Books and the Power of Print

Chapter 10
E-books and the Publishing Industry

“We had high hopes that [e-books outselling print books] would happen eventually, but we never imagined it would happen this quickly.”

—Jeff Bezos, Amazon Chief Executive, 2011
The History of Books from Papyrus to Paperback

Ancient world

- Papyrus
  - Used in Egypt as early as 2400 B.C.E.

- Parchment
  - Treated animal skin
  - Replaced papyrus in Europe

- Codex
  - First protomodern book
  - Made of bound materials by the Romans, 4th century
The development of manuscript culture

- Books painstakingly lettered, decorated, and bound by hand
- Entrepreneurial stage of the evolution of books
- Illuminated manuscripts
  - Use of decorative, colorful designs and illustrations
  - Made for churches or wealthy clients
The History of Books from Papyrus to Paperback (cont.)

Block printing and movable type

Block printing
- Developed by Chinese printers
- Enabled multiple copies to be printed and bound together

Movable type
- Invented in China around 1000
- Made creating block pages faster
- Developed independently in Europe in the 1400s
The History of Books from Papyrus to Paperback (cont.)

The Gutenberg revolution

Printing press

- Invented by Johannes Gutenberg
- Inestimable influence on Western culture
- Helped make books cheaper
- Permitted information and knowledge to spread outside local jurisdictions
- Permitted individuals to challenge traditional wisdom and customs
J'commence le second livre sur les
ris de fortune et vertu, ou quel est monde que de la post-
petite cabillation demeures de roya-
umes, remèdes, de tous astres; fortune est cause de la
maistresse, l'fortune, par la
rela-
Cana, la ma-
apparée, et elle
arrestée. Les
marins nent
le portolet,
bras aux armes, accou-

Birth of publishing in the United States

- Stephen Daye
  - Published the first colonial book, *The Whole Booke of Psalms*, in 1640

- Benjamin Franklin
  - Imported and reprinted novels

- First paperback books in the 1830s
  - First dime novels in 1860
  - Sometimes identified as *pulp fiction*
EIGHT DIME NOVELS
EDITED BY E.F. BLEILER

OLD KING BRADY
FRANK JAMES
NICK CARTER
DEADWOOD DICK
BUFFALO BILL
THE STEAM MAN
FRANK Merriwell
HOratio Alger

The Jesse James Stories
Original Narratives of the James Boys

No. 1.

Price, Ten Cents.

Jesse James the Outlaw

By W.B. Lawson.
The History of Books from Papyrus to Paperback (cont.)

1880s
- First **linotype** machines and the introduction of steam-powered and high-speed rotary presses

Early 1900s
- Development of **offset lithography** greatly reduced the cost of color and illustrations, and accelerated book production
Linotype Machine and Offset Lithography
The Formation of Publishing Houses

- Early “prestigious” publishing houses
  - Tried to identify and produce the works of good writers
  - Oldest houses survive now as part of larger conglomerates.
- Demand for books grew between 1880 and 1920 with the rise of industrialized urban culture.
Book industry helped assimilate European immigrants into American culture, language.

Despite a decline from 1910 through the 1950s, the book industry bounced back after World War II.
Types of Books

- **Trade books**
  - Adult trade
  - Juvenile trade
  - Comics and graphic novels

- **Professional books**
  - Law
  - Business
  - Medical
  - Technical-scientific
Types of Books (cont.)

- Textbooks
  - Elementary through high school (el-hi) texts
  - College texts
  - Vocational texts

- Mass market paperbacks
  - Instant books

- Religious titles
Types of Books (cont.)

- Reference books
  - Dictionaries
  - Encyclopedias
  - Atlases
  - Almanacs
  - Professional or trade-specific
- University press books
  - Scholarly works for small groups
Figure 10.1: Estimated U.S. Book Revenue, 2010
Influences of Television and Film

Two major facets

- How TV can help sell books
  - Promotion by talk-show hosts such as Oprah Winfrey
- How books serve as ideas for TV shows and movies
  - *Game of Thrones* on HBO and *Dexter* on Showtime
  - *Life of Pi* by Yann Martel and J. K. Rowling’s *Harry Potter* series
Audio Books

- Also known as talking books or books on tape
- Generally feature actors or authors reading entire works or abridged versions
- Popular with the sightless and vision-impaired, as well as with commuters
Convergence: Books in the Digital Age

E-books

- Project Gutenberg
  - Offers more than 40,000 public domain books for free
- Print books move online
  - First e-readers were too heavy, expensive, and/or difficult to read
  - Amazon produced the first popular device (Kindle) and e-book store
  - Best-selling adult fiction book format in the United States by 2012
The future of e-books

Printing books on demand
- Reviving books that would otherwise go out of print
- Avoiding the inconvenience of carrying unsold books

Reimagining what a book can be
- Hosting embedded video, hyperlinks, and dynamic content
- Tailoring books to specific readers
Preserving and Digitizing Books

Nineteenth-century books
- Printed on acid-based paper, which gradually deteriorates
- Libraries developed preservation techniques in the 1970s.

Acid-free paper
- Developed in the early 1990s
- Libraries photocopied pages onto the paper and stored the originals.
Preserving and Digitizing Books (cont.)

- Digital imaging
  - Google Books Library Project
    - Partnered with the New York Public Library and university research libraries
    - Authors Guild and Association of American Publishers Controversy
  - Open Content Alliance
    - Working with the Boston Public Library, university libraries, Amazon, Microsoft, and Yahoo! to create the Digital Public Library of America
Censorship and Banned Books

Censorship

- Imposed by various rulers and groups to maintain authority
- Often prevented people from learning about the rituals and moral standards of other cultures

American Library Association

- Compiles a list of the most challenged books every year
Censorship and Banned Books (cont.)

Book challenge
- Formal complaint for the removal of a book from a library
- Common reasons for challenges
  - Sexually explicit passages or nudity
  - Offensive language or racism
  - Occult themes
  - Violence
  - Homosexual themes
  - Promotion of a religious viewpoint
Figure 10.3: Banned and Challenged Books

Breakdown of the Reasons for Challenges against American Libraries from 2001 to 2010

- Sexually explicit material: 1,536
- Offensive language: 1,231
- Unsuit to age group: 977
- Violence: 553
- Homosexuality: 370
- Religious viewpoints: 304
- Anti-family: 121

Top 20 Banned Classics:

1. The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald
2. The Catcher in the Rye by J. D. Salinger
3. The Grapes of Wrath by John Steinbeck
4. To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee
5. The Color Purple by Alice Walker
6. Ulysses by James Joyce
7. Beloved by Toni Morrison
8. The Lord of the Flies by William Golding
9. 1984 by George Orwell
10. The Sound and the Fury by William Faulkner
11. Lolita by Vladimir Nabokov
12. Of Mice and Men by John Steinbeck
13. Charlotte’s Web by E. B. White
14. A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man by James Joyce
15. Catch-22 by Joseph Heller
16. Brave New World by Aldous Huxley
17. Animal Farm by George Orwell
18. The Sun Also Rises by Ernest Hemingway
19. As I Lay Dying by William Faulkner
20. A Farewell to Arms by Ernest Hemingway
Ownership Patterns

Ownership

- Handful of major corporations dominate commercial publishing.
  - Large companies can financially support smaller firms while allowing editorial ideas to remain independent.
- Large trade book publishers and independents are both struggling in the digital upheaval and dominance of Amazon.com.
Table 10.2: World’s Ten Largest Trade Book Publishers, 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank Publishing Company (Group or Division)</th>
<th>Home Country</th>
<th>Revenue in $ Millions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Pearson</td>
<td>U.K.</td>
<td>$8,411</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Reed Elsevier</td>
<td>U.K./NL/U.S.</td>
<td>$5,686</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Thomson Reuters</td>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td>$5,435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Wolters Kluwer</td>
<td>NL</td>
<td>$4,360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Hachette Livre (Lagardère)</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>$2,649</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Grupo Planeta</td>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>$2,304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 McGraw-Hill Education</td>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td>$2,292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Random House (Bertelsmann)</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>$2,274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Holtzbrinck</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>$1,952</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Scholastic</td>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td>$1,906</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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The Structure of Book Publishing

- **Editorial**
  - **Acquisitions editor**
    - Identifies talent and handles *subsidiary rights*
  - **Developmental editor**
    - Handles feedback to author and makes suggestions for improvement
  - **Copy editors**
    - Attend to issues in writing or length
The Structure of Book Publishing (cont.)

- Production
  - Production and design managers
    - Work on the look of the book
    - Make decisions about type style, paper, cover design, and layout
  - Marketing concerns
    - Number of copies to print
    - How to reach potential readers
    - Costs for promotion and advertising
Figure 10.4: How a Book’s Revenue Is Divided
Selling Books: Brick-and-Mortar Stores, Clubs, and Mail Order

- Brick-and-mortar stores
  - Book superstores (Barnes & Noble)
  - Independents
  - Big discount retailers (Walmart)
  - Specialty retailers (Anthropologie)
- Book clubs
  - Originally helped the industry when local stores were rare
  - Consolidated into Direct Brands, Inc.
Mail order

Pioneered in the 1950s by magazine publishers (Time-Life books)

Sold special sets of books, one book at a time

Primarily used by trade, professional, and university press publishers today
Advantages to consumers

- Convenience, low prices, and access to less popular titles

Amazon.com

- Transformed the industry
- Major player in print and e-books
- Established Amazon Publishing
- Biggest rivals are Apple’s iBookstore and Google Play
Figure 10.5: Market Share of Reader Tablets
Alternative Voices

- Public libraries
- NewPages.com
  - Trying to bring together alternative and university presses, independent bookstores, and guides to literary and alternative magazines
- E-publishing
  - Enables authors to sidestep traditional publishers
Books and the Future of Democracy

Democracy of reading
- Books have played an important role in spreading democracy and connecting people to new ideas.

Americans are reading more.
- Readers are more likely to perform volunteer and charity work.

Books and reading have survived the challenge of digital culture.