EDITOR AND AUTHOR RELATIONSHIPS IN THE EVOLVING WORLD OF PUBLISHING

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Chapter 1: Introduction
The publishing industry has experienced major evolutions during the last century. Everything from the format of publishing to the use of operating systems and means of department communication underwent changes as the result of new technologies. Coinciding with these changes, a clear evolution in the role of the editor took place. The technological revolution taking place in the late twentieth century forced editors to adapt and take on new roles created by the advancing industry. In filling these new roles, editors faced the special challenge of balancing the old ways of editing with new technology so that they could maintain the close relationships of traditional editor-author partnerships, while also continuing to support the publishing industry as it transitioned into the twenty-first century.

Editor-author relationships have always been an important aspect of publishing, as the ultimate success or failure of a book can often be determined by the condition of the author-editor relationship. That is not to say that all positive relationships will produce bestsellers, but in most cases when the author-editor working relationship is not just healthy but thriving, the work produced will illustrate a clarity and cohesiveness that usually is rewarded with more critical praise and higher sales. As the sales and success of works are the driving force of publishers and fuel the publishing industry to continue, the success of the publishing industry, in many ways rests on the success of editor-author partnerships.

The changes taking place in the editor-author relationship can be seen through examining specific editor-author duos: Edith Wharton and Edward Burlingame, F. Scott Fitzgerald and Maxwell Perkins, Thomas Wolfe and Maxwell Perkins, Ernest
Hemingway and Maxwell Perkins, and David Foster Wallace and Michael Pietsch. These editors and authors each shared a unique relationship. Their collaborations demonstrate how the pairing of editor-authors prove essential to the success of fiction and also demonstrate the different tensions editors and authors had to navigate as a result of changes introduced into the publishing industry throughout the last hundred years.

Advances in technology played a key role in many of the industry changes. The internet and computer programs have redefined the type of editing, for which editors are responsible. Before the accessibility of modern editing tools, a large part of an editor’s job was focused on correcting grammar, usage, and mechanics. With technology, editors were freed from the more elementary aspects of editing and could focus more of their energy on serving as an advisor for authors.

Technology was not responsible for all of the changes in the publishing industry. The introduction of the new role of literary agent had major consequences for the publishing industry as a whole. This includes a key role in influencing how the job of editor has evolved, since literary agents have taken on many responsibilities that used to belong solely to editors, such as serving as a spokesperson for the author and the author’s interests.

Through examining the changes prompted by advances in the publishing industry, one can better see the importance in maintaining strong editor-author bonds. Understanding the mechanics behind editors’ relationships with authors can bring a new appreciation to editors’ impact in the production of literature. Distinguishing between the aspects of the changing publishing industry and the stability found in successful editor-
author relationships helps support the conclusion that the past, present, and future
endurance of the publishing industry relies on the strong bonds of editors and authors.
Chapter 2: Edith Wharton, Edward Burlingame, and William Brownell
Edith Wharton is best known for being one of the most prominent female writers of poetry and short fiction in the early nineteenth century. Wharton’s start in the publishing industry came in 1889 when her first poem was published in *Scribner’s Magazine*. This marked the beginning of a strong relationship between Wharton and Scribner’s. From the beginning of her relationship with *Scribner’s Magazine*, Wharton worked with editor Edward L. Burlingame. Burlingame’s relationship with Wharton helped to define her early career as a writer (Disabatino 13). He was a source of encouragement for her even when he rejected her pieces. In 1893 Wharton wrote Burlingame about his rejection of her story “The Bunner Sisters.” In it she said, “You then pronounced it too long for one number of the magazine, & unsuited to serial publication, but you spoke otherwise very kindly of it, & though I am not too good a judge of what I write, it seems to me, after several careful readings, up to my average of writing” (Disabatino 13). At a time so early in her career when Wharton was particularly doubtful of her writing, Burlingame’s constructive comments and repeated urging for Wharton to continue submitting for serialization provided the encouragement Wharton needed to become successful.

As Wharton worked more closely with Scribner’s she also developed a close working relationship with William Crary Brownell. Brownell also worked as editor at Scribner’s. Writer Nicholas Disabatino said in his writing for, “The House of Letters: Edith Wharton’s Changing Relationship with the Publishing Industry,” “Brownell’s support as [Wharton’s] editor helped her break away from the critics’ relentless comparison of her to Henry James” (20). Still despite having a cordial and efficient
working relationship with Brownell, Wharton still experienced moments of frustration with her publishers. This frustration often stemmed from Wharton’s unconventional approach when it came to her writing. Wharton did not believe in keeping a tight schedule, and she would often start a piece only to abandon it to work on something else before returning to her original piece (Disabatino 17). Wharton also often worked at a faster pace than her editors. This did not suit her publisher’s schedule or style and led to friction between Wharton and Brownell. Disabatino concluded, “It seems that Wharton believed that the role of editor was to help the writer and not to pressure the artist to maintain a deadline” (19). This conflict between what Wharton expected from her editor verses what she actually received, led to an inevitable division between writer and editor. Still Wharton continued to work with Scribner’s and her manuscript for *The House of Mirth* went through a smooth transition to the magazine and other than a few slight syntactical changes, there were no major textual variations between the first edition and the serialization (Disabatino 23). *The House of Mirth* achieved great success and helped launch Edith Wharton as a household name, yet as Disabatino notes, “She was not completely satisfied with Charles Scribner’s and Sons, and [had] begun to slowly break away from her old publishers in order to find more advantageous and lucrative offers from the field of consumer magazines and from competing publishers” (29). One of Wharton’s complaints against Scribner’s was with the marketing strategies of her work. Wharton objected to certain liberties she felt were being taken with the cover artwork for her novel. Wharton critics claim that this, along with Wharton’s unconventional process of writing, caused a division between Wharton and Burlingame which led to Wharton
experimenting with other publishers. Disabatino writes, “After initial dissatisfaction with the small sales and slow advertising for *Ethan Frome*, Wharton committed literary infidelity and gave her next novel, *The Reef*, to another major publishing company, Appleton” (31.) Wharton chose Appleton because it offered her the opportunity to seek out greater recognition from her work; Appleton was known for using more enterprising business methods and aggressive advertising campaigns, which were what Wharton wanted from her publishers (Lee 424).

Though Wharton published *The Reef* and some of her works with Appleton, her divorce with Scribner’s was slow. Wharton would give Scribner’s her work on and off many times leading up to 1915. Ultimately, Wharton’s publishing with Appleton damaged her relationship with her parent publishers beyond repair. After hearing of Wharton’s deal with Appleton, Charles Scribner said, “It has taken me a month to recover from the shock caused by your announcement that you had arranged with Appleton for the publication of your next book…Of course I am very sorry to lose the honor of exclusive publication for you and it will be a little difficult for me to explain to others why you made the change” (Lee 425).

After Wharton’s moved to Appleton she worked with editor and agent, Rutger Bleeker Jewett and began to experience the world of mass-market consumer magazines. She found success in the serialization of her work in different popular woman’s magazines, like *The Delineator*. Wharton’s decision to divorce from Scribner’s even after her works received success was motivated by Scribner’s inability to understand and give Wharton what she wanted. Though Burlingame and Wharton maintained a successful
partnership for a period of time, the partnership could not last because the editor and author’s ideals on creating works of literature did not match. Without sharing these ideals Wharton and Burlingame were unable to maintain the closeness necessary for successful author-editor relationships.
Chapter 3: F. Scott Fitzgerald and Maxwell Perkins
Maxwell Perkins is often referred to as the most important literary editor of the twentieth century. He worked with prominent authors such as Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and Marjorie K. Rawlings, though it is his work with Thomas Wolfe for which he is most remembered today. Perkins had an intense interest in each of his authors and adapted a different editing style to compliment different authors. Perkins was described by A. Scott Berg in his novel *Max Perkins Editor of Genius*. Berg said:

His literary judgment was original and exceedingly astute, and he was famous for his ability to inspire an author to produce the best that was in him or her. More a friend to his authors than a taskmaster, he aided them in every way. He helped them structure their books, if help was needed; thought up titles, invented plots; he served as psycho analyst, lovelorn adviser, marriage counselor, career manager, money-lender. (Berg 4)

Perkins believed that editing was a great responsibility, yet he expected no credit for his contributions. He said to a class on publishing at New York University, “An editor does not add to a book. At best he serves as handmaiden to an author. Don’t ever get to feeling important about yourself, because an editor at most releases energy. He creates nothing” (Berg 6). This carried through in Perkins relationships with his authors.

Perkins first met Fitzgerald when he was still a young author. Fitzgerald was still inexperienced and wanted the guiding hand of an editor like Perkins. Berg described Perkins early relationship with his authors saying:

Beginning with Fitzgerald and continuing with each new writer he took on, he slowly altered the traditional notion of the editor’s role. He sought
out authors who were not just ‘safe,’ conventional in style and bland in content, but who spoke in a new voice about the new values of the postwar world. In this way, as an editor he did more than reflect the standards of his age; he consistently influenced and changed them by the new talents he published. (41)

Perkins, being fairly new and inexperienced in the publishing industry, seemed a perfect match for Fitzgerald. Perkins liked Fitzgerald’s writing, and was happy to take Fitzgerald on, since he felt the most important role of publishing was still, “To take on an author at the start or reasonably near it, and then to publish not this book and that, but the whole author” (Berg 178).

The relationship between Perkins and Fitzgerald quickly evolved. In one of their first meetings Perkins suggested, off the record, that Scott rewrite his novel and change the narration from first to third person (Berg 14). Scott took this advice and began to reconstruct his manuscript at this point entitled The Education of a Personage into what would become This Side of Paradise. Perkins not only provided advice for his author; he also fought for Scribner’s to publish him. Perkins confronted the head of the company, Charles Scribner, saying, “If we’re going to turn down the likes of Fitzgerald, I will lose all interest in publishing books” (Berg 16).

At this suggestion Scribner’s quickly signed Fitzgerald. Once Fitzgerald officially signed, Perkins worked more closely with him on his writings. When Fitzgerald experienced a writer’s slump Perkins would send him a book to keep him going. One of Perkins other authors, James Jones remarked, “Max was like an old-time druggist,
whenever he saw you getting sluggish, he prescribed a book that he thought would pep you up. They were always specially selected for your condition, perfectly matched to your particular tastes and temperament, but with enough of a kick to get you thinking in a new direction” (Berg 21).

Once Perkins was assured his author was prescribed the right treatment to produce the best book, Perkins would start editing. Perkins once suggested, “90 percent of the time editors perform duties any office boy could do as well…But once a month, or once every six months, there comes a moment which no one but you could cope with. Into that single moment of work goes all your education, all your background, all the thinking of your life” (Berg 50). Perkins made it a special goal to maintain individual relationships with each of his authors and so he edited differently for each of his different authors. This development of specific interpersonal relationships, illustrate how important intimate and unique relationships are between editor and author.

In the case of Fitzgerald, Perkins mostly made suggestions involving changing the structural set up of his novels. Upon receiving Fitzgerald’s manuscript for Tender is the Night, Berg says, “Perkins gave it a consecutive reading. He felt there was a lag in the beginning of the book, largely because of a sequence at the train station that was peripheral to the main story; he asked Fitzgerald to consider cutting it because ‘as soon as people get to Dick Diver their interest in the book, and their perception of its importance increases some thirty to forty percent’” (229). Fitzgerald agreed with Perkins and gratefully made the changes to Tender is the Night as suggested. Later Fitzgerald would write to Perkins saying, “Max, it amuses me when praise comes in on the ‘structure’ of
the book—because it was you who fixed up the structure, not me. And don’t think I’m not grateful for all that sane and helpful advice about it” (Berg 85).

Fitzgerald was a grateful recipient of all of Perkins help. He later wrote in a letter to Perkins about the dedication of Tender is the Night: “My only regret is that the dedication isn’t to you, as it should be, because Christ knows you’ve stuck with me on the thing through thick and thin, and it was pretty thin going for a while” (Berg 230). But Perkins did not care about this kind of recognition, since he believed that book editors should remain invisible; he felt public recognition of them might undermine readers’ faith in writers, and writers’ confidence in themselves.

As a consequence of Perkins maintaining individual relationships with his authors he often found himself serving not just professional roles. In the case of Fitzgerald, Perkins served as advisor and financial lender. Fitzgerald was often in financial duress, as he had richer tastes than the fame and money writing brought. Though this struggle followed Fitzgerald throughout the entirety of his career, Perkins did everything he could to eliminate the stress of money as an excuse preventing his author from writing. Perkins would even lend Fitzgerald large sums of money from his own personal bank account so that Fitzgerald could continue working on a particular novel instead of straying towards short stories that could be serialized in magazines for a quick paycheck. Perkins also convinced Scribner’s to give Fitzgerald forward installments of his pay instead of remaining on the contracted schedule.

This involvement in Fitzgerald’s personal life marks the importance of strong editor-author relationships. If Perkins maintained a strictly business relationship with
Fitzgerald he would not have been as successful an editor. Perkins friendly involvement
in Fitzgerald’s life encouraged Fitzgerald to focus on his writing. When financial
problems would have otherwise distracted him, Perkins interceded as advisor and friend
and allowed Fitzgerald to pursue his work. Fitzgerald reliance on his editor for support
displays the trust between editor and author that helped fuel a successful working
relationship. Perkins continued support of Fitzgerald throughout his career ─from helping
him sign with Scribner’s to helping him publish his first book ─garnered fierce loyalty
between Perkins and Fitzgerald which translated into the long-term success of their
partnership.
Chapter 4: Thomas Wolfe and Maxwell Perkins
Maxwell Perkins also maintained a successful relationship with writer Thomas Wolfe. Upon first hearing of Thomas Wolfe and his writing, Perkins felt a great sense of foreboding. This was partially due to the abundance of myths that surrounded Wolfe’s writing, particularly the supposed size of his working manuscript. The people who had seen the manuscript swore, “It stood several feet off the ground” (Berg 133). As Perkins recalled, returning from work after his New Year’s holiday, he was filled with trepidation at meeting the creator of the manuscript that covered his desk. He was also startled by the presence of Wolfe himself. Berg said, “Max had been forewarned of Wolfe’s unusual appearance, but he was nonetheless startled by the massiveness of the six-foot six-inch, black-haired man leaning against the jamb, filling his doorway” (131).

At their first meeting Perkins and Wolfe promptly got to work on Wolfe’s manuscript. Perkins quickly got over his anxiety regarding Wolfe, he wrote describing Wolfe, “Every good thing that comes is accompanied by trouble” (Berg 128). Perkins talked first to Wolfe about a scene early in the manuscript between the hero’s father and the madam of the local brothel, in which she was purchasing a tombstone for one of her girls. Wolfe eagerly interjected, “I know you can’t print that! I’ll take that out at once, Mr. Perkins,” to which Perkins exclaimed, “Take it out? It’s one of the greatest short stories I have ever read!” (Berg 131). This small interaction had a great impact on Wolfe and marked the development of trust between editor and author. Wolfe said, “I was so moved and touched to think that someone at length had thought enough of my work to sweat over it in this way that I almost wept” (Berg 132).
However, this was just the beginning of the bond of trust between editor and author. Perkins made many comments and suggestions to Wolfe, but the author was not yet ready to agree to all of Perkins’ changes. Wolfe had particular difficulty cutting the length of the novel down. The manuscript may not have stood several feet off the ground but, Berg says, “It was 1,114 pages of onionskin, contained some 330,000 words, and stood five inches high” (133). Berg also reports:

Wolfe was not yet willing, during this first editorial session, to agree to so radical a cut as the first 100 pages. But he was not put off by the suggestion. In fact, he had never been so light of heart. ‘It was the first time, so far as I can remember,’ Wolfe recorded later, ‘that anyone had concretely suggested to me that anything I had written was worth as much as fifteen cents.’(132)

By their next meeting Wolfe had begun to trim the book down, unfortunately as Berg notes, “For all of Wolfe’s work, the book was only eight pages shorter. He had made many of the deletions Perkins had suggested, but the new transitions he wrote to connect the severed portions of the narrative had swollen into thousands of words” (133). This less-than-impressive triumph created some tension for Wolfe, but upon receiving advice from his friend Madeline Boyd, Wolfe continued following Perkins’ suggestions. Boyd instructed Wolfe to listen to Perkins because, she said, “He is one of those quiet and powerful persons in the background, the sole and only excuse…for Scott Fitzgerald having been as successful as he is” (Berg 134). This advice reinforced Wolfe’s belief in his editor and he continued to put more faith in Perkins. In fact, Wolfe took up the habit
of going to Scribner’s once, sometimes twice a week, without appointment, carrying 100 page sections for Perkins to edit (Berg 134). His unscheduled meetings became so consistent that Perkins would worry if Wolfe did not appear, and would write to Wolfe or call him up to find out why.

As they continued working on the manuscript and preparing it for publication more and more cuts had to be made. Berg recalls, “After a point Perkins had to search not for whole pages to be excised but often merely single phrases. Cuts made because of obscenities or improprieties amounted to 524 lines” (135). Each deletion remained a struggle. As a rule, every deletion was suggested by Perkins, discussed and debated by him and Wolfe, before being removed; no part of the manuscript was extracted without mutual consent and no pages were destroyed (Berg 134). Tensions increased as the changes expanded to cutting not just specific scene or phrases but entire characters. Wolfe appealed every time Perkins sentenced a character to the chopping block. Wolfe would plead, “I think these people are ‘great’ people and that they should be told about” (Berg 135). While Perkins agreed with Wolfe, he felt an editorial responsibility to argue for these deletions; he was convinced that, instead of propelling the story, the large crew of characters slowed it down. So in turn, to name one of many examples, the four pages Wolfe had written about his uncle were reduced to simply, “Henry, the oldest, was now thirty” (Berg 135). Still, Wolfe and Perkins’ relationship was strengthened through this tension. Wolfe wrote to his sister Mabel Wolfe Wheaton, “This man Perkins is a fine fellow and perhaps the best publishing editor in America. I have great confidence in him and I usually yield to his judgment” (Berg 134). Together, Perkins and Wolfe would cut
ninety thousand words, enough to fill a large book, from the manuscript of his first novel, *Look Homeward, Angel*.

All of the changes paid off as the book became a critical and commercial success. By the summer of 1929 Madeleine Boyd believed, as she would for years to come, that “Without that other genius — Max — the world would never have heard of Tom Wolfe” (Berg 136). Following the success of Wolfe’s first novel, Perkins continued to admire his author and was eager to do whatever he could to help publish more of Wolfe’s works. However, at this time Wolfe was caught in a passionate and destructive relationship with the much older, married designer, Aline Bernstein. Bernstein provided financial support for Wolfe, making it hard for him to break away from her. Perkins saw the impact this relationship had on his writer and began to act as not just editor to Wolfe but as friend and advisor as well. Sensing the distress Bernstein was causing Wolfe, Perkins took steps to help his author distance himself from her. After a particularly tumultuous fight between Wolfe and Bernstein, Perkins wrote a recommendation for Wolfe that helped him receive a fellowship with the Guggenheim Foundation. Berg also notes, “Max further arranged a $4,500 advance in monthly installments on [Wolfe’s] new book. With the incoming royalties from *Look Homeward, Angel* he had some $10,000 and no longer had to rely on the support of Aline Bernstein” (160).

Perkins and Wolfe’s friendship continued to develop. Wolfe wrote in a December, 1929 letter to Perkins, “One year ago I had little hope for my work, and I did not know you. What has happened since may seem to be only a modest success to many people; but to me it is touched with strangeness and wonder. It is a miracle” (Berg 160). Perkins and
Wolfe continued to meet regularly as they began work on Wolfe’s next novel. Since the success of his first novel Wolfe had more trust in Perkins both as editor and friend. He continued to put an increasing amount of faith in Perkins and, as Berg says, “Tom now had an increasing need to involve Maxwell Perkins in his life as well as his work. The two men could no longer be separated, nor did they wish to be. More and more Wolfe was becoming the son Perkins never had” (169).

Wolfe’s next novel produced many of the same editing challenges as the first. The length was again a major issue. Berg writes, “Max also worried that if Wolfe continued writing, his book could never be contained within two covers. It was already four times as long as the uncut manuscript of Look Homeward, Angel, over ten times the length of most novels. And Wolfe was adding 50,000 words a month. For the author’s welfare Perkins was considering drastic action” (234). This drastic action occurred later that year in the middle of December. Wolfe recalled the situation saying:

The editor…who during all this tormented period had kept a quiet watch on me, called me to his home and calmly informed me that my book was finished. I could only look at him with stunned surprise, and finally I could only tell him out of the depth of my own hopelessness, that he was mistaken, that the book was not finished, that it could never be complete, that I could write no more, He answered with the same quiet finality that the book was finished whether I knew it or not, and then he told me to go to my room and spend the next week in collecting in its proper order the
manuscript which had accumulated during the last two years. (Berg 234-5)

This action was at the time considered extreme, as it still would be today, but Perkins’ editorial instinct instructed him that Wolfe was doing more harm than good dwelling over the manuscript without allowing it to being read and edited.

Wolfe took his editor’s advice and a few days later appeared at Perkin’s office.

Berg says:

[Wolfe] entered Max’s south-west-corner office and unloaded a heavy bundle on his editor’s desk. It was wrapped in brown paper, twice tied with string, and stood two feet high. Perkins opened it and found it packed with typescript – more than 3,000 rough-draft pages, the first part of the novel. The sheets, all different kinds of paper, were not consecutively written. (235)

Tom later explained the relief this brought him as he wrote in a letter to his mother, “God knows a lot of it is still fragmentary and broken up, but at any rate he can now look at it and give me an opinion on it” (Berg 235).

Still, this only brought Wolfe temporary relief as he felt very desperate in wanting his novel to succeed. He wrote to Perkins, “Well, now here is your chance. I think a very desperate piece of work is ahead for both so us, but if you think it is worth doing and tell me to go ahead, I think there is nothing that I cannot accomplish…I don’t envy you the job before you.” (Berg 235) Perkins felt just as nervous as Wolfe but Perkins had greater
faith in Wolfe than he had in himself. This is evidenced in his later reflection. After reading Wolfe’s manuscript, Perkins said:

I, who thought Tom a man of genius, and loved him too, and could not bear to see him fail, was almost as desperate as he, so much there was to do. But the truth is that if I did him a real service—and in this I did—it was in keeping him from losing his belief in himself by believing in him. What he most needed was comradeship and understanding in a long crisis and those things I could give him then. (Berg 235)

Wolfe delivered the rest of the manuscript pages just two days before Christmas 1933. Most of the pages Perkins had seen as fragments over the years, but this was the first time he could view them in their correct sequence. After dropping these pages off Wolfe left believing, as he acknowledged in *The Story of A Novel*, that once again Perkins’s intuition had been right. Wolfe said, “He had told me the truth when he said that I had finished the book” (Berg 236).

Perkins spent the holiday reading the complete manuscript, which altogether contained one million words. During his reading, Perkins discovered that the manuscript actually contained two separate cycles, both chronologically and thematically. After identifying this Perkins and Wolfe got to work with hopes that the book could be published the following summer. They resumed their rigid working pattern from the final months of working on *Look Homeward, Angel*. Berg says, “Perkins and Wolfe began working at Scribner’s for two hours every afternoon, Monday through Saturday… Each day they argued. Perkins insisted that it was an author’s duty to be selective in his
writing. Wolfe asserted that it was an author’s primary task to illuminate a whole way of life for the reader” (236). Stemming from this conflicting opinion of the authors duty to his works, many concessions were made on both sides.

Perkins continued proofreading Wolfe’s manuscript while suggesting changes. Berg says, “Sometimes Perkins wrote short directives right on Tom’s detailed breakdown of the book: ‘Insert section in train’ or ‘Conclude Leopold ’” (237). Other times Perkins would include more comprehensive instructions, as seen below:

**THINGS TO BE DONE IMMEDIATELY IN FIRST REVISION**

1. Make rich man in opening scene older and more middle aged.
2. Cut out references to previous books and to success
3. Write out fully and with all dialogue the jail and arrest scene. (Berg 237)

Eventually the manuscript was assimilated into more or less the form of a typical, if not unusually long, book. Perkins helped Wolfe designate chapter breaks and together they worked their way line-by-line, examining each paragraph and sentence looking for any superfluous details to be cut. Perkins knew and respected Wolfe as a genius, but recognized it was hard for him to conform his writing gifts to conventions. Perkins said, “Just as he [Wolfe] had to fit his body to the doorways, vehicles, and furniture of smaller men, so he had to fit his expression to the conventional requirements of a space and time that were as surely too small for his nature as they were for his subject”(Berg 355). Though cutting was not a new experience for Wolfe or Perkins, Wolfe admitted it was
especially hard for him, saying, “Cutting has always been the most difficult and
distasteful part of writing to me” (Berg 238).

Later that year the final copy of the manuscript was submitted, and the book titled
_Of Time and the River_ was finally published. Though Perkins wished he had been able to
do more to the manuscript, Berg says, “He realized that an editor too must eventually
give up a book” (249). The book was more commercially successful than _Look_
_Homeward, Angel_ but never achieved the same level of critical acclaim. Some critics felt
that the novel was more of a product of Perkins than Wolfe. Perkins adamantly refused
this, not only with his favorite mantra, “The book belongs to the author,” but also in
saying, “No understanding person could believe that it affected the book in any serious or
important way—that it was much more than mechanical help” (Berg 319). Still Wolfe felt
hurt by these critiques and began to distance himself from his editor.

During January, 1937, Wolfe cemented the distance between he and Perkins,
when he sent Perkins a twenty-eight page letter detailing their separation. Perkins was
shocked by the letter and made many attempts to reach out to Wolfe and repair the
relationship that ended so suddenly, but to no avail. Many critics blame Perkins’ severe
editing of Wolfe’s work for their separation. Others say it was criticism at the wrong time
combined with differences of opinion that began to chip away at the partnership between
Perkins and Wolfe. Either way one thing was apparent: Wolfe felt wronged by his editor.

After he separated from Perkins, Wolfe never published another book. Though
some critics use this to argue Perkins had a heavy hand in contributing to Wolfe’s novels,
Perkins has always denied this. He gave his view on the subject saying, “An editor does
not add to a book. At best he serves as handmaiden to an author” (Berg 6). Wolfe died in September 1938. On hearing of his old friend’s death Perkins said, “It is hard to think that Tom wouldn’t have been utterly tortured as things are in the world. It was in him to do more than he ever did, but he would have suffered all the time” (Berg 355).

Regardless of the ending of their relationship, writer Thomas Wolfe and editor Maxwell Perkins are still known as one of the most famous editor-author duos. This brief foray into Perkins and Wolfe’s notable author-editor partnership illustrates some of the complexities of the author-editor relationship. For Wolfe and Perkins, the strength of their relationship relied on their close bond. Wolfe and Perkins’ relationship was so closely tied into their friendship that the thought of being betrayed by his friend overwhelmed Wolfe so that he could not move on once trust was lost in their relationship and so Wolfe never published again. This marks an important distinction in the importance of strong personal connection in editor-author relationships as the personal aspects involved in publishing outweigh the professional aspects of publishing.
Chapter 5: Ernest Hemingway and Maxwell Perkins
Ernest Hemingway and Maxwell Perkins shared an interesting editor-author relationship. Perkins worked with Hemingway on his first novel, *The Sun Also Rises*. Perkins could easily see Hemingway’s talent as a writer. Upon first reading part of the manuscript for *The Sun Also Rises*, Perkins wrote to Hemingway, “I was greatly impressed by the power in the scenes and incidents pictured, and by the effectiveness of their relation to each other” (Berg 87). Perkins instantly saw the potential in *The Sun Also Rises* but the novel differed so much in style and subject from any book Perkins had ever edited, or even read, that he was at first unusually hesitant to offer advice to Hemingway.

The one problem Perkins felt confident in addressing was the use of profanities and the negative characterizations of important people. Perkins felt this would be the major problem Hemingway would face when trying to publish. Berg summarizes Perkins’ opinion bluntly, saying, “The problems of *The Sun Also Rises*, he felt, had less to do with entire sections than with individual words and phrases—profanities and unacceptable characterizations which Perkins knew could result in the book’s suppression and in libel suits. As for language, he wrote the author, the ‘majority of people are more affected by words than things’” (97).

Knowing that it would be difficult, Perkins set to task in persuading the very conservative Charles Scribner to publish the rather outrageous sentiments of Hemingway. This in itself was a great challenge, as it was known that, “Printing obscenities was to [Charles Scribner] unthinkable; keeping ‘dirty books’ from sullying his imprint was a matter of great importance” (Berg 95). Still, Perkins saw the brilliance in Hemingway’s writing and wanted to stand by his author. Charles A. Madison, an editorial executive at
Henry Holt & Company made it clear that it would not be easy for Perkins when he said, “To persuade Scribner to publish a book containing four-letter words and dialogue that crackled with obscenity. It was one thing to call a female dog a bitch...but it was quite another to refer to a woman— in this case, the heroine, Lady Brett Ashley— as one” (Berg 95).

Ultimately, Perkins held a face-to-face conference with Charles Scribner regarding the unprintable words in Hemingway’s manuscript. Through retellings, this conversation itself has become exaggerated into a publishing legend. Regardless of the exact things said during this conversation, the most important point is that Perkins achieved the unachievable and won the approval to print Hemingway’s story. Perkins and Hemingway enacted several changes to lessen the vulgarity and offense of Hemingway’s prose. In fact, by the end of August, 1926:

He [Hemmingway] had dealt with all the hot spots Perkins had cited:

Henry James, in a “historical” reference to his impotence, was identified only as Henry; direct references to such living writers as Joseph Hergesheimer and Hilaire Belloc were eliminated or changed; dashes were substituted for the letters in the obscene words; and the Spanish fighting bulls were depicted without their “embarrassing appendages.” (Berg 98)

Ultimately these changes paid off. *The Sun Also Rises* achieved critical and commercial success. Perkins wrote Hemingway, referring to the increase in sales of *The Sun Also Rises* that, “The Sun has risen…and is rising steadily” (99).
Hemingway and Perkins had become not only colleagues, but also friends over the course of working on *The Sun Also Rises*. As a friend, Hemingway invited Perkins on one of his famous deep-sea fishing trips so that they could celebrate. Perkins declined the initial offer, reluctant to leave his work, but he would eventually go with Hemingway on a trip to Key West. Perkins and Hemingway’s relationship could also be seen evolving as Hemingway’s friends and family would often contact Perkins when they could not find Hemingway, knowing Perkins would have some idea of where he was and how to contact him. For example, Perkins was telegrammed by Hemingway’s mother Grace, in December, 1928. The telegram read, “TRY TO LOCATE ERNEST HEMINGWAY IN NEW YORK ADVISE HIM OF DEATH OF HIS FATHER TODAY ASK HIM TO COMMUNICATE WITH HOME IMMEDIATELY” (Berg 140). Within an hour Perkins was able to contact Hemingway and wire him the money he needed to travel back home.

The friendship that developed out of their working relationship helped Perkins better understand Hemingway, and in turn better understand Hemingway’s writing. When Perkins edited Hemingway’s *A Farewell to Arms* there was a greater synchronicity in their working together, as Perkins no longer felt reluctant to wholeheartedly offer his advice. This meant the pair spent less time editing and the novel received quicker publication. Within the first weeks of being published *A Farewell to Arms* had sold over 30,000 copies. Upon the success of Hemingway’s novel, Perkins persuaded Scribner’s to hike the author’s royalty percentage on *A Farewell to Arms*, at the cost of several hundred
dollars to the company, “Just because,” Perkins told Hemingway, “we think the value of publishing for you is a great one in itself” (Berg 157).

Perkins often tried to force his successful authors together in hopes that they might encourage each other. He particularly wanted Hemingway to get along with Thomas Wolfe. On the meeting he arranged for Wolfe and Hemingway, Perkins said, “I brought it about, because I hoped Hem would be able to influence Tom to overcome his faults in writing, even though they were the defects of his qualities, such as his tendency to repetitions and excessive expression” (Berg 215). Though these meetings never really produced what Perkins intended, Perkins still continued to unite his authors because he felt a paternal sense to connect these authors, who filled the role of the sons he never had.

Hemingway and Perkins’s partnership is further example of the emphasis on personal relationships in the publishing industry. Having a tight personal bond, like the bond between Perkins and his writers, is important in creating good partnerships and in producing great works of literature. The success of the novels Perkins edited with Fitzgerald, Wolfe, and Hemingway illustrate the trend that close editor-author partnerships can produce higher quality of works. Perkins ability to maintain unique relationships with each the authors he worked with translated into Perkins being able to understand and help each author demonstrate their full authorial potential in their works.
Chapter 6: David Foster Wallace, Michael Pietsch, and Bonnie Nadell
David Wallace first started working with editor Michael Pietsch in April, 1992, after receiving a submission from Wallace’s agent Bonnie Nadell. Nadell saw the potential for success a partnership Pietsch offered Wallace and acted as a matchmaker. Nadell sent Pietsch the first 150 pages of what would be *Infinite Jest* and Pietsch was entranced. He said, “They were wild, smart, funny, sad, and unlike any pages of manuscript I'd ever held in my hands” (Mitchell). After reading the short section of Wallace’s manuscript Pietsch responded to Nadell and communicated his interest in helping Wallace work on what Pietsch was certain would be a very long book. Pietsch said, “I was lucky enough to be working at Little, Brown, a company that was willing to support this kind of endeavor. We signed a contract and waited” (Mitchell).

When Wallace had finished two-thirds of the novel, he sent Pietsch the pile of manuscripts and asked for feedback. Pietsch was reluctant to give feedback because, he said, “Without the whole story it would be impossible to know what ultimately mattered” (Mitchell). Still Pietsch did his best to give his input on what he found confusing, or slow. Pietsch said, “I banged my head hardest against the Marathe/Steeply political colloquies and the Orin Incandenza football stories and David revised those strands considerably” (Mitchell).

Together Wallace and Pietsch decided the role Pietsch would take as editor of *Infinite Jest*. Wallace already had an advisor in his agent Nadell, and it was clear Wallace did not want or need a lot of advice or heavy editing. Pietsch’s role was to give an outside opinion and focus on asking the question, “Can the book possibly live without this?” This was essential since the book was going to be so long and demand so much of the reader’s
time. Therefore, Wallace and Pietsch made it their goal to eliminate any passages, “No matter how beautiful, funny, brilliant or fascinating they were of themselves, simply because the novel did not absolutely require them” (Mitchell).

Wallace and Pietsch worked together to cut around 250 manuscript pages. Every cut was authorized by Wallace. Pietsch recalls, “I made suggestions and recommendations and tried to make the reasons for them as clear as possible. But every change was his. It is a common misconception that the writer turns the manuscript over to the editor, who then revises, shapes, and cuts at will. In fact the editor’s job is to earn the writer’s agreement that changes he or she suggests are worth making” (Mitchell). Not every change Pietsch suggested was immediately taken up by Wallace. In fact some suggestions were not acted on at all. Below is an excerpt of Wallace’s responses to Pietsch’s editing suggestions:

p. 52—This is one of my personal favorite Swiftian lines in the whole manuscript, which I will cut, you rotter.

p. 82—I cut this and have now come back an hour later and put it back.

p. 133—Poor old FN 33 about the grammar exam is cut. I’ll also erase it from the back-up disc so I can’t come back in an hour and put it back in (an enduring hazard, I’m finding.)

p. 327-330. Michael, have mercy. Pending an almost Horacianly persuasive rationale on your part, my canines are bared on this one.

p. 739-748. I’ve rewritten it—for about the 11th time—for clarity, but I bare teeth all the way back to the 2nd molar on cutting it.
Infinite Jest was published in February, 1996. It received critical acclaim and commercial success. It sold more than 150,000 copies and was included by Time magazine in its list of “The 100 best English-language novels published since 1923”. The success of this novel did not slow Wallace and Pietsch down. They continued working together and Pietsch edited and made contributions to all of Wallace’s subsequent works; though it is his editing of Wallace’s The Pale King that most stands out.

The publication of The Pale King is controversial because it was still unfinished at the time of David Foster Wallace’s death. The manuscript pages of the in-progress novel were found by Wallace’s wife, Karen Green and his agent Nadell. Together Nadell and Pietsch worked to piece the novel together. Pietsch described the confusion that came with first seeing Wallace’s manuscript. He said in an interview with The Atlantic, “When I first saw it, it was … literally thousands of pages, of many types. Typewritten pages. Handwritten pages. Pages in workbooks….First, [Wallace’s wife and agent] gave me a stack of pages—a 200-page stack of about 12 chapters he had, that was on his desk when he died. This neatly typed section he left. They asked me first to read that, and then to come look at everything else he had, and to come up with a plan” (Fassler).

Pietsch has described the difficulty of assembling the unfinished novel saying, “I think it's inarguable that it's complete. It's possible that David had written all the scenes and chapters that he wanted to write, and had just not finished revising and assembling them—but that would just be speculation. There are notes at the end, as you see, that
suggest directions he might have taken” (Fassler). Still Pietsch did assemble the novel as best he could, which he regarded as a testament to Wallace's enormous talents, a crucial addition to his body of work, and his too-soon epitaph.

Pietsch started editing the unfinished novel by trying to designate an order to the story. This was especially challenging since the novel was set up to be non-linear and to defy reader’s expectations. Pietsch described his method saying:

I’d look at all the multiple versions to find what appeared to be the last version. Once I had all of the distinct pieces, I read them again to try to understand the story that was within them. And gradually, I saw that there was a chronological sequence and spine to the novel… So the main work of assembling the novel was finding those things that needed to happen in order for the reader to make sense of what was happening—and then arraying the other pieces, which are less time-specific, around those in a way that creates what I hope will be a pleasurable flow of David Wallace—of his brilliant, brilliant range of voices, and narrative techniques, and ideas. (Fassler)

Another challenge facing Pietsch in the posthumous editing of the novel was his inability to collaborate with the author in choosing what needed to be cut from the story. Pietsch described this saying, “Editing with a writer is a joyous collaboration—not even a collaboration, but a conversation, a colloquy, a back-and-forth. That interplay with David was one of the most joyous I've had in my life as an editor...Without David there to respond, my goal was to include everything that made sense” (Fassler). Pietsch had to
change his editing style as he worked with Wallace’s agent to change as little as possible in order to stay true to Wallace and his intentions for the novel. Pietsch said, “I didn't feel like I had the liberty to edit his words without him there to respond to them. So I restricted myself, and restricted my editing, to making names consistent, and places consistent, and ranks—achieving a kind of consistency so the story made sense” (Fassler).

David Foster Wallace and Michael Pietsch illustrate the case in which sometimes an editor-author relationship extends itself past death. Pietsch took on what he described as the challenge of a lifetime in editing Wallace’s final work. Pietsch remembered the experience saying, “For me, it was a grief-stricken challenge—but how lucky I am to have been given this opportunity. Even working through the page of David's smallest, most illegible handwriting, I was happy every second” (Fassler). The fact that Pietsch was able to assemble a Pulitzer Prize finalist out of thousands of type- and hand-written manuscript pages that were produced over the course of more than a decade illustrates how successful a relationship Wallace and Pietsch had established. However, the relationship between Wallace and Pietsch in many ways would be incomplete without Wallace’s agent Bonnie Nadell. Apart from first bringing Wallace and Pietsch together, Nadell in her role of agent was able to act as intermediary between writer and editor and ultimately simplify the business side of publishing, preventing strain on the editor-writer relationship from developing out of financial or contractual disputes. Nadell’s also developed a strong personal relationship with Wallace as she allied with him as a writer, always looking to promote Wallace’s best interest.
The amount of understanding it took for Pietsch to assemble Wallace’s novel without instruction from the author shows that a special understanding existed between editor and author. From this it is clear that Wallace and Pietsch shared a strong personal relationship. This personal relationship was not weakened by the added role of the literary agent, but instead Nadell as agent was able to support Wallace and work from outside Little, Brown to ensure the success of Wallace and his works. This in turn helped Pietsch and his relationship with Wallace, as Pietsch did not have strain the line between fighting for his author and being loyal to his employing publisher. The addition of literary agent, allowed for Pietsch and Wallace to share a strong personal relationship without becoming mixed up with the business affairs. The addition of Nadell into the editor author duo allowed Wallace and Pietsch to develop firm definitions of their individual roles which prevented unnecessary conflicts, maximized efficiency and ultimately strengthened the editor-author connection.
Chapter 7: Introduction of Agents into the Publishing Industry
Since the early twentieth century the publishing industry has experienced many changes. Some of these changes were inevitable with advancements in technology; others became necessary because of the vast growth in the industry. For example the literary agent is a fairly new convention in the world of publishing. The first literary agents appeared in London during the early nineteenth century, but it wasn’t until the 1970s that modern-era publishing agents became popular (Thompson 59). Even then John Thompson, writer of *Merchants of Culture the Publishing Business in the Twenty-First Century* concludes it was, “In the course of the 1980s and 1990s, that the agent, effectively became the necessary point of entry into the field of trade publishing” (73).

At the beginning of the agent’s rise in popularity many in the industry saw agents as a threat. Publishers thought agents would “disrupt the traditional relationship between the publisher and the author and debase literature by emphasizing the commercial aspect (Thompson 60). Despite these fears agents were successful in entering the industry, illustrating that there was a need for a position like the agent. Literary agent Paul Reynolds described his position as being a sort of middleman. Reynolds says he thought of himself a broker in the literary marketplace, arranging deals between the buyers and sellers of literary properties regardless of who they were (Thompson 61). Eventually the role of agent would evolve from being a sort of double agent, caught between acting for the author and for the publisher, in favor of the author. Thompson recalls this saying, “The ambiguous role of the double agent gradually evolved into the modern conception of the literary agent as an intermediary whose primary allegiance was to the authors who, in effect, employed them (359).
Early agents like Reynolds were vital in determining what direction the career of literary agent would take. One of these agents, Morton Janklow, described that he felt in his position as an agent that the author, not the publisher, was in the position of strength and so his job as literary agent was to act as the author’s advocate, revising contracts if he felt they were unfair to the author (Thompson 65). The actions of agents like Janklow helped instill a new kind of literary agent and a new style of agenting, many of the features which would become increasingly commonplace during the boom of numbers of literary agents in English metropolitan areas such as New York and London in the 1980s and 1990s (Thompson 71).

This burst in the number of literary agents is easily observed but less easily tracked. Thompson says, “The Association of Author Representatives— the professional association of literary agents— listed 424 members in 2008” (71). He also says, this is not a reliable statistic, “since many agents and agencies, including some of the largest and most powerful agencies are not members” (Thompson 71). One New York agent interviewed by Thompson estimated there were 1,500 agents in America, with the majority of them being based in New York, but this was just a rough guess. This increasing supply in agents was “due largely to the changes that were taking place at this time in the publishing houses themselves…the growing consolidation of publishing houses forced out many publishers and managers- including some very senior and experiences publishers who were very knowledgeable about the industry” (Thompson 72). In Merchants of Culture, Thompson attributes the absence of accurate statistics as “a
reflection of the fact that literary agenting always was, and still remains, an unregulated profession” (71).

Since agents now play an essential role in the field of publishing, it is important to try and define their role. Most agents see themselves as a go-between for author and publisher. Agents try to navigate the situation to make both parties happy, although the agent works mostly for the author. Most agents would describe their role as a sort of manager for the long term career development of their authors (Thompson 86). Agents spend most of their time helping authors by preparing proposals and manuscripts for submission, pitching and selling their authors.

It is important to understand that the role agents do play is completely separate from the role of editor or publisher. As Thompson says in his book on the publishing industry, “In fact, most of the major houses in New York and London will no longer accept submissions from authors who don’t have agents, and if they do get submissions from unagented authors—perhaps passed on to them from one of their other authors—they will usually suggest to the author that they get an agent” (74).

Agents play an important role, since it is often now agents, not editors that find new authors. This, Thomson says, “Simplifies the editor’s job in certain ways, as it now means that they can rely on agents to do the initial scouting for new talent by scouring the pages of the literary magazines, traveling to conferences and literary festivals, visiting college campuses and so on” (75). Agents not only help find authors they want to help publish, but they also “work with them to turn an idea of draft manuscript into something
that an editor or publisher would recognize as an attractive project and potentially successful book” (Thompson 75).

Agents are also responsible for maintaining the majority of conversation with authors. As Thompson put it, the role of agent “protects the editor from having to become too involved with authors in a day-to-day way” (74). One agent interviewed by Thompson explained, “[Editors] don’t have time these days, so they don’t want someone calling them up at night, they don’t want someone calling them up in the morning and they don’t want to listen to the ins and outs of someone’s divorce” (74). In many ways editors and publishers have come to see agents as necessary players in the field to whom they can outsource tasks which they no longer have the time or inclination to do. While this description may seem harsh, it also places agents in favor with editors because in many ways agents save editors from doing more work.

Agents are also necessary because they help distinguish between the creative and business aspects of publishing. With agents taking on the responsibilities of negotiating advances and contracts, editors are able to focus on the creative process of writing and editing. Not to mention, Thompson says, “They find it easier and less awkward if the business aspects are handled by agents who, like them, are professionals in the business of publishing” (74). It saves enormous amounts of time when agents are involved because they have been through the negotiation process many times and know what to ask for when negotiating deals and contracts. Though dealing with agents also raises the stakes, they ultimately simplify the whole process.
The addition of the literary agent has come to fill a specific void in the publishing industry. Agents stepped in to act as spokesperson for the author allowing editors to maintain loyalty to the publishing houses employing them and providing a more even playing field between authors and publishers. While the inclusion of the literary agent was at first looked upon as threatening to the editor-author relationship, the agent has actually come to support editors and agents, allowing them to personally bond and work within the creative side of the publishing industry while agents handle the business negotiations. The development of the role of literary agent as a necessity in the publishing world, further cements that the close relationship of editors and authors is important in helping develop successful works and in helping the industry succeed as a whole.
Chapter 8: Technology Changes the Publishing Industry
The technological advances made since the early twentieth century have had a major impact on the publishing industry as a whole. Advances in communication ports have allowed for faster and easier contact between all those in the industry. The invention of the internet and email made communication much faster and simpler. For example, the ability to send a manuscript as a file attachment and to receive almost instantly is vastly different from the weeks or months it would take to ship bins of manuscripts across the country or around the world. Not to mention the switch between sending emails instead of telegraphs made it possible for more information to be sent between points faster. This development meant that editing time was cut down enormously. In most cases production time decreased from taking an average of nine months to one year, to six to nine months (Reid). This not only allowed for works to be produced more easily but it also allowed for more works to be published in total. Thompson discusses publishing in the digital age, saying:

But digitization had the potential to transform the publishing industry much more profoundly that this, precisely because the publishing industry—like many sectors of the creative industries—is concerned fundamentally with symbolic content that can be codified in digital form. Hence the whole process of creating, managing, developing and transforming this content is a process that can in principle be handled in a digital form- from the moment when an author composes a text by typing on the keys of a computer to the final creation of a file in a format that can be used by a printer. (327)
Changes in technology also impacted the way publishers operated amongst themselves in the sphere of business. In *Merchants of Culture*, Thompson notes, “The most immediate respect in which digitization had affected the publishing industry is in terms of operating systems and information flows” (326). This has been occurring since the mid 1980s. Since then, Thompson says, “Most publishing firms have been engaged in a continuous process of investing in the computerization and digitization of their offices and operating systems. They have built or installed back-office publishing systems which store bibliographical and other data on each title and can be accessed by anyone in the organization who can log onto the network” (326). Publishers have come to rely on computers for catalog preparation and mailing, advertising, direct mail, sending out review copies and, more recently, various kinds of e-marketing. Now, both publishers and book retailers now use computerized systems of stock management to monitor stock levels and stock turn (Thompson 34).

One of the biggest impacts technology has had on the world of publishing is in the changing format of publishing. Fiction was once commonly published in two formats. One was through traditional presses creating typical hard and paperback copy books. The other was through serialization of fiction in magazines. The serialization of fiction was popularized during the late nineteenth century in Britain but continued to remain popular in both Britain and America until the middle of the twentieth century. Serialization of fiction was presented by continuous installments issued either as separate publications or appearing in sequential issues of a single periodical publication. The serialization of works provided both a wider audience for authors and a means of financial stability. For
this reason, magazine publishing had a great appeal. As an essayist in *Scribner's Monthly* explained in 1878, "Now it is the second or third rate novelist who cannot get publication in a magazine, and is obliged to publish in a volume, and it is in the magazine that the best novelist always appears first" (Lund). In fact, serialization became so standard in American literature that authors like Henry James often built an installment structure into their creative process.

For example, because of the popularity surrounding serial fiction publication in the twentieth century, the overall consumption of fiction was very different than it is today. Since a novel would often be consumed by readers in installments over a period as long as a year, instead of being read in a single volume, authors would often write the next section of their story as a response to the audience’s reaction. This affected entire works of literature, since authors would revise and rework plot structures, altering the story so that it would produce the maximum response from readers.

The popularity of serialization subsided with the invention of more advanced technology. The inventions of broadcast radio and television caused a decline in printed serial fiction as newspapers and magazines shifted their focus on publishing less entertainment and more news. With this, most authors returned to publishing their works in the form of traditional novels, at least until the beginning of the twenty-first century when the advent of the internet again changed the publishing industry.

The internet introduced the ability to publish less formally for free to the masses. Many aspiring authors flocked to websites that would publish free-to-read works independently to get their fiction out to the wider world. Popular web-based communities
such as Livejournal, Fictionpress.com, and Wattpad gave aspiring authors the chance to reach readers without going through the traditional route of publishing. Many of the books published on these sites have as many readers as successful novels; some have received the same number of readers as *New York Times* bestsellers. Along with web-based communities that provide free publishing, the internet also allows for the introduction of electronic books, also known as e-books, to the masses.

Beginning in the 1990s e-books took hold of the publishing industry. At this time, Thompson reports, “Many publishers were pouring millions of dollars into electronic publishing projects of various kinds and venture capitalists were launching new companies aimed at digitizing book content making it available in a variety of formats” (313). An early 2000 report published by PricewaterhouseCoopers forecast an explosion of consumer spending on electronic books, and estimated that by 2004 consumer spending on e-books would reach 5.4 billion dollars and would comprise 17 percent of the market (Thompson 314). This forecast would prove to be conservative since the 2007 release of the Kindle prompted an immediate surge in e-book sales. After the release of the Kindle, “The same trade house that had seen ebook sales grow by 50 per cent in 2007 now saw its ebook sales leap by 400 per cent in 2008” (Thompson 319). These numbers proved to publishers that e-books and electronic publishing were going to have a major influence on the industry.

One repercussion of the e-book revolution that publishers immediately had to deal with was the impact e-books had on sales of traditional print books. Thompson points out, “For the large trade publishers in the US, the surge in ebook sales has meant that a
growing portion of their revenues is being accounted for by ebooks rather than traditional print books, whether hardcover or paperback” (321). Thompson continues, “For fiction as a whole, ebooks were accounting for around 40 per cent of overall sales in this corporation by mid-2011, but in some categories of genre fiction and for some authors the percentages were even higher—60 per cent for some categories like romance, some authors as high as 80 per cent” (322). The massive percentage of sales coming from e-books shows that the success of a publishing company relied more and more on the company’s relationship with electronic publishing. Companies that successfully transitioned into electronic publishing would be successful while those relying solely on traditional print publications would fall out of favor with consumers, and lose essential sales.

The electronic age also meant publishers had to adapt to the differences in the production process of e-books. Electronic books are different from print books in many essences. Thompson says, “From the viewpoint of the production process, the book itself has been reconstituted as a digital file” (328). This reconstitution of the book as a digital file is a major and essential change attributed to the digital revolution. This reconstitution involves, many of the technological aspects of book production, including typesetting and page design, being transformed by the application of new digital technologies. While many publishers continue to pencil edit on paper and then have the manuscript re-keyed by the compositor, who supplies the publisher with a clean electronic file, the process of editorial revision is irreconcilably altered because technology overwrites many parts of
the editing process. For example, many of the technical errors that editors were relied on to correct are now resolved with the application of spell check.

E-books continue to have a huge impact on the publishing world. The publishing industry, Thompson says:

[Is] witnessing major changes that could have profound consequences for the industry as a whole. It is simply too early to say what these consequences will be, but already many are beginning to wonder if the traditional revenue models of trade publishing—which have relied on market segmentation and the temporal phasing or ‘windowing’ of editions that are differentially priced—can be sustained in the face of the ebook surge. (324)

Many in the industry believe that the full impact of e-books and electronic publishing is still not yet felt. Ryan Boudinot, executive director of Seattle City of Literature expresses concern over the changes that e-books continue to introduce in the industry. He said in an interview, “In today's Kindle/e-book/self-publishing environment, with New York publishing sliding into cultural irrelevance, I find questions about working with agents and editors increasingly old-fashioned. Anyone who claims to have useful information about the publishing industry is lying to you, because nobody knows what the hell is happening” (Boudinot).

One thing is certain; e-books have brought an increasing amount of uncertainty to the publishing industry. E-books have made big publishing corporations bigger, and smaller corporations smaller. L.A. literary blogger Scott Timberg said in an article for
The digital revolution has ‘marginalized traditional publishers,’” (Goldfarb 58). The internet site, Amazon has benefited astronomically from the rising sales of e-books. While traditional book retailers like Borders, a bookstore chain that not long ago put many small, neighborhood bookstores out of business, itself went out of business.

In fact in 2012, for every 100 hard cover books Amazon sold, it sold 180 digital books (Goldfarb 58). This is sometimes attributed to the fact that e-books are usually produced quicker than hard copy books. Mark Coker the creator of the free online publishing company, Smashwords, reported his company, “I’s publishing 9,000 books a month, 100,000 titles a year” (Goldfarb 59). This pattern of e-book growth has led some critics and book lovers to argue over the legitimacy of the lower prices Amazon offers for e-books. Mark Goldfarb in his article The Changing Publishing Landscape says, “The lower prices Amazon offers in order to sell its expensive (relative to the cost of books) Kindles could prove to be a shortsighted view of the industry’s long-term interest in selling more books. Bookstores are going out of business. Authors now have fewer traditional publishers to publish their books. Publishers are paying significantly smaller advances to most authors” (58). E-books’ success is confirmed by Publisher’s Weekly as they announced in 2013 that e-books make up 25 percent of the book market (Goldfarb 58). Add to this electronic publishing the merger of Penguin and Random House, and the traditional English publishing scene grows bleaker. The new conglomerate will control 25 percent of the global book trade. (Goldberg 61) This is particularly bleak for Americans as Goldberg points out, “Four of the current six big publishers are owned by
European companies, and one of the two American companies is Australian-based, and the new Penguin-Random group is owned by UK and German publishers” (61).

However, there is some hope for traditional publishers, even if they are not associated with the big six publishing chains. Goldfarb says, “While many authors are choosing to publish directly with Amazon’s Kindle Direct Publishing or Barnes & Noble’s PubIt!, CreateSpace, Lulu, or other digital self-help platforms, Diversion[publisher] has discovered there is a poll of high quality mid-list authors who prefer working with a publisher that provides a team with ties to traditional publishing” (60). Still most professionals in the industry agree with the Director of Literature at the National Endowment for the Arts when he says that the e-books are only the beginning of the reinvention taking place in publishing. He concludes, “We won’t know for five or ten years where the book publishing industry will be” (Goldfarb 61).

While e-books have become so popular that they demand their own department within the publishing world, in many ways e-books are still undeveloped and only at their launch. For this reason the ties between self-publishing, e-books, and editing is still not completely felt. E-books are successful because of their ability to be produced at essentially no cost to publisher. This also makes e-books a good candidate for self-publishing and online publishing. However, this means e-books produced without the formality of traditional publishers are not crafted by the same editor-author partnerships that have helped to make the publishing industry so successful. In fact, many fiction works that are published strictly electronically are not subjected to any kind of editing, let alone the collaborative editing produced by close author-editor partnerships.
The lack of this editor-author partnership has led many industry professionals to be concerned for the quality of e-books. In a survey conducted by Data Conversion Laboratory and Bowker, studying the new trends in the publishing industry, one in three publishers rated the quality of most e-books they've read as either "okay" or "poor." In the same survey, two thirds of the publishers surveyed said they believe readers want the best quality possible and that quality affects e-book sales. Additionally approximately 98 percent of those surveyed felt that editing and copyediting is as important, or more important, for e-books than for print books.

While some critics think e-book’s increasing popularity, strong sales and ubiquitous presence on digital devices mean it is unnecessary to worry over the quality of e-books, experts argue these concerns are valid and warranted. Mark Gross, president/CEO of Data Conversion Laboratory said, “Two to three years ago, publishers thought that the reader wouldn't notice problems with quality. But it's now very clear they do ” (Martin).

Technological advances have had a huge impact on the development of the publishing industry. The internet and electronic communication have completely restructured the process and timeline for publishing works. Technology also introduced e-books as a new format for publishing, the rising popularity of which, have prompted a complete reinvention in the publishing industry. However, the permanence of this reinvention is still questioned, as many e-books have began to produce trends showing, as content developer/strategist and author Liora Farkovit says, “Poor quality can not only hamper sales of that particular product-it can also tarnish the reputation and future
earnings potential of the author and publisher” (Martin). This poor quality found in many e-books, unquestionably results from the lack of editing e-books receive and so the only correction to ensure a better end product is for publishers to implement an effective quality control process. The outrage stemming from poor quality e-books proves that technology does not make up for traditional editing. Gross says, “While the tools we have today allow us to streamline the process, and check the results more easily, there are no shortcuts to rigorous review” (Martin). There is a reason the editor-author relationship has remained a part of the publishing industry for so long. This relationship is vital to producing the multiple levels of editing and proofing that ensure quality works are produced.
Chapter 11: Conclusion
The publishing industry has undergone many changes in the last century. Innovations in technology, changes in publishing formats, the addition of agents, and the increasing popularity of electronic publishing have all combined to produce the modern publishing industry. With all of these changes one aspect of the industry that has remained the same is the emphasis on editor-author relationships. Editors have always played an important role in the production of literature. Editors’ relationships with authors have been especially important in publishing, as the ultimate success or failure of a book can often be determined by the condition of the author-editor relationship.

Thriving editor-author relationships will produce works that illustrate a clarity and cohesiveness that usually is rewarded with more critical praise and higher sales. Since the sales and success of novels are the driving force of the publishing industry, the success of the publishing industry, in many ways rests on the success of editor-author partnerships.

The dynamics of a successful editor-author relationship can be seen through examining specific editor-author duos: Edith Wharton and Edward Burlingame, F. Scott Fitzgerald and Maxwell Perkins, Thomas Wolfe and Maxwell Perkins, Ernest Hemingway and Maxwell Perkins, and David Foster Wallace and Michael Pietsch. These pairs each shared a unique relationship which helped fuel their collaborations to create successful works of fiction.

While certain aspects of the successful editor-author relationships remain constant, like the importance of a close bond between editor and author, continued advances in technology have affected major changes in the publishing industry. These changes have forced other aspects of the editor’s role to evolve. The internet and
computer programs have redefined the type of editing for which editors are responsible. For example, one hundred years ago, an editor’s duties included basic tasks such as spelling and grammar checks. These tasks can now be outsourced through the use of computer systems. In this way technology helped to free editors from the more elementary aspects of editing so that they could focus more of their energy on serving as an advisor for authors.

Technology has also opened avenues for authors to express themselves through various channels such as through internet publications and e-books. This resulted in huge changes impacting the way the publishing industry is operated. Most significantly, e-books are known to lack strong editor-author partnerships. While e-books missing this relationship have still been able to achieve popularity, e-books demonstrate the need for strong editor-author relationships as the lacking of editor-author partnerships in this realm of publishing produces an evidently poorer quality of work.

By considering how these changes in the publishing industry have affected the working relationship of editor-author partnerships, one can understand the importance in maintaining strong editor-author relationships. Evaluating the relationships in this project and considering the changes that continue to occur in the publishing industry, it is clear that regardless of the means of publishing, the past, present, and future endurance of the publishing industry relies on the strong bonds of editors and authors. The right author-editor duos can work together through whatever changes present themselves and move the industry forward.
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