Literary Publishing in the Federal Republic of Germany: Redefining the Enterprise

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Abstract
The evolution of the primary institution of literary mediation, the publishing house, has been a result of significant historical, sociological and technological developments since the end of World War II. Just as the early sixties marked the beginning of a new era in literary publishing (most notably through the expansion of paperback publishing) the eighties and nineties may also represent another benchmark in the evolution of the publishing industry in western industrialized nations. Our perceptions of the literary text, now reproduced in increasingly diverse formats and adapted to new media, are bound to the changing role of the book medium itself, which is being integrated into a highly complex communications marketplace.

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Literary Publishing in the Federal Republic of Germany: Redefining the Enterprise

Mark W. Rectanus
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The evolution of the primary institution of literary mediation, the publishing house, has been a result of significant historical, sociological and technological developments since the end of World War II. Just as the early sixties marked the beginning of a new era in literary publishing (most notably through the expansion of paperback publishing) the eighties and nineties may also represent another benchmark in the evolution of the publishing industry in western industrialized nations. Our perceptions of the literary text, now reproduced in increasingly diverse formats and adapted to new media, are bound to the changing role of the book medium itself, which is being integrated into a highly complex communications marketplace.

During the past 30 years literary publishers in the Federal Republic have gradually developed a new verlegerisches Selbstverständnis which reflects this evolution of the publishing industry. Contemporary literary publishers approach the concept of publishing with different techniques and goals than their predecessors of the prewar generation (e.g. Samuel Fischer, Peter Suhrkamp, or Kurt Wolff). A clear consciousness that literary

1. Among the many works on this topic written from the perspective of the pre-WW II generation see: Gottfried Bermann Fischer, Bedroht - Bewahrt. Der Weg eines Verlegers (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer Verlag, 1979), Peter De Mendelsohn, S. Fischer und sein Verlag (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer Verlag, 1970), Peter Suhrkamp. Zur Biographie eines Verlegers vorgelegt von Siegfried Unseld (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1975), Kurt Wolff, Autoren, Bücher, Abenteuer. Betrachtungen und Erinnerungen eines Verlegers (Berlin: Verlag Klaus Wagenbach, 1965).
publishing could not be same sort of enterprise it had been prior to WWII was obvious, but the fact that organizational and operational structures had to change radically only became apparent during the fifties. This search for new directions had surfaced by the early sixties. In 1965 publisher Klaus Piper questioned the role of literary publishing houses in his commentary entitled: “Hat der schönegeistige Verlag noch ein Gesicht?” He asserted that literary publishing houses were in the midst of an identity crisis precipitated by the demands of a changing marketplace which was characterized by: “… Vorrang des Wirtschaftlichen (zunehmender Kapitalbedarf, notwendiger und rascher ‘Umsatz’), Übermacht der Organisation, Vergewaltigung der eigentlichen Produktion, nämlich der Selektion und Pflege der Bücher, durch Werbung, Vertrieb, Publizität …” Moreover publishing and literary traditions, which could be traced back to the turn of the century (embodied by Samuel Fischer, Albert Langen, Georg Müller, Eugen Diederichs, Anton Kippenberg, Reinhard Piper and later followed by Ernst Rowohlt, Jakob Hegner and Kurt Wolff) were disappearing.

The “traditional model” of publishing, alluded to by Piper, was specifically defined by Kurt Wolff in his collection of essays on the author-publisher relationship entitled *Autoren, Bücher, Abenteuer. Betrachtungen und Erinnerungen eines Verlegers*.

> “Ein Unternehmen, das jährlich 100 bis 400 neue Bücher herausgibt … mag sehr respektabel sein, kann auch gute Bücher unter den vielen haben — der Ausdruck einer individuellen Verleger-Persönlichkeit kann es natürlich nie sein. … Man wird im allgemeinen feststellen — wenn’s gelgentlich auch Ausnahmen gibt — daß die Bücher der großen Autoren nicht bei den Monster-Unternehmungen erschienen sind, und literarisch wichtige Bewegungen von kleinen Firmen, das heißt von individuellen Verlegern getragen und entwickelt wurden. … Man verlegt entweder Bücher, von denen man meint, die Leute sollen sie lesen, oder Bücher, von denen man meint, die Leute wollen sie lesen, Verleger der zweiten Kategorie, das heißt Verleger, die dem Publikumgeschmack dienerisch nachlaufen zählen für uns nicht — nicht wahr?”

3. Piper, p. 466.
Thus the traditional publisher is characterized by a strong individual personality who becomes a house trademark. Secondly, the firm must remain small enough for this individual to retain a close, personal contact with authors. Finally, publishers who count fulfill a pedagogical and cultural function by publishing books that should be read. Such publishers have a very definite notion of a Tendenz which unites the publishing program and supports the house identity.

Piper's response to the conflict between the publisher's role as cultural mediator and the economic exigencies of the postwar marketplace was a synthesis: "Den 'unbequemen' aber notwendigen Autoren müssen wir Verleger unsere Tore öffnen. Durch den Dienst am 'alten Wahren' und an den Aufgaben der Gegenwart bekunden wir den Sinn für die Aktualität unseres Berufes."7 Literary publishers in the Federal Republic attempted to achieve this synthesis by promoting their role as mediators and articulators of the literary canon ('dem alten Wahren') while searching for new authors and programs.

The transition from traditional publishing to a modern model is best illustrated by several different responses to traditional publishing within the same historical context of the 1960s. Klaus Wagenbach recognized the conflicts addressed by Piper when he founded his own publishing house in 1965. By drawing on Kurt Wolff for a theory of publishing (Wolff's Autoren, Bücher, Abenteuer was the first title in the Quarthefte) and by embracing a new revolutionary program, including Erich Fried, Wolf Biermann, Peter Rühmkorf and Johannes Bobrowski, Wagenbach simultaneously reached out in two directions. He not only promoted younger leftist authors in the Federal Republic, and literature from the GDR, but attempted to place publishing traditions of the past (i.e. close author-publisher relationships, attention to single-edition publishing, promotion of a distinct profile or Tendenz) in a new non-authoritarian perspective. Indeed, Wagenbach was one of the few leftist publishers of the sixties and seventies to predate the student movement.8 Starting with a format based on a small one-man publishing operation Wagenbach adapted the graphic concept of Wolff's series Der

7. Piper, p. 468.
jüngste Tag to the Quarthefte, and then added a radical, contemporary program.

One of the best illustrations of the transition from traditional publishing to modern publishing is the evolution of the modern paperback medium. Although the paperback had numerous historical predecessors, the emergence of the modern paperback series during the 1960s represented a visible change in, and a significant departure from, traditional publishing. In 1960 the paperback had not yet received the widespread public acceptance which it currently enjoys. Paperback-Augsgabe and Taschenbuch designated two different forms of publication, the later used pejoratively. The Taschenbuchverlage of the 1950s were primarily reprint publishers, reproducing titles which would appeal to large audiences in inexpensive editions. By 1959 29 publishers in the Federal Republic and West Berlin were producing 37 paperback series. Most of the programs were broadly based in an attempt to


10. See for example: Anton Philipp Reclam’s “Universalbibliothek” (1867), Joseph Meyer’s “Groschen Bibliothek Deutscher Klassiker,” Christian Bernhard Tauchnitz “Tauchnitz Editions” (1839). These pioneers were followed later in the nineteenth century by Henkel’s “Bibliothek der Gesamtliteratur des In- und Auslandes,” “Meyers Volksbücherei” and during the 1930s by Sir Allen Lane’s “Penguins” in England and Rober Fair de Graff’s “Pocket Books” in the USA. Ernst Rowohlt introduced the concept of the mass market paperback in Germany during the late 1940s and by 1950 had sold 3 million copies under the rororo signet. (See: Gerd Schulz, “Drei Jahrzehnte deutscher Taschenbücher,” in Das Börsenblatt für den deutschen Buchhandel, 37 (1981), pp. 1139-1144.

11. Modern paperbacks were, for the most part, produced for mass production and distribution which necessitated reorganization within the publishing house and, perhaps more significantly, a new perception of how books should look (i.e. cover, paper, design) and how they should be sold. Siegfried Unseld’s comments regarding the development of Suhrkamp Verlag reflect this conflict between the traditional publisher and modern publisher: “Das war einer der Konflikte in den Jahren der Zusammenarbeit mit Suhrkamp: Daß ich sagte, was nützt es uns, wenn wir schöne Bücher machen, wenn wir sie dann nicht verkaufen. Ich habe damals u.a. eine Vertriebsorganisation aufgebaut, Werbung eingeführt. Suhrkamps Standpunkt war sicher ehrenwert — aber so kann man nur einen kleinen, persönlichen Verlag führen. Damals zwischen 1950 und 1960, ging das ja auch gut, damals gab es eine ganze Reihe solcher Kleinverlage. Aber kaum einer von ihnen hat sich letztlich gehalten oder entwickeln können. Erinnert sei an Namen wie Claassen oder Neske.” (“Der Vater des Regenbogens”) (Interview with Siegfried Unseld), in Buchmarkt 4 (1980), p.168.


reach as large and diverse an audience as possible. But only about 10 of the 44 paperback series in existence by 1962 published reprints of contemporary literature.14

The year 1960 marked a symbolic turning point in the evolution of the paperback in the Federal Republic. The founding of the Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, initiated by publisher Joseph Caspar Witsch, represented a sociological reorientation toward the paperback medium.15 The acceptance of the paperback, initially by younger readers (especially students), then later by all segments of bookbuyers, reflected significant sociological, economic, and technological changes in the literary marketplace. In his retrospective entitled “Wie es begann” Heinz Friedrich (Geschäftsführer for dtv) writes:


Publishers’ desire to explore new forms of programatic and technological innovation and diversification, as well as the recognition that they must address the interests of a growing market of younger readers with an affordable print format, represented an important psychological and sociological departure from traditional hardcover, single-edition publishing. The

14. Rowohlt, S. Fischer, Ullstein, List, Goldmann, Herder, Heyne, Reclam, Suhrkamp, dtv. (see Hantzschel, p. 375)
15. The original dtv Gesellschafter were: Artemis, Beck/Biederstein, Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, Hanser, Hegner, Insel, Kiepenheuer & Witsch, Kösel, Nymphenburger, Piper, Walter, and Heinz Friedrich.
acceptance or rejection of the paperback within literary publishing symbolized both a generational conflict and a conflict in value systems. This conflict is crystallized in Siegfried Unseld's (Publisher, Suhrkamp/Insel) comments regarding Peter Suhrkamp and paperbacks:

Er war der Meinung, das Taschenbuch vermittle nicht das Erlebnis des Lesens. Darüber kann man streiten, jedenfalls dachte auch ich lange nicht daran, jemals Taschenbücher zu machen. Ich glaube, wenn Suhrkamp gewußt hätte, daß wir Taschenbücher machen würden, dann hätte er mir nie diesen Verlag anvertraut.17

Unseld's decision to introduce a quality paperback series (edition suhrkamp) met with stiff opposition from within the publishing house and from his author-advisors, (with the exception of Martin Walser).18 During the 1960s the paperback became an important medium not only for leading literary publishers like Hanser, Luchterhand, Piper, and Suhrkamp, but also for numerous new, small publishers (Wagenbach, Rotbuch, Oberbaum, Stromfeld, Roter Stern) who wanted to publish in an affordable format.

The acceptance of the paperback by younger book buyers was a sociological phenomenon which was simultaneously accompanied by a general trend toward more socio-critical literature during the late 1950s. Works published in 1959 by Günter Grass (Die Blechtrommel), Heinrich Böll (Billard um halb zehn), Uwe Johnson (Mutmaßungen über Jakob) and Martin Walser (Halbzeit) were representative of a new consciousness in German literature. The formation of the “Dortmunder Gruppe 61 — Arbeitskreis für die künstlerische Auseinandersetzung mit der industriellen Arbeitswelt” by Fritz Hüser and critical voices in the theater (Rolf Hochhuth, Heinar Kipphardt, Martin Walser, Peter Weiss) provided ample evidence for Klaus Wagenbach’s assertion: “Ab 1961-1962 gab es eine erkennbare andere Literatur.”19

17. Unseld, Der Vater des Regenbogens, p. 164.
The climax and crystallization point of the social and ideological revolution within the publishing industry, which commenced in the early 1960s and gradually ended in the mid-1970s, was symbolized by the Frankfurt Book Fair of 1968. Demonstrations organized by the Apo-Gruppen were directed against the Axel Springer Verlag, Franz Josef Strauß (who was promoting his book), against the regime in Greece and against the Friedenspreisträger Leopold Sédar Senghor. The police intervened on Messesonntag and the Fair was closed for several hours. The Frankfurt Book Fair was perceived not only as a symbol of a conservative literary establishment, but as the promoter of its value system. The image of the publisher was an authoritarian one, and in this sense the conflict was also generational. At the same time there was widespread alarm, even within the publishing industry “establishment,” regarding the increase of Elefantenhochzeiten, or publishing mergers and acquisitions by major firms. In 1968 sixteen publishers accounted for approximately one-third of all sales and forty-three publishers produced almost forty percent of all titles. The authority of the Börsenverein des deutschen Buchhandels (the official trade organization of the publishing industry) and the Frankfurt Book Fair was challenged, not by students alone, but by authors, editors, and publishers from within the industry who reacted to the police action at the Fair.

An immediate reaction to the events of the 1968 Frankfurt Book Fair was the organization of the Literaturproduzenten, led by Frank Benseler (then head of the Soziologisches Lektorat at Luchterhand Verlag) and Walter Boehlich (who had left Suhrkamp Verlag in November 1968 during the Mitbestimmungskrise), who first met in Frankfurt on February 2, 1969. The platform and positions taken by Benseler resulted from the influence of the student movement, the Apo-Gruppen, growing discontent among many editors of the post-WWII generation, solidarity with the Gewerkschaft HBV (Handel, Banken, Verischerungen) and other
trade groups within the publishing industry.23 Particular emphasis was placed on the economic conditions of production in the literary marketplace, which were determined by, and reinforced, a "consciousness industry" controlled by an elite. Despite the fact that the Literaturproduzenten were able to achieve a loose alignment with the Verband Deutscher Schriftsteller, who were simultaneously engaged in attempts to achieve better working conditions for authors,24 a major rift developed between the two groups and within the LP. The failure to formulate specific resolutions for reform within the workplace (e.g. Tarifverträge, Mitbestimmung, Aus- und Fortbildung) which would extend beyond the immediate concerns of the democratization of the Book Fair, coupled with growing internal conflict, precipitated the rapid dissolution of the group which dwindled to one-third its original size (300) by 1970.25

Despite the fact that the LP were unable to achieve major reforms they, along with the VS and the HBV, served an important function in raising the consciousness of many individuals within the literary marketplace. The interests of the LP, the VS, and the radical wing of the HBV, the Apo, leftist publishers (e.g. Wagenbach and Trikont) and students converged during the Frankfurt Book Fairs of 1967, 1968, and 1969. Editors in literary publishing houses (Goldmann, Luchterhand, Rowohlt, S. Fischer, Suhrkamp) were

23. Benseler refers directly to the influence of the student movement in an interview: "In Frankfurt sehen wir uns wieder," Reflektor: Diskussionsbasis und Informationsträger junger Buchhändler 2 (1969), p. 11. Benseler explains that the term Literaturproduzenten, as well as the theoretical orientation of the group, is based on the work of Walter Benjamin.

24. The "Verband deutscher Schriftsteller" played a critical role in raising public awareness of the author's social and economic status. It was at the "VS" meeting of June 8, 1969 that Heinrich Böll declared an "Ende der Bescheidenheit" for authors. Heinrich Böll, Ingeborg Drewitz, Günter Grass, and Dieter Lattmann called for a detailed study of the author's status (later published as Der Autorenreport). The "VS" continues to be plagued by internal strife, which has limited the organization's effectiveness in imporving authors' working conditions and economic status in the Federal Republic of Germany. See: W. Christian Schmitt, "Siebter Kongress des Verbandes deutscher Schriftsteller: Die Einzelgänger proben den Abgang," in Das Börsenblatt für den deutschen Buchhandel 23 (1986), pp. 846-847.

simultaneously attempting to restructure the editorial process. The so-called Aufstand der Manager or Mitbestimmungskrise, 26 which occurred primarily between 1965 and 1975, revolved around two principal areas for reform: 1) the improvement of social and economic conditions in the workplace, including higher wages, regulation of overtime, formation of Betriebsräte, professional education and training for apprentices and other employees and 2) the democratization of the decision-making process in manuscript and program selection through the process of Mitbestimmung, based on the constitution of Lektoratsversammlungen. Particularly those editors who identified with political reform movements wanted to put the social goals of the theoretical works they published into practice in the publishing house. Indeed the success of many of the literary series in the Federal Republic published during the 1960s and early 1970s can be traced to editors' identification with the political and social concerns of their readers, and the presentation of these themes and authors in publishing programs.

The Politisierung of the publishing house itself was a natural development of a major political thrust in publishing programs and a result of what Heinrich Vormweg has described as a general Politisierung des gesellschaftlichen Lebens. 27 The extent to which editors were involved in this process is documented by the fact that Walter Boehlich and Frank Benseler led the Literaturproduzenten after departing from Suhrkamp and Luchterhand. While demands for increased participation at the editorial-managerial level (via Lektoratsversammlungen) did lead to some measure of increased author and editor participation in the decision-making process (e.g. at Verlag der Autoren) these experiences were by no means uniformly positive or productive in terms of achieving substantive reforms. 28

27. Heinrich Vormweg, Politische Taschenbücher, broadcast transcript from the Westdeutscher Rundfunk, November 20, 1970. Vormweg refers specifically to the theoretical and socio-political programs of the edition suhrkamp, Reihe Hanser and Sammlung Luchterhand which played an important role in “political enlightenment” during the late 1960s and early 1970s.
28. More successful models included Heinrich Heine Verlag, Der Verlag der Autoren or in Holland De Beizige Beij. There was not only a belief among editors that the literature they published could change society, but also that they could put this theory into practice within the publishing house. By 1974 many editors realized that this goal was illusory. Among the numerous articles on this topic see: Wolfgang Körner, “Die Lektoren angesichts des Kaitals: ratlos,” in Buchmarkt 6 (1968), pp. 28-
A more visible and enduring product of this revolution within the literary marketplace from 1965 to 1975 was the Alternativverlag. Most of these new publishers (e.g. Basis Verlag, Karin-Kramer-Verlag, Oberbaum, Rotbuch, Roter Stern, Trikont, Verlag der Autoren) shared a common goal: the attempt to democratize, and in many cases collectivize, the organizational structure of the publishing house while simultaneously offering authors greater financial and editorial participation in the publishing process (e.g. Der Verlag der Autoren). In a sense, the experiment to establish the “collective,” or variants thereof, as a model within older publishing houses (during the Mitbestimmungskrise) was continued in diverse forms on a much smaller scale within the alternative publishing scene throughout the early 1970s. The split within Verlag Klaus Wagenbach, for example which produced Rotbuch Verlag, was a result of internal controversy regarding the collective model.29 Thus the structure of many of the alternative publishing houses proved to be as experimental as much of the literature they published. This structure was by no means static, but in a constant process of evolution — and therefore to a certain extent quite unstable and fragile.30 Much of this organizational and economic instability was a result of ongoing efforts to integrate new social movements into publishing programs (e.g. the ecology movement, anti-nuclear movement, or womens movement).


30. The publishing industry in general has a high turn over rate among employees, largely due to its reputation for low salaries and stressful working conditions. Smaller presses are no exception. Rotbuch, for example, had two Geschäftsführer and five editors between 1973 and 1981, Oberbaumverlag went through a process of complete change in management and program. See Inborg Keller, “Spiegel der linken Bewegung,” in Das Börsenblatt für den deutschen Buchhandel 75 (1981), pp. 2169-2190.
Yet the small size of the alternative publishers also enabled them to introduce new authors and programs with greater speed and flexibility. Thus publishers like Klaus Wagenbach introduced contemporary authors from the German Democratic Republic long before contemporary literature from the German Democratic Republic found an established place in the programs of leading literary publishers (e.g. S. Fischer, Kiepenheuer & Witsch, Luchterhand, Suhrkamp). And by the mid-1970s many of the so-called alternative publishers who emerged from the socio-political movements of the late 1960s were no longer considered exceptions, but rather an institutionalized sector within the literary marketplace of the Federal Republic. These publishers also began to aggressively market and promote their programs to the review media, the book trade and readers. Thus, *Quarthefte* and *Rotbücher* can be found along with paperback series from larger publishing houses in many bookstores. Simultaneously, alternative publishers formed cooperative distribution agreements (*Arbeitgemeinschaft alternativer Verlage*) and developed new retail markets through alternative bookshops or unconventional retail outlets like *2001*. These publishers are only a part of a much larger and quite diverse small press movement within the Federal Republic. Small publishers, like the Eremiten Presse, have made a significant contribution to contemporary German literature by publishing new authors and by focusing their attention on subcultures and readerships deemed too small for larger houses.

31. Most smaller publishers who survive more than a few years have a good sense of their target market and how to reach it through effective marketing and distribution techniques, regardless of whether they consider their enterprise as politically “alternative.” Wagenbach introduced “Wagenbachs Taschenbücherei” (WAT), apparently to offer a more diversified program appealing to a somewhat larger audience.


33. Authors who have been published by Eremiten Presse (which is also recognized for outstanding graphic design) include: Peter O. Chotjewitz, Max von der Grün, Marie Luise Kaschnitz, Friederike Mayröcker, Christoph Meckel, Christa Reinig, Botho Strauß, Martin Walser, and Gabriele Wohmann.

34. Another important sector of the small and alternative press movement which has become institutionalized are the Frauenverlage (e.g. Frauenoffensive which initiated a “Produktions- und Vertriebsgemeinschaft” with Trikont, Frauenbuchverlag, Frauenpolitik, Amazonenverlag) and feminist bookshops. Information within the small press and alternative press movement in the Federal Republic of Germany has been disseminated by the “Literarisches Informations
The history of literary publishing from the late 1950s to the late 1970s reflects an evolution from the goals and value system of the prewar era (emphasis on the book as an individual creation, author orientation, distinctive programs, and limited production) to a modern publishing structure most clearly represented by larger media conglomerates such as Bertelsmann and Holtzbrinck (market orientation, program and edition diversification, author-editor or production teams, and a perception of the publishing industry as a participant in the communications industry). Klaus Piper's concern for the identity of literary publishing houses, Siegfried Unseld's decision to publish a paperback series despite the warnings of his authors and mentor Peter Suhrkamp, Klaus Wagenbach's decision to form his own publishing firm and the subsequent "collective experiment" which led to Rotbuch Verlag, and the short-lived Literaturproduzenten all represent diverse responses to social and technological change within the historical context of the 1960s and 1970s.

Publishing in the 1980s

Today, literary publishers such as S. Fischer, Carl Hanser, Hoffmann und Campe, Kiepenheuer & Witsch, Rowohlt, and Suhrkamp represent a synthesis of both traditional and modern models. Many aspects of both models (including program selection, production, distribution, marketing or the more abstract goals and objectives upon which publishers base their enterprise) exist to varying degrees within individual firms. Wolfgang R. Langenbucher formulated, perhaps rather simplistically but appropriately, the goal of the contemporary literary publisher as "den Geist auf den Markt durchsetzen." Literary publishers maintain that they are attempting to create a market for their authors' works rather than responding to market demands. Yet a careful examination of the programs of major literary publishers

Zentrum" (directed by Josef Wintjes alias "Ulcus Molle") through a catalog of alternative press publications called "Info."


would reveal that they attempt to accomplish both goals, i.e. they promote the author and the book (as an individual artistic creation) while utilizing advanced, sophisticated marketing techniques to accomplish their goals.37 A good example of the shift to a market-oriented approach to publishing is the proliferation of paperback series in science fiction and fantasy in literary publishing houses. Twenty-five years ago most publishers including Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, S. Fischer and Suhrkamp would have considered this genre strictly as Trivialliteratur. Today it is seen by publishers as a natural process of program diversification and as a democratization of the literary marketplace.

The evolution of a new definition of publishing was recognized by Roland Ulmer, Vorsitzender des Verleger-Ausschusses des Börsenvereins des deutschen Buchhandels, in a recent lecture at the Free University of Berlin:

Als ich vor 20 Jahren zum erstenmal an Verlegerversammlungen teilnahm, hat der juristische Fachverleger Wolfgang Metzner zum allgemeinen Erstaunen eine neue Definition des Verlegerberufes gegeben. Es kam ihm darauf an, klarzustellen, daß der Verleger die Werke seiner Autoren nicht nur in Buchform herausbringt und verbreitet, sondern daß er die ihm vom Autor übertragenen Rechte gleichsam treuhänderisch für die unterschiedlichsten Verwertungsformen verwaltet und wahrnimmt. Damals standen die Taschenbuch-, die Buchgemeinschafts- und die Übersetzungslizenzen im Vordergrund. Die deutschen Verleger waren aufgeschreckt über amerikanische Entwicklungen. Dort hatten sich Autoren-Agenturen etabliert, die den Verlagen nur die Buchrechte übertragen und alle anderen Rechte selbst verwalteten. Es ist den deutschen Verlegern gelungen zu verhindern, daß dieses System auch in der Bundesrepublik Fuß faßte.38

Buying and selling rights is frequently perceived as merely an ancillary activity of publishers, and only receives public notice when the media reports substantial sums paid for paperback, bookclub or movie rights deals involving best-selling authors. Yet in reality the administration of rights, and the successful marketing

37. Rectanus, pp. 113-129.
of same in a variety of print formats, and if possible in the audiovisual media, represents the central and most important endeavor of the contemporary publisher. The significance of rights acquisition and control was recently illustrated in the national press which reported that performer Michael Jackson purchased rights to the Beatles songs by outbidding Paul McCartney and Yoko Ono. This purchase demonstrates the principle (which is common knowledge in the entertainment industry) that most creative artists have little control over the ultimate disposition of their work.

The increasing influence of literary agents in the United States, as well as the importance of rights departments in West German publishing houses (where literary agents have been less successful in author acquisition), confirm the economic value of rights ownership. Rights acquisitions and sales for specific media and markets (e.g. paperback, bookclub, serialization, television, film, video cassette, or cable television productions) have become an essential economic component of the publishing industry, rather than merely a small source of additional revenue. Arnd Roszinky-Terjung estimates that in larger so-called Publikumsverlage, with diversified programs, subsidiary rights account for as much as 30% of revenues. Without the reproduction of literary texts in a variety of print formats, or without foreign licensing agreements and rights sales to the electronic media (which may provide significant revenue for leading authors), most major literary publishers would not be willing or able to make long-term financial commitments to programs in contemporary literature. The successful evolution of paperback publishing and bookclub marketing during the 1960s illustrates this shift from single edition hardcover publishing to


40. Thomas Beckermann, editor of the Collection S. Fischer, confirms that the “Collection,” which publishes primarily new authors, represents a type of research and development investment (Entwicklungsbüro) with the hope that some of the eventual profits from successful authors will pay for the present investment. (Interview with Thomas Beckermann at S. Fischer Verlag, Frankfurt am Main, July 7, 1982.) See also comments by Franz H. Erb regarding the “Collection” as a Zukunftsinvestition, reported by Hanns Lothar Schütz, “Fischer startet die Billigbuchreihe ‘Collection S. Fischer’,” in Das Börsenblatt für den deutschen Buchhandel 22 (1978), p. 470.
multi-edition or multi-format publishing.\textsuperscript{41} Literary publishing houses including S. Fischer, Carl Hanser, Kiepenheuer \& Witsch, Luchterhand, Piper, Rowohlt, Rotbuch, Suhrkamp/Insel, and Klaus Wagenbach have long since recognized the value of producing their own paperback series inhouse rather than licensing them to other publishers,\textsuperscript{42} but have simultaneously continued aggressive licensing strategies for serialization, bookclub and film rights.

As a result of shifts in reader interest and increasing competition among publishers to acquire rights within the international literary marketplace, literary publishers in the Federal Republic have acquired more foreign authors. Thus publishers now think in terms of acquiring world rights to a promising author whenever possible, rather than limiting their program to national boundaries, and then market those rights domestically and internationally. Hanser Verlag, for example, controls world rights to Lars Gustafsson.\textsuperscript{43} Literary publishers in the Federal Republic are major buyers in the international literary marketplace and are experiencing significant commercial success with foreign authors, e.g. Umberto Eco \textit{Der Name der Rose} at Hanser, Marguerite Duras \textit{Der Liebhaber} or Isabel Allende \textit{Das Geisterhaus} both at Suhrkamp and Djuna Barnes at Wagenbach, not to mention numerous bestselling authors from the United States published by leading paperback houses like Droemer, Heyne, Goldmann or Ullstein. Contemporary literature in translation (particularly from English, French, Spanish and more recently Chinese and Italian)\textsuperscript{44} represents an important reservoir for literary publishers in the Federal Republic. While the growing


\textsuperscript{42} Suhrkamp publisher Siegfried Unseld indicates that until Suhrkamp Verlag had a well-established paperback series (until 1974-1975) it was dependent on subsidiary (paperback) income. “Der Vater des Regenbogens,” (Interview with Siegfried Unseld), in \textit{Buchmarkt} 4 (1980), p. 164.

\textsuperscript{43} Interview with Christoph Schlotterer, publisher of the literary division of Carl Hanser Verlag, München, July 25, 1985.

\textsuperscript{44} Italian books were on the upswing at the Frankfurter Buchmesse in 1985. See also Marcel Bieger, “Koln: Viertes deutsch-italienisches Verlegertreffen,” in \textit{Das Börsenblatt für den deutschen Buchhandel} 83 (1985), pp. 2710-2712.
importance of foreign authors in literary publishing programs might be lauded (by the publishing houses) as the promotion of cultural diversity, it may also be perceived (by the critical observer) as a need to acquire foreign authors whose works provide the potential for significant sales, in a domestic market where most major authors are already established at a publishing house and don't move. Certainly the strategy of internationalizing the literary program, or in economic terms, looking abroad for new literary properties which will increase the sales base, has been quite effective. Indeed the German publishing industry itself has become more internationally diversified as major media concerns like Bertelsmann have made extensive investments in foreign bookclub and publishing operations. Bantam Books and Doubleday, for example, are now owned by Bertelsmann and the Holt Trade Group was recently purchased by the Holtzbrinck Group and has been renamed Henry Holt Publishing.45

New Technologies

The advent of new technologies within the book publishing industry and in other media have also contributed to a redefinition of the publishing enterprise. Ulmer reports that a working paper of the "Committee on New Media" (Ausschuß Neue Medien) in the Börsenverein reformulates the definition of the publisher as follows:

Verleger ist in den allgemeinen Begriffen der neuen Informationswirtschaft, wer gewerblich die Veröffentlichung von Informationen betreibt und zum Kauf anbietet. Die Informationen werden ihm zu diesem Zweck von Autoren geliefert oder von ihm bei Autoren bestellt, er bereitet sie zur Veröffentlichung auf und hält sie zur Verbreitung auf Informationsträgern oder in Datenbanken bereit.46

Some of the electronic media being explored by publishers includes: videotex, video cassettes, laser discs and most recently commercial television, cable and radio enterprises which have been established in the Federal Republic (e.g. SAT 1, or numerous

46. Ulmer, p. 2790.
small radio stations like Gong 2000 in Munich). While cable television in the Federal Republic has been anything but successful (up to this point), the sale of video recorders has been phenomenal, as evidenced by significant numbers of video rental shops. Here the trend seems to be following the United States where it is estimated that 38 percent of all homes will have a VCR by 1988.

Thus it would appear that book publishers are preparing to enter the information age. In this regard Ulmer concludes: "Ging es zunächst um die vollständige Übertragung der Urheberrechte, steht heute die ungehinderte Verbreitung in allen Medien formen im Vordergrund unserer längerfristigen Zunkunftsplanungen." The possession of rights is the prerequisite to their exploitation in new and existing media. With the evolution and dissemination of new technologies, texts may be processed, adapted and distributed in increasingly diverse formats to specialized markets. The licensing process has become more sophisticated as publishers buy or sell for specific media or forms of reproduction rather than selling all rights. Thus sales of bookclub rights, serialization rights or translation rights may involve separate negotiations with individual licensees and are presently perceived as potential income sources for both publisher and author. In the Federal Republic of Germany subsidiary rights are usually split between author and publisher 60:40 or 70:30 in some cases, while in the USA it is common practice for authors of literary works to retain all audio-visual rights.

Rights sales frequently play an important role even during the acquisition of a new manuscript, particularly when successful authors are involved. Subsidiary rights are often sold before the book is published. Such rights sales for bestselling authors not only assist in financing a larger first printing or major advertising campaign but also generate additional book sales through reproduction in, or adaptation to, other media (so-called Medienverbund). While the publisher may perceive a new literary text presented for publication first and foremost as a manuscript to be produced in a variety of print formats (hardcover, paperback,

47. West German book publishers, especially larger media concerns like Bertelsmann and Holtzbrinck, are participating in "Verleger-Fernsehen". The Holtzbrinck-Gruppe, owner of S. Fischer, Kindler, and Rowohlt, has a 5.4% share in SAT 1 and has established "AV Euromedia Gesellschaft für Audiovision" to develop programming for cable television and commercial radio in the Federal Republic of Germany (Hall, p. 3198).


49. Ulmer, p. 2790.
bookclub, serialization) his or her overall approach to the text may simultaneously include presentation in other media and markets as a part of the total "publishing" process (to the extent that licensing potential exists). Thus "rights potential" is one of the first questions a publisher might pose during manuscript acquisition and forms an important part of his or her initial approach to a new manuscript. Rights potential is also an indicator of market potential, which is conversely determined by the degree to which a text or "literary property" may be successfully exploited in print, electronic, audio-visual or performance formats.

Data base publishing is one of the new technologies now being accepted by larger literary publishing houses. While so-called number-oriented or empirical data bases have proven most lucrative for publishers serving business and technical markets, diversified literary publishers like Suhrkamp and Hanser (and even smaller publishers such as Stroemfeld/Roter Stern) have recognized the advantages of storing literary texts in word-oriented data bases. The Deutscher Klassiker Verlag (a Suhrkamp subsidiary) launched its first program in 1985 by publishing lavishly produced leatherbound volumes of German classics for an upper-middle class and upper-class market, but will store the texts of these literary classics on computer data base, not only enabling researchers to access texts which might not be available in some university libraries, but also facilitating sophisticated bibliographic and text searches. Through electronic data storage these comprehensive text editions are used to serve numerous distinct markets by appearing in an appropriate format or medium for each

50. West German rights managers distinguish between the so-called "buchnahe und bucherne Rechte" (i.e. rights for print media and rights for audio-visual media).


market (i.e. expensive leatherbound, medium-priced hardbound, inexpensive paperback or on data base). As library budgets fail to keep pace with new publications, access to publishers’ data bases may become an alternative to interlibrary loans or travel to distant archives for many researchers. And once publishers introduce online service for their data base, so-called demand printing (or on-demand printing), which allows the end-user to request information to be transmitted over telephone lines and then be stored or printed by his or her own computer, will eventually be available to the literary scholar, librarian, bookseller, and book buyer. Demand printing is particularly attractive for publishers who produce numerous titles with small print runs (e.g. literary publishers) since it not only reduces inventory costs but also provides immediate remuneration for the publisher (through electronic bank transfer from the user’s account to the publisher’s).

At the 1984 Frankfurt Book Fair Suhrkamp publisher Siegfried Unseld assessed the impact of electronic data processing on the publishing industry:

Elektronische Datenspeicherung und Datenverarbeitung werden die Information durch das bedruckte Papier weiter zurückdrängen. Computer werden Schnelldrucker, Fernkopierer steuern. Für aktuelle politische wie auch für wissenschaftliche Information ist das gedruckte Wort zu langsam und zu umständlich geworden.53

While the primary online use of word-oriented data bases will probably be for secondary literature or rare texts, and while it is unlikely that many works of contemporary literature will be actually read online, there can be no question that the manner in which literary texts are produced, reproduced and distributed will be significantly altered in the future. Gradually more and more authors will deliver text on floppy disks as author and publisher systems become more compatible and are standardized. Suhrkamp is beginning to offer word processing systems to translators54 and some publishers are presenting economic incentives to authors who deliver manuscripts on floppy disks.

The economic advantages of electronic data storage (regardless of whether the publisher decides to eventually market the data base online) are considerable. In a Publishers Weekly study,

percentage costs for print production were compared with electronic production. While print publishers expend 49 percent of their total publishing costs on collecting, storing, processing and transforming information, electronic publishers expend only 3.4 percent for these functions, allocating the bulk of their budget (64 percent) for electronic dissemination. Electronic data storage permits the publisher to rapidly produce a variety of print editions or formats of one text or series of texts in hardcover, paperback, cassette or leatherbound collector volumes. Not only may the text be more readily disseminated and adapted for various print formats, it becomes in a sense more fluid. Chapters or passages of novels may be excerpted for anthologies, condensations are more easily generated, letters or essays may be collected or published individually. As a result, the integrity of the original text is more assailable, both during the editing process and even after the text has been published in book form. Even after publication the text does not remain static, but may be reproduced in various formats or more easily adapted for other media.

The original text is no longer a typed manuscript delivered to the publisher, edited, reworked, cut, pasted and delivered to the typesetter, but an electronic text which, as Michael Heim argues, is open to a creative “overabundance” of possibilities. In a discussion of the effects of wordprocessing, considered from a philosophical perspective, Heim contends that thought processes and habits developed during electronic word processing represent a distinct departure from the classical concept of written expression and communication:

According to the traditional view, the virtue of writing is based on the development of intellectual integrity and the coherence of the consequent insight. According to the classical model, derived from Socrates, the meticulous determination of the word itself and its consequent usage lead to intellectual consistency, and thus also yield consistent truth. Electronic, wordprocessing, in contrast, creates a drastic increase of

56. I would like to thank Professor Michael Heim for his insights regarding the philosophical implications of word-processing technology and its impact on the writer. For a more extensive discussion of this topic see: Michael Heim, “The Impact of Word-Processing Technology on Human Thought: A Philosophical Investigation,” (unpublished manuscript), p. 10.
possibilities within the writing process itself. Through electronic editing the process of rewriting is almost overwhelmed with possibilities: words, lines and whole paragraphs may suddenly be inserted, erased or typed over. All texts may be saved at will, and are available for corrections and successive editing. The rationalization (Rationalisierung) of the writing system facilitates all possible fusions of text fragments. In the new economy of word-processing thought habits (Denkgewohnheiten) and processes of thought formulation are trained in a very different manner. Thus the virtue of creative overabundance replaces responsible integrity. 58

Heim's analysis raises important questions regarding the "fixity" of the traditional literary text in print vs. the potential for adaptation, indeed manipulation, of texts which are produced on electronic media and/or compose electronic data bases. The administration of literary data bases by publishers also poses many questions, too numerous and complex to be discussed here. 59 Another central issue regarding electronic texts is their rapid production, distribution, consumption and extinction. Although electronic data processing may enable smaller publishers to become more competitive (in well-defined areas) with larger houses and thus offer a greater diversity of books, the actual distribution and marketing of significant numbers of new titles (over and above the current production levels in the industry), and the communication of these titles to readers through the review media, is highly problematic for both small and large publishers. Even within the current print environment most observers agree that the number of books produced cannot be accommodated by the distribution system. 60 Electronic publishing and production in print

58. A more extensive version of Michael Heim's paper (note 56) was presented in German. I have translated this passage into English. See Michael Heim, "Computersprache und Persönlichkeit: Die Auswirkungen der Computer-Textverarbeitung auf den Denkprozess," (unpublished manuscript), pp. 22, 25. (Forthcoming monograph from Yale University Press).

59. To what extent and under what circumstances should literary adaptations be promoted by the publisher (e.g. condensations, film and dramatic adaptations, screenplays, text editions, and translations)?

and non-print formats will escalate the process of rapid information distribution, but will also decrease the longevity of individual books or "programs" as a result of market exigencies to produce new products in order to maintain sources of revenue and market share.61

New technologies are not only restructuring the publishing industry and the manner in which texts are produced, but are also altering traditional publishing processes or functions. Brian Aveney, Director for Research and Development at Blackwell North America, writes:

Publishers are responsible for 5 major functions: acquisition, manuscript development, manufacturing, marketing, and distribution. The way each of these activities is carried out is dependent on certain technological assumptions inherent in our current edition printing environment. Many of these assumptions become suspect in the projected electronic information environment. In each activity the computer-based environment will enable if not compel, an 'unbundling' of tasks, that is tasks that were clustered or bundled together for technological reasons (e.g. access to files or people) may no longer seem logically bundled when the technology changes.62

Unbundling of publishing tasks will ultimately lead to greater interaction among publishers or information brokers and yield multiple publishers for the same work (a state which already exists in print publishing if one considers that the same title may have a different publisher for paperback, bookclub, and serialization editions). This will also increase licensing and rights activity, as

61. Authors are already under economic pressure to be as productive as possible in order to maintain their livelihood. Not only the number of new literary titles appearing each season, but also the number of cultural productions in other media, decrease the attention that can be devoted to any individual artistic work in the review media. Thus cultural discussions move rapidly from one theme to the next. Indeed this lack of sustained focus is necessitated by the format and market orientation inherent in the review media. Yet a decrease in quantity, that is in the number of titles produced, would not necessarily yield an increase in quality, although it might indeed center more attention on these few titles (as is the case with the bestseller lists). Program reductions in publishing houses would mean that publishers would have to generate at least the same amount of revenue with fewer titles. This would have significant implications regarding the acquisition of new titles.

well as user fees, as texts are reproduced in a variety of formats and media. Aveney concludes that:

Distribution will become largely obsolete as a separate function in publishing with the eventual disappearance of the edition-printed products of industrial model publishing. Distribution will become a computer-controlled process of downloading text or video signals to the user's personal computer memory or directly to a printer or viewer. In a reversal of current realities distribution will occur before manufacturing in the on-demand environment.63

In addition electronic publishers will be able to track the reading habits of their customers and develop highly sophisticated user profiles by simply recording which texts have been transmitted to which users.64

Interaction of the book medium itself with other media is another force restructuring the publishing environment. Books on tape or "talking books" are now commonplace. The reception of literary texts will be more closely linked to the audio-visual media.65 The inclusion of tape cassettes e.g. in edition suhrkamp: Neue Folge (1105) entitled Hans Wollschaläger liest James Joyce. Mit Tonbandkassette provides one such example of this companion function which alters the conditions of reception. The most recent innovation in combining book and electronic formats is called "interactive fiction" or the "electronic novel." These novels, which are "read" on a home computer, utilize sound and text graphics and are adaptations of popular fiction such as Ray Bradbury's Fahrenheit 451 or Douglas Adams' The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy. As the reader "interacts with the computer through typed commands" he or she influences the outcome of the story.66 In contrast to computer adventure games which are puzzle-oriented, interactive fiction is plot-oriented.67 The reader may

63. Aveney, p. 22.
64. Slade, p. 22.
select from various alternatives as he or she progresses through the story and, in the case of mysteries, may be offered several different resolutions to the case.

Interactive fiction represents a definite shift from a receptive mode of “reading” to a more “productive” mode of reading by incorporating text production. Although reading both printed books and electronic books involves production in the sense that the reader must interact with the text consciously and subconsciously during the reading process (for example by recreating the text and/or by filling the so-called “gaps” or Leerstellen (W. Iser) within the text) the reader of electronic text may, at least partially, assume the role of the author by selecting text or producing new text variants, albeit within the parameters of the original electronic text.

Electronic texts per se do not merely offer the opportunity for the reader to determine plot outcome by selecting various options which have been preprogrammed (in the “interactive books” mentioned above), they contain the potential for the reader to become a “coauthor” or “editor” by adding, deleting or restructuring passages in the original text. To what extent then is it legitimate for the reader-writer to alter or “adapt” the original text in this manner? While it might be asserted that there are probably few readers who would be interested in editing or adapting electronic texts by actually writing their own passages to be inserted into the text, the ramifications of this type of literary production and reception warrant closer scrutiny.

The potential to select or write various beginnings, endings, or passages within a text and then compare and contrast them with the author's original would seem to have some pedagogical merit. There are certainly precedents for literary texts published in more than one version or Fassung. An analysis of the author's own text variants, a discussion of how the student perceives the author's variants as alternative treatments of central themes or issues in the text and finally a discussion of students' own text variants could heighten an awareness of linguistic and aesthetic features of the original and illuminate the author's and students' respective social and historical perspectives. Certainly the pedagogical device of asking students to write their own ending to a short story, fairy tale, etc. is frequently employed in textbooks.

A rather worrisome aspect of electronic texts is the increased potential for more sophisticated and subtle forms of text “adaptation” or outright plagiarism by some “creative writers.” After a data base of fiction texts, or even nonfiction texts (e.g. travel
magazines), had been acquired, it would not be difficult to copy and adapt passages and develop variant plot outlines.

Many of the so-called “genre series” (romances, westerns, detective stories, mysteries and to a certain extent fantasy and science fiction) which already rely on formula writing might utilize their own copyrighted literary data base(s) to develop new “products” in this fashion, but would simultaneously have to be more conscious of the potential of plagiarism from this data base. Transforming printed texts into electronic texts, in order to create a literary or research data base, is becoming much easier with the development of new technologies like the Kurzweil 4000 Intelligent Scanning System, which utilizes artificial intelligence to actually read printed pages into a data base. The potential to develop either a more uniform product or a highly differentiated product from a literary data base [by either the author, editor, adapter (e.g. for movies, theatre) or plagiarizer] might be facilitated by electronic “style analyzers” (at present still somewhat primitive with the exception of the Writer’s Workbench)68 which could be adapted for various style applications based on aesthetic guidelines.

Further discussions of the function and use of “interactive books” and literary texts in electronic form should at the outset examine the degree to which the “reader” interacts with the text in both “receptive” and “productive” modes. Certainly the recognition of the distinction between discussing or selecting various text alternatives and producing new text variants is critical. Moreover, the relationship of the “electronic reader” to the “electronic text” may be increasingly problematized by a certain relativization of the text itself as a result of multiple, equally valid, text variants. To what extent can or will the “electronic reader” posit his or her variant, not just as a valid interpretation or image of the original (receptive mode), but as a variant which becomes a part of the actual text itself by adding, deleting, or substituting text and...

68. Robin Raskin, “The Quest for Style,” in PC Magazine, May 27, 1986, pp. 189-194. New technologies will continue to increase the potential for manipulation of literary texts (especially those texts in the public domain). A good example of this trend is the current debate over the colorization of black and white films in the public domain. While colorization is used as a form of “repackaging” to resell an old product, it is frequently overlooked that the owners of the “new” color products (primarily Color Systems Technology, MGM acquired by Turner Broadcasting and Disney) apply for new copyrights, and if successful hold exclusive rights to the “new” color films. (The same principle currently applies to publishers of new editions of works in the public domain.) See: John Wallace, “Giving New Life to Old Movie Classics,” Publishers Weekly June 6, 1986, pp. 32-36.
thus forming a new text (productive mode)? Does the process of positing or promoting the legitimacy of numerous, or possibly unlimited text variants, to be substituted at will, inherently infer the dissolution of the original text? And what are the implications of this process for the relationship between authors and readers?

All of these factors have caused the publisher to reassess and redefine the contemporary publishing environment. As Roland Ulmer observes, publishers have experienced the economic necessity of marketing their products to other media or publishing houses, domestically and abroad, for over 20 years. The future will involve the literary publisher in even more extensive activity as a rights administrator and marketer, as a result of economic and technological exigencies. Increasingly the publisher's primary management function will encompass the successful acquisition, development, promotion and retention of rights. The dispute between the Arno-Schmidt-Stiftung (Jan Philipp F. Reemtsma) and S. Fischer Verlag illustrates the complexity of rights administration and the importance of rights retention in the literary marketplace. It also raises important questions regarding the administration of literary rights both during the author's life and after his or her death.69

Some literary publishers are also taking the first step toward merchandising. In the United States an Alice Walker calendar capitalizes on the reception of the author's work (The Color Purple) in the film and book media. Ernest Hemingway's family has secured trademark protection for the author's name in order to start merchandising an outdoor clothing line.70 In The Federal Republic Suhrkamp has commissioned a Hermann Hesse poster from Andy Warhol ("Hesse Poster von Andy Warhol," 20 DM) and is marketing a 1987 calendar of Hesse's water colors ("Hermann Hesse Aquarelle," 32 DM).71 These examples of merchandising illustrate the economic importance of licensing within the media.


71. See inside cover advertisement and p. 801 in Das Börsenblatt für den deutschen Buchhandel March 18, 1986.
marketplace, but, perhaps more importantly, reflect the commodity character (Warencharakter) which the author's persona acquires in merchandising, and which simultaneously functions as a form of highly mediated literary communication (i.e. 1) as an advertisement, 2) as a decorative or consummable object — e.g. poster or calendar and 3) as a form of access to a body of literature via the author's persona). As it becomes more expensive to develop new brand names and as the new product failure rate remains high (particularly in the consumer product marketplace), consumer product firms may turn increasingly to established images for packaging new product lines.

The preceding discussion is not intended as a eulogy for the book or the printed word. Even the most outspoken advocates of the electronic media predict a very definite place for the book in the future media marketplace. Yet the function of the book and its relationship to other media is sure to change as a result of new technologies and socio-cultural factors. While other media will not totally displace the book medium, the centrality of the book as an efficient communications medium (in terms of its degree of "functionality") and the role of the book as a primary medium in the process of cultural transmission, are being questioned. With regard to the socio-cultural sphere, Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann and other demographers in the Federal Republic have ascertained that the amount of time which persons in the age groups 14-19 and 20-29 devote to reading has decreased about 30 percent for both groups between 1974 and 1980. Manfred Nagl has observed that, despite efforts in schools to encourage reading, the book and reading have low social prestige in the value system of teenagers and young adults:

72. Lenore Fleischer reports on the marketing of romance author Janet Dailey in her column "Talk of the Trade": "'Janet is demographically perfect,' burbles her literary agent, Richard Curtis. 'She's 39, beautiful, wholesome, sexy, romantic, photogenic, with a good speaking voice, and she's a class act.'" Michael Cohn, head of Licensed Ventures International Ltd. who planned to purchase rights to market Janet Dailey declared: "She's psychographically perfect. . . We're going to market Janet Dailey to the people she appeals to, who would like to 'borrow her identity,' which is what licensing is all about." To put the licensing business in an economic perspective Fleischer notes that "in 1983 licensing was a $43-billion-plus business." Lenore Fleischer, "Talk of the Trade," in Publishers Weekly March 2, 1984, p. 91.

73. For an excellent discussion of the book's relationship to other media see Saxter, "Das Buch in der Medienkonkurrenz" (note 35).

74. Ulmer, p. 2797.
Von selbst nicht lesenden Erwachsenen zum lesen angehalten, lernen Kinder, daß es zu den Privilegien des Groß-Seins gehört, nicht lesen zu müssen und uneingeschränkt fernsehen zu dürfen. Die im allgemeinen gute materielle Situation der Kinder und Jugendlichen, das überreiche Angebot an anderen Medien und Freizeitmöglichkeiten, von Hörspielen auf Tonkassetten über Spielzeug und Sport bis zur jugendspezifischen Pop und Rockmusik (samt der damit verbundenen Diskothekenkultur) taten ein übriges, denn sie habe eine große Attraktivität, eine niedere Zugangsschwelle und einem hohen Prestigewert bei Kindern und Jugendlichen und machen Bücher zu einem eher ärmlich einzelgängerischen und faden Erlebniswelt.75

In relation to other communications media the book has suffered a loss in a functionality, particularly in the areas of information analysis and dissemination. The book as the primary medium of literary communication will remain, but within a total media marketplace which produces and perceives literature in terms of a sector of the entertainment market. Nagl calls for a new type of book “das andere Buch” writing:

Wer die Demokratisierung und Entmythologisierung des Buches nicht darin erfüllt sehen kann, daß Jerry Cotton nicht mehr als Heft, sondern auch als Taschenbuch und E. T. nicht nur als Film, sondern auch als Bilderbuch konsumiert werden, der muß sich für den Erhalt des anderen Lesens, für die weitere Präsenz und Zugänglichkeit des anderen Buches engagieren, das seinen Wert und seine Würde gerade in seiner marktstrategischen Ungeeignetheit erweist.76

A clear assessment and reevaluation of our understanding of how contemporary literature is produced, distributed and received in a literary marketplace, which is rapidly transforming into a subculture of the international media marketplace, is a

prerequisite to promoting “das andere Buch”. The changing self-definition of the publisher, the horizontal restructuring of the publishing industry, the “unbundling” of publishing tasks, the integration of the book into the mass communications marketplace, the effect of all these factors on publisher-author relationships (including contractual agreements), the impact of new technologies on the socio-economic status of the author and the socio-cultural status of the book and reading will directly affect the function of literature in post-industrial information-oriented societies.