. Please tell me about your work with Teens: What sort of activities (did you) or do you have in your library to reach teens? Are you using technology and the Internet to attract and work with teens? Could you please describe? Are you involved in book selection in your library? What is your role? What is most important to you about getting books into the hands of young people?

III. What do you think about publishers' new ways of engaging with teens online, whether via their proprietary websites (such as *Random Buzzers*), or via multiplatform books (such as *The Amanda Project*)?

IV. Young Adult Literature Beyond the Library: Relationships with Publishers
Are you regularly in touch with publishers and their authors about young adult literature? Where and when do you meet? How do these relationships influence your work?

V. Role in Establishing the Field, Serving as Cultural Arbiters of Taste

Do you serve (or have you ever served) on committees of the

American Library Association (ALA) or the sub-group Young

Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) committees?

Do you serve (or have you ever served) on any award committees?

Do you (or have you ever written) write reviews of Young Adult

books?

The Publishers: Protocol for semi-structured interviews with contemporary marketers

1. In recent years, the Internet has enabled publishers to have a direct relationship with young adult readers. How is your company using the Internet to reach teens? How does teen feedback help you in your publishing program?

2. Are you using the Internet to engage young adult librarians, and if so, how?

3. What role do you envision young adult librarians have (if any) in the books you publish for young adults?

4. Tell me about your multiplatform publishing program. What is exciting for you about these new formats of books? What are some of the challenges?

The Young Adults: Protocol for semi-structured interviews with teens who participate in online book-related sites

In order to study this population's use of the Internet on book-related sites about how and why they participate, I conducted interviews with teens using snowball sampling starting with friends of my children. The target population is teens participating in the online book-related sites of this research project, and I hope to have at least 10 participants.

Themes and Sample Questions

Participation

Do you participate in online book-related sites? If so, which ones, and how do you participate (as a reviewer, fan-fiction writer, content contributor, or other)?

If you participate, what type of material do you contribute?

How much time do you spend on these sites a day or a week?

Have you ever used the Internet to participate in book-related discussions on sites like Amazon.com, weRead, Library Thing, or others?

Have you ever used the Internet to participate in discussions on title specific sites like *Twilight Saga.com*, *The Amanda Project* or book reviewing sites such as RandomBuzzers?

Are you familiar with multiplatform books? Have you ever contributed content to a multiplatform book series, such as *The Amanda Project*? If so, why do you participate? How often do you participate?

Reading and Book Acquisition

How many books do you read a month?

Tell me about the types of books you like to read.

Where do you get the books you read?

Where do you go (Friends? Websites? Librarians?) for book recommendations,

and why?

Affective Labor

Have you ever posted questions to authors on publisher websites?

Have you ever corresponded with authors on publisher websites?

Does having access to authors make you more or less inclined to access particular

websites?

Do you like seeing your name attached to reviews/content?

What motivates you to contribute to these sites? What do you like about

participating?

Privacy

Is privacy a concern for you?

Do you read the EULAs (End-User License Agreements) of websites before you

participate?

Creativity (remix)

Do you ever use the Internet to...take material you find online--like songs, text or

images—and remix it into your own artistic creations? How often?

APPENDIX E: *Random Buzzers* Analysis Spreadsheet

Random Buzzers Participants:

This analysis was conducted in order to estimate the participants on the *Random Buzzers* site, and is connected to the case study of Chapter 4.

Random Buzzers - Participants   April 2012   1

Buzzers Directory (http://www.randombuzzers.com/the-buzz/buzzers-directory/) Total number of buzzers as of 4/5/12: 67,524. Comprised of gatekeepers (teachers, librarians, mothers, fathers), of authors, and of teens. Hard to tell who is whom, but searching with the following terms in names: "Teacher," "Librarian," "Mother" or "Mom," "Father" or "Dad" (including "Daddy)", "Author" and "teen" brought up some interesting results.

	Teachers (8 have word "teacher" in name)	M/F	Hometown	Member Since	Last Login	# of posts	# of comments	# of Buzz Bucks	other
1	LAteacher	F	Fredericksberg, VA	5/5/10	5/5/10	0	0	90	
2	historyteacher300	M	n/a	9/2/08	9/2/08	0	0	60	
3	Teacherlady	F	Ypsilanti, MI	4/8/10	4/8/10	0	0	60	
4	teacher333	F	Montville, NJ	11/20/10	11/20/10	0	0	200	
5	Teacher	F	Gold Hill, NC	10/28/08	12/17/09	0	0	60	
	Librarians (22 have word "librarian" in name) (took every 4th one)	M/F	Hometown	Member Since	Last Login	# of posts	# of comments	# of Buzz Bucks	other
1	DJ_Librarian	f	n/a	2/24/12	4/6/12	1	0	6525	(recent participant)
2	NinjaLibrarian	F	Nashville, TN	12/3/09	8/16/11	0	1	5928	"my buzz groups": Chick Lit Readers!, House of Night Fans, Percy Jackson Fans, Scott Westerfeld, The Hunger Games Fan Club
3	Tinylibrarian	F	Los Angeles, CA	3/29/10	3/27/11	0	1	410	
4	LibrarianSarah	F	Springfield, MO	10/8/08	7/24/10	3	3	11417	my buzz groups: Ally Carter Fan Club; Chick Lit Readers!; Meg Cabot Fans; Percy Jackson Fans; Sarah Dessen; Sarah Mlynowski

		M/F	Hometown	Member Since	Last Login	# of posts	# of comments	# of Buzz Bucks	other
5	DigitalLibrarain21	F	Columbia, MD	6/6/10	6/6/10	0	0	100	Info:Library Media Specialist who loves reading, technology and educating 21st century learners. Wife, mother, and Mac fanatic. Not your mother's librarian.
Mothers (133 have the word "mom" in their name, another 8 have "mother" in their name) - took 5 "Moms"(first one (that looked like a real mom, and not something with letters mom) every other page of 10 each) and 1 "mother"									
1	NewUTMommy	F	Layton, UT	6/1/11	4/3/12	0	0	12675	I'm a thirty-something working mom and busy wife who squeezes in as much reading time as possible, especially during my train commutes to and from work.
2	LilMoma38	F	Weston, OR	7/22/10	10/31/10	0	1	100	
3	Readings_of_a_busy_Mom	F	Birmingham, AL	7/8/10	7/9/10	1	0	1,500	Im a busy mom who also manages to fit in alot of reading something im passionate about. I read 4/5 books a week and review them over at my blog...http://www.thereadingsofabusymom.blogspot.com/
4	Danasmom	F	n/a	9/1/08	9/2/08	0	0	60	
5	aidensmom	F	n/a	7/12/08	7/12/08	0	0	60	
1	amusingmother	F	Lehi, UT	12/14/10	1/14/12	8	2	850	Mother, educator, reader

Fathers (10 with Father in name). There are 30 members with "daddy" in the title - but it is difficult to distinguish actual fathers (probably: "Kierasdaddy" "Samdaddy101" from those using slang terms "Mackdaddy", "bigdaddyg93", "bigpimpindaddy" (who was joined 7/24/08 and hasn't logged in since 7/25/08.) 73 users have "dad" in the name (of course includes the "daddy"s above), but "Lizdad" and "Bensdad" "dad" gets mixed in with "dadestroyer" and "Swordaddict" (from Eragon, probably)

Godfather	M	n/a	6/8/09	6/8/09	0	0	60	n/a
Fatherfirefly	M	n/a	7/4/08	8/21/08	0	0	60	n/a
Father Handsome	M	n/a	6/3/08	6/9/08	0	0	60	n/a
Lizdad	M	n/a	11/29/07	11/29/07	0	0	30	n/a
Bensdad00	M	n/a	6/4/08	8/25/10	0	0	560	n/a

1,076 Authors total on site - not all are RBs. Absent: celebrity author Kareem Abdul Jabbar. There were 50 "pages" of authors so I took the first one every 10 pages in "authors directory" http://www.randombuzzers.com/authors/ who was also a RB. Since that did not work well, I took the first five authors on the "recently featured" page instead Didn't work either, so I went to genre page, and took first author in first 5 genres who was an RB.

1	jamesdashner	M	n/a	9/12/09	4/5/12	422	2	90	James Dashner is the New York Times bestselling author of The Maze Runner series and The 13th Reality series. [genre: action & adventure]
2	mattdelapena	M	Brooklyn, NY	10/5/09	12/21/10	82	1	110	[genre: boys & men]
3	alexanderlagos	M	New York, NY	5/14/10	9/30/11	38	1	150	[comics & graphic novels]
4	CarrieRyan	F	Charlotte, NC	2/12/09	4/4/12	180	0	60	Born and raised in Greenville, South Carolina, Carrie Ryan is a graduate of Williams College and Duke University School of Law. [girls & women]
5	laurenkate	F	Los Angeles, CA	11/16/09	2/2/12	196	0	60	I'm the author of FALLEN and THE BETRAYAL OF NATALIE HARGROVE, and I am currently working on a sequel to FALLEN

Self-described as "Teens" 47 members have "teen" in username. I took first one each of 5 pages.	M/F	Hometown	Member Since	Last Login	# of posts	# of comments	# of Buzz Bucks	other
Teen911	F	West Olive, MI	12/8/10	4/6/12	19285	26	258 (NB: She might have spent some of her BBs).	My buzz groups: Creative Writing; Edward Cullen Fans; Meg Cabot Fans; People who love Music; Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants fans; The Hunger Games Fan Club.
Seventeen	F	n/a	2/25/11	2/25/11	300	0	0	n/a
Bartowteens	F	Cartersville, GA	2/2/08	2/11/10	4641	0	0	n/a
Innovativeteen	F	Richmond, VA	8/2/08	8/2/08	114	0	0	n/a
Justeenoman	M	n/a	6/16/08	6/16/08	60	0	0	n/a

APPENDIX F: Sample Peer-to-Peer Review Posted on Random Buzzers.com

The following is an example of the type of peer-to-peer reviews, which exist within the *Random Buzzers* site. As of August 11, 2012, there were a total of 27, 679 reviews on the site.

Instructions under reviews:

"Reviewing books is a super easy way to earn Buzz Bucks and there's no limit on submissions. All you have to do is fill in your book's details and share your review!

To submit your review, give your review a title, tell us which book, assign it a rating and then share your thoughts! You'll earn 100 Buzz Bucks per review! We'll update your Buzz Bucks total as soon as we can look over your submission." (RandomBuzzers, n.d.)

Peer-to-Peer review of "Perfect Escape by Jennifer Brown by ImaginaryKris (August 5, 2012):

"I love books with a strong sibling relationship. Imagine my joy when I found a book centered on a sibling relationship. The story didn't disappoint; in fact, it was better than I imagined. It isn't all-around happy--Kendra has her fair share of frustrations, tears, and worries--however, I was perfectly happy reading this story. I understand the complexities of a sister-brother relationship (though I'm the older one in the relationship), and I can empathize with her feelings, though I haven't had to cope with

her situation. Kendra has felt overshadowed by her brother and his OCD problems. While she realzies [sic] that it's not really his fault that he has these compulsions, she can't help but feel as though her life is run by him. His return added on top of her fear of having her future ruined by a cheating scandal drive her to run away with her brother, who also has had enough with his OCD issues, far from their problems at home.

The emotions run rampant in this novel. Kendra and her brother have their issues, Grayson dealing with people treating him as though her could have an emotional breakdown any moment and Kendra dealing with the pressures of being the perfect, normal daughter. Both think [sic] the other have [sic] an easier time and have their moments of jealousy. It is also true that Kendra has her selfish reasons for the trip and for trying to cure Grayson of his disorder. Nevertheless, she and her brother have a strong bond; they love each other and do their best to look after each other. I love them. Seriously. They're amazing siblings for all their imperfections; it is a human thing, imperfection. My eyes were tearing as I neared the end of the novel.

The story explores the impact of OCD on a family and how their friends and others view them. Grayson is a genius and a nice guy; however, people express their disappointment on how his OCD prevents him from reaching perfection, and they don't look further than his OCD to appreciate who he is as a person. Not many characters are introduced in this novel. Each one is important in how he or she influences the major characters, especially the ones that stick around for more than a few scenes. There are fun roadstops, bad jokes that made me and my brother laugh (I shared them with him, as he was in the room with me), and there were some stormy moments that tore at my heart when Kendra and Grayson released pentup [sic] emotions.

More than a story about two sibling [sic] on a road trip, more than a story about cheating and OCD, Perfect Escape is about family, friendship, and acceptance. It is about the imperfections that make us who we are. I wanted the story to continue, so we can find out more about what happens later. At the same time, I appreciate where this story leaves us because it's the moment of realization, and it's the point where Kendra needs to reach. This story left me feeling happy and satisfied. There's nothing more I could have asked of Jennifer Brown from this story. I look forward to seeing more books from her!"

(Retrieved August 10, 2012, from

http://www.randombuzzers.com/books/reviews/view/28180/)

APPENDIX G: Short Summary of the Twilight Saga by Stephenie Meyer

Twilight, the first in a four-book series, is about a seventeen-year-old girl, Bella Swan, who moves from Phoenix, Arizona, to Forks, Washington, where she falls in love with Edward Cullen, who although he attends her high school, was actually born in 1901, but as a vampire, he is permanently teenage. Luckily, Edward and his coven are mostly "vegetarian" vampires, who drink animal instead of human blood. Bella is awkward and clumsy, and when she accidentally cuts her finger, James, a vampire from another coven, attacks her, and puts her life at risk. In order to protect Bella, Edward kills James. In the next book, *New Moon*, despite being madly in love with Bella, Edward leaves her, because he realizes that for her to be with him means that her life will always be in danger. In Edward's absence, Jacob Black, a Native American high school student who also happens to be a werewolf, forms an intense—but unbalanced—friendship with Bella. While Bella certainly feels love a form of love for Jacob (perhaps a form that is closer to love for a sibling), Jacob falls madly in love with her. But Bella remains loyal to Edward, and when Edward eventually returns, he and Bella are immediately reunited. In *Eclipse*, the third book in the series, Bella must resolve her conflicting feelings for Jacob, and choose between Edward and Jacob. Victoria, a vampire who was James's mate, arrives and attempts to murder Bella, in revenge for Edward's murder of James. In the fourth book, *Breaking Dawn*, despite the fact that Edward does not want Bella to become a vampire, as he feels becoming one ruined his own life, Bella insists, so that she can be with Edward for all eternity. Edward, in turn, insists that they get married before he "turns" her. On the honeymoon, just before Bella is transformed, she becomes pregnant

with a half-human, half-vampire baby. Almost dying during childbirth, Edward injects her with his venom just as she is given a Caesarian Section, and Bella is transformed into a vampire. Meanwhile jilted Jacob conveniently finds his own soulmate in baby Renesmee, "imprinting" on her for life (which in turn cures him of his own obsession with the unattainable Bella).

APPENDIX H: Analysis of *Twilight* Fan Sites on stepheniemeyer.com

List of Twilight Fan Sites from http://www.stepheniemeyer.com/ts_fansites.html
April 15, 2012

Title of Site	Status of Site: Active/Inactive/Vanished
Sweet Lullaby	vanished
Twilight	inactive since 2010
A Chemical Reacts RPG	vanished
A Coven of Wolves	vanished
A TwentySomething Twilight Fan	inactive since 2011
A Twilight Life	active
Academy Volterra	requires log-in
Alicefan's Twilight Fans	inactive since 2008
AliceForever	vanished
All Things Twilight	vanished
also here: http://tsdcv3.proboards.com/	active - April 2012
Amore di Anima	inactive since 2009
An Apple Each Day	vanished
An Edward & Bella Fan	inactive since 2008
And the anti-fan site: Twilight Sucks - now on tumblr: http://fuckyeahtwilightsucks.tumblr.com/	last post April 29, 2012
Apple in Hand	vanished
Australian Site: Fire and Ice	vanished
Australian Site: Twilight Australia	active, but all links within broken
Australian Site: Twilight_Aus (LiveJournal)	inactive since 2011
Be Bitten — The Twilight Series Boards	active
Be My Obsession	vanished
Bella and Edward Forever	
Bella and Edward Obsession	
Bella Luna (RPG)	
Bella Penombra	
Bella Rocks! (Twilight-inspired band)	
BellaandEdward.com	
BellaFans	
BellandEdward	
Beyond Twilight	
Bite at Dawn	vanished
Bite Me	
Bite Me: A Twilight Podcast	
Bite of Twilight	

Can't FIGHT an eclipse	
Club Twilight	
Cold Twilight	
Comet at Twilight	
Coven of Eternal Twilight	
Craving Cullens	
Crazy for Twilight	
Cullen and Hale	
Cullen Boys Anonymous	
Cullen City	inactive since 2008
Cullen Coven	
Cullen Vampires	
Cullen's Family	
Cullenx	
Dark Dusk (RPG)	
Dazzle Me Please	
Devoted Twilighters	
Dream Come True	
Dream Twilight	
Dreaming of Twilight	vanished
Dusk to Dawn	
Eclipse DVD	
Edward and Bella for life and beyond	
Edward Cullen - Every Girl's Dream	
Edward Cullen .net	
Edward Cullen completes me	
Edward Cullen Coven	
Edward Cullen last forever	
Edward Cullen Online	
Edward Cullen the One and Only	active
Edward vs. Jacob	
Edward-our-fantasy	
Edward's Meadow	
Edward's Volvo	
Enough for Forever (darkbb)	
Enough for Forever (LJ)	
Epoch -- Twilight	
Equinox (RPG site)	
Eternal Annoyances	
Eternal Love	inactive since 2010
Eternal Twilight	
Eventide Alchemy (RPG)	

Everlasting Twilight	
Everything Twilight	
Exactly His Brand of Heroine	
FanFiction Net Twilight Page	
Fanpire Forums	
Fanpop: The Twilight Fan Club	
FantasticTwiHards (youtube channel)	inactive since 2011
Fatal Attraction	
Fire and Ice: A Twilight Podcast	
For Forks' Sake	
For the Twilight Series Lover	
Forbidden - A Twilight RPG	
Forbidden Love	
Forest's Edge	
Forever Dawn .net	
Forever in Ice	
Forever in the Meadow	inactive since 2008
Forever Twilight	
Forks, Washington rpg	
From Twilight to Eclipse	
Glittery Boyfriend	
His Crooked Smile	
His Golden Eyes	
I-DazzleYou	
IFeltHope.net - A Jasper Hale and Alice Cullen Fansite	
Infinite Twilight	
Into the Twilight	vanished
Irish Twilight Fans	
Irritable Grizzly	
Is Twilight your brand of heroin?	
Jacob Black Fans	
Jacob Fans	
Jacob_Vs_Edward	
Jasper/Alice: A fan community	
Kelmett (Kellan Lutz as Emmett)	
Kismet: The Lion and the Lamb	
Life Beyond Twilight	active, but content no longer related to Twilight
Lion and Lamb (Piczo site)	
Lion and Lamb Love	
Lions and Lambs in Luv	
Love the Cullens	
Mobile site: GoTwilight.mobi	
Moonlit Temptation	
Morte Romantica	
Movie Casting Site	
Mrs. Cullen	

My Brand of Heroin	
My Twilight Purgatory	
Myspace Blog: Fans of Jacob Black	
Myspace Group: Edward, Bella and Jacob	
Myspace Group: Edward's Team	
Myspace Group: Official Alice & Jasper Site	
Myspace Group: Official Cullenist Group	
Myspace Group: TWiLiGHT	
Myspace Group: Twilight Book	
Myspace Group: Twilight Equals Love	vanished
Myspace Group: Twilight is My Bible	
Myspace Group: Twilight Moms	
Myspace Group: Twilight TM	
Myspace Group: We all want to be Bella	
Myspace Page: Twilight Movie	
Myspace Page: Twilight_Movie	
Mystical Scent	
No More Marbles (on youtube.com)	
Obsessed with Edward	
Official Team Jempwarth Website	inactive since 2008
OME, a Twilight Sorority	
Once you go Black, you never go back! (Jacob Fan Club)	
One From The Twilight	
Ostentatious	
Our Twilight Chronicles	
Paper Moons: A Twilight inspired RPG	
Passion Eternal	
Peace, Love, TWILIGHT!	
Perfect for Forever	
Perpetual Twilight	inactive since 2008
Phases: A Twilight Podcast	
Piczo site: Apple Each Day	
Place 4 all things Twilight	
Rain, Clouds, and Edward	
Ramblings and Thoughts' Twilight section	
Real Men Glitter	
Red Apple	
Secret Betrayal	
Simply Addicted	

SoulMates: A Jasper and Alice Fansite	
Spiritual Love: Esme and Carlisle	
Stay Twilight	
Stealing Yellow Cars	
Step into the Story	
Stephenie Meyer Fans Website	
Stephenie Meyer Web	inactive since 2008
Stephenie Says	
Stupid Shiny Volvo Owner	
Team Jacob	
Team Switzerland	
Team-Edward	
TeamEdwardCullen	
Teen Twilightist	
The Bella Cullen Project (Twilight Fan Band)	
The Cullen Clan	
The Cullen Clan!	vanished
The Cullen Family	
The Cullens and other Twilight characters	
The Cullens Online	
The EC Fan Club	
The Edward Plushie Club	
The Forbidden Fruit	
The Forbidden Fruit Tastes The Sweetest	
The Lion and the Lamb	
The Lion and the Lamb (Piczo)	
The Lion and the Lamb, RPG	vanished
The Lion fell in love with the Lamb (LiveJournal)	
The Love of Edward and Bella	
The Mitch Hansen Band (Twilight-Inspired Music)	
The Shiny Vampire Club	
The Twilight Awards	
The Twilight Coven	
The Twilight Forums	
The Twilight Forums (at forumotion.com)	
The Twilight Hour	
The Twilight Lexicon	active (and commercial)

Twilight Extremists	
Twilight Facebook	
Twilight Fan	
Twilight Fan Center	
Twilight Fan Fiction	inactive since 2011
Twilight Fanatics	
Twilight FanForum	
Twilight Fans Invited	
Twilight Fans on Writing.com	
Twilight Fans Unite!	
Twilight Fans United	
Twilight Fansite: a very addictive book	
Twilight Fanspace	
Twilight Fantasy	
Twilight Forever (a Piczo site)	inactive since 2010
Twilight Forever (Gaia profile)	
Twilight Forever (on freewebs.com)	
Twilight Forever: Where Twilight IS Forever (on freewebs.com)	
Twilight Forums .org	
Twilight Forums (at seethesun.org)	
Twilight Freaks	
Twilight Graphic Novel	
Twilight Guy	
Twilight Indonesia	
Twilight Love	active (not clear when last posted)
Twilight Lovers Rejoice	
Twilight Madness	
Twilight Mafia	
Twilight Magic	
Twilight Mania	
Twilight Mania! (at weebly.com)	
Twilight Manipulations	
Twilight Mom (on blogspot)	
Twilight Moms	
Twilight Movies	active (count-down to next twilight movie. As of 4/29/12, 7PM, 201 days, 58 minutes, 39 seconds)
Twilight Newborns	
Twilight News Site	
Twilight Novel: Forever Twilight	
Twilight Obsession	
Twilight Obsessors	
Twilight Originals	
Twilight Point	
Twilight Poison	
Twilight Puerto Rico	
Twilight Renegades	inactive since 2011

The Twilight Pursuit	
The Twilight Saga	
The Twilight Saga (on webs.com)	
The Twilight Saga (Yahoo group)	
The Twilight Saga and The Host (on webs.com)	
The Twilight Saga for the Slightly Obsessed	
The Twilight Saga Multiply	
The Twilight Saga Wiki	
Third Epiphany	vanished (now with cyrillic)
Tickle Me Twilight	
Time is Running Out	
Time Stands Still	
Topaz and Debussy	
Topaz Eyes	
Topaz Obsession	
TopazEyes	
Touched by Twilight	
Twi-Hard (a site for Twilight saga fans)	
Twi-Hards	vanished
Twi-Light	
TwiLife	
Twilight — A Way of Life	
Twilight (at Runboard)	
Twilight (by Sarah)	
Twilight 20somethings	
Twilight Academy	
Twilight Addicts	
Twilight Advisor	
Twilight Amazing RP and Discussion	active (february 2012)
Twilight Archives	
Twilight BeDazzled	
Twilight billet-doux (Piczo)	
Twilight Boards	
Twilight Book Fansite (Piczo)	
Twilight Central	
Twilight Continued...from another point of view (Facebook)	
Twilight Couple (youtube)	
Twilight Coven Philippines	
Twilight Cults	vanished
Twilight Disorder	
Twilight Dreamers	
Twilight Eternity	
Twilight Experience	

Twilight Roleplaying site	
Twilight Rox	
Twilight Saga Central	
Twilight Saga Fanaticz	
Twilight Saga Lovers	
Twilight Saga Review	
Twilight Seires Fanatics	
Twilight Series (on freewebs)	
Twilight Series Fandom (LiveJournal)	inactive since 2010
Twilight Series Theories	
Twilight Source	
Twilight Teams	
Twilight Thirsty	
Twilight Treasury	
Twilight Twenties	
Twilight Twins	
Twilight UK	
Twilight Ultimate	
Twilight Uninterrupted	vanished
Twilight Universe	
Twilight Vampire Evolution	
Twilight Vampires	
Twilight Weekly	
Twilight-Headed	
Twilight-Lovers	
Twilight-O-Holics	
Twilight: Edward and Bella Fansite	
Twilight: forever bitten by its greatness	
Twilight: If someone dared you...	inactive since 2010
Twilight! The Apple Book	
Twilight!!!	
Twilight... my life	
Twilight's Destiny	
Twilight/New Moon/Cast (Facebook)	
Twilighted	
Twilighted (at piczo.com)	
Twilighter (at forumotion)	
Twilighter (ning.com)	
Twilighter's Hub	inactive since 2011
Twilighters	
Twilighters Anonymous	
Twilighters Down Under	
Twilighters United	
Twilighters Writers	
TwilightGurl	

TwilightTheObsession	
Twiliner	
TwiMamas	inactive since 2009
Tworts	
Unconditionally and Irrevocably	
Unified Twilight Society	
Unite Twilight	
Vampire Bites	
Vampire Hunt	
Vampire obsession	
Vampire Obsessions	
Vampire_Obsession	
Vampires are Forever	active (not clear when last posted)
Vampires of Forks, Washington	
Vampires of Nite	
Vampires Released	
Vamps Go Veg	
Vesperarium Graphics	
Visions of the Night	
Wanna Bet	
We Love Edward!	
We Love the Twilight Series	
We Support Stephenie Meyer	inactive since 2009
When you can live forever, what do you live for?	
With You	
Yellow Porschey	
You Are Exactly My Brand of Heroin	inactive since 2011
Zazzle Site	

APPENDIX I: Appealing to Readers on *The Amanda Project*

Written in 2010 by "Hal, Callie, and Nia," Amanda's friends from the book, and retrieved

from http://www.theamandaproject.com/coming-to-a-bookstore 8/13/12, this appeal to

young readers asks them to go get a copy of the book and to start writing and posting:

Amanda's story—and our website—have gotten so much attention that a big publisher, HarperCollins, has asked us to write about what's going on!
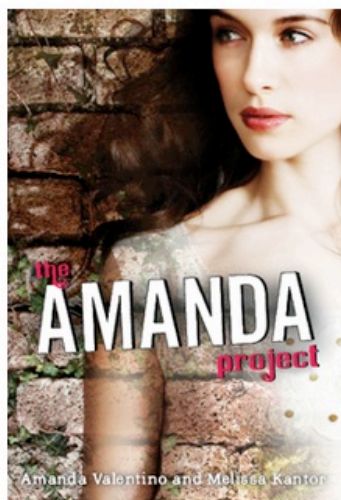
It all starts with Callie's chronicle of what's happened so far—go get your copy now! Then Hal will take up where Callie left off—in his book *Revealed*—coming to bookstores next spring (2011), and Nia's after that...there will be **eight books** before we're finished!

We're all working with professional authors (!!!) to tell our stories—Callie worked with the amazing Melissa Kantor to write her book, Hal is working with Peter Silsbee, and Nia is writing with Laurie Faria Stolarz.

But that's not even the most exciting part...

Each of the books will include special writing that we choose from the Amanda Project site. In the hardcover of the first book, we were super-excited to include PhysicsNerd's beautiful "Who Is This Amanda Truly?" And, there will be a NEW piece of writing in the paperback version of Callie's book, hitting stores this January!!!

We need your stories!!! Keep writing and posting, and if something you've written helps us tell the story of Amanda, and where she is now, we'll include your writing in one of our books. (Of course, we'll obviously get your permission first.)

Check back often for updates. We're excited!

—Hal, Callie & Nia