

Shannon M. Young. Gender Bias in the Young Adult Publishing Industry: Too Many “Girly” Books? A Master’s Paper for the M.S. in L.S degree. April, 2016. 31 pages.
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This study describes a content analysis of the cover art of 175 young adult books published within the last four years. The study was done to determine whether or not there is a gender bias in favor of girls in the young adult publishing industry. Educators across the English-speaking world are beginning to notice that teen boys are falling behind their female counterparts in reading, and some claim that this gap is due to lack of reading material for boys. This sample shows that there is a slight bias in favor of girls in young adult publishing, but the difference is not significant enough to support such claims.

Headings:

Book cover art.

Young adult literature.

Teenagers—Books & reading.

Girls—Books & reading.

Boys—Books & reading.

GENDER BIAS IN THE YOUNG ADULT PUBLISHING INDUSTRY: TOO MANY
“GIRLY” BOOKS?

by
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A Master's paper submitted to the faculty
of the School of Information and Library Science
of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Science in
Library Science.

Chapel Hill, North Carolina

April 2016

Approved by

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Introduction

Young adult literature is pervasive in popular culture today. Whether one looks on Tumblr, Pinterest, Instagram, Facebook, in the movie theaters, or on clothes and accessories, popular books written primarily for young adults seem to be everywhere. Despite all of this attention, the young adult market is still one that publishers struggle to reach, as teens in general tend to be reluctant readers (Yampbell, 2005). Teenage boys pose a particular challenge, as they are much more likely to struggle with reading and to find it boring than girls do (Sarroub et al, 2016). Publishers exist to sell books, and if a particular market is struggling, they will do whatever they perceive as best to make money. Some have argued in recent years that this means publishers, librarians and educators are ignoring the reading needs of adolescent boys and publishing disproportionate numbers of titles aimed at the teenage female audience (Jones et al, 2003).

When it comes to marketing a book to a particular audience, cover art can be incredibly important. According to a survey conducted by the Young Adult Library Services Association (a branch of the American Library Association), librarians rated cover art as the second most important factor for teens when choosing what to read, the most important being relation to school assignments (Adams, 2001). What teens may or may not find attractive in the cover art of a book is a complex question since, like with every demographic group, there is a huge amount of diversity in the teen population. What appeals to one young adult may be repellent to another. Despite this complexity,

publishers seem to be relying on a very simple recipe for creating “appealing” book covers. They are overwhelmingly falling back on the old dichotomy of “boy books” and “girl books.” Judy Brunsek, a long-time professional in the marketing and publishing world, explains this decision (Seigel, 2015):

Not every book should appeal to every market. . . We generally think that girls will readily read most books, but that many boys seem to need to be appealed to in particular ways. Cover-design choices are very much made with the target audience in mind.

So, before books hit the shelves or are presented to teen readers, publishers are making assumptions about what will appeal to teen boys versus teen girls. Often, these assumptions are made simply by looking at the gender of the main character in the book and little else (Seigel, 2015).

Years ago, there was a lot of research conducted on the differing reading preferences of boys and girls. Findings tended to support traditional ideas of gender characteristics and roles. According to these studies, girls were interested in books that centered on character development and emotion, and boys wanted action, adventure, humor, and a male protagonist (Bredler, 2014). Girls were supposed to prefer female protagonists who were mainly concerned with their looks and attaining a boyfriend, while boys were supposed to want male protagonists who were edgy and aggressive (Jacobs, 2004).

To a large extent, these assumptions still hold a lot of sway, particularly with the male teen audience. While librarians and teachers may push girls to read books that are predominantly aimed for the male audience, boys are still expected to eschew anything

feminine (Jacobs, 2004). With the increasing popularity of “chick lit” in the young adult publishing world (a hazily-defined genre “for girls” that could include anything from Jane Austen to *Gossip Girl*), this could create a severely limited environment for male teen readers to choose books (Graham, 2006).

This question of choice for teen readers is incredibly important. Without books that capture the imagination and engage readers, of course they will find the subject boring and struggle to practice and increase their reading skills. This discussion begs the question of whether or not there is a bias in the young adult publishing industry towards serving one gender over the other.

Literature Review

In the history of Library Science, there have been quite a few studies concerned with the reading preferences of children and young adults based upon gender, and there have also been a number of studies and articles from librarians, publishers, teachers, and education experts about how children and young adults interact with the cover art on books. Although the existing body of research does not directly address how gender and cover art clues interact to influence young adult reading preferences, the studies that address these issues separately will inform my research. A majority of the studies on gender preferences in reading have returned remarkably similar results throughout the years, so I have only presented here a small but representative sample of these findings. Also, many of these studies focus primarily on children, and I have tried to stick to studies specifically pertaining to teenagers.

There are also a large number of sources discussing the recent poor reading scores for boys, so again, I have only used a sample of these in this literature review. These test scores and studies not only analyze why boys are doing poorly in reading, but also put forth ideas about how educators and parents can attempt to fix the problem. These readings demonstrate the importance of a study that may show a gender bias in the young adult publishing industry.

Teen Reading Preference and Gender

Many of the studies focusing on the differences in reading preferences between boys and girls were conducted in the late 1980s and early 1990s. General findings showed that girls spent more time reading than boys, but boys tended to have a wider variety of interests (Rinehardt et al, 1998). Some researchers also found that there were few obvious connections between genre preference and gender, with the exceptions being that only girls liked romance and boys liked adventure to a greater degree (Rinehardt et al, 1998).

A study conducted a few years later by a Master's student at Kent State University supported most previous findings and provided a bit more detail about the differences between boys and girls in reading preference. This study supported the idea that girls and boys preferred to read books with a protagonist of the same sex, but that in girls this preference diminished with age, while with boys it only grew stronger as they got older (Schultheis, 1990). Indeed, it seems that teen girls actually preferred to read about male protagonists. When asked to choose a favorite book, 64% of the teen girls in the study chose a book with a male protagonist, and 90% of the boys did as well (Schultheis, 1990).

Although young girls were said to have a preference for female characters, this idea that girls will enjoy a story about either boy characters or girl characters and boys will only enjoy stories about boy characters is pervasive throughout education and library literature. Education students are instructed that when choosing a read aloud, they should always choose a "boy book" because boys will not sit still for girl books and are expected to avoid the feminine at all costs (Segel, 1982). This is quite interesting, considering the

past study that confirmed the idea that boys have wider ranges of reading interests than girls, and this conflict demonstrates the need for further study.

The Master's Paper by Schultheis (1990) addressed a number of other findings that supported previous studies, including the preference of romance and realistic fiction for girls and the preference for adventure, humor, horror, and science fiction for boys. However, the study also showed that some changes were slowly starting to take hold in the 1990s when it comes to gender preferences in teen reading. The study found many more overlapping interests between teen boys and girls than in the past, including the desire for realism, detail, believable and interesting characters, suspense, and the ability to relate to characters (Schultheis, 1990). Furthermore, nine of the ten nonfiction books chosen as favorites were chosen by girls, which refutes the previous idea that only boys will enjoy and actively seek nonfiction (Schultheis, 1990). Finally, this study found that girls were becoming more interested in books about sports and war, two subjects that were previously seen as the domain of boys (Schultheis, 1990).

The most interesting part of this study, is the fact that these teens were aware of the gender separation in reading preferences. The boys in particular were very vocal about the differences between what a girl will read and what boys read; many of them were quite belittling when describing the things that girls like to read and became defensive and even hostile when discussing their differences with girls (Schultheis, 1990). If teen boys still have this strong negative reaction to books and topics that are considered "girly," it is likely that these views will be present in their minds when analyzing the cover art of books.

In more recent studies about gender preference and reading, the changes that Schultheis noted seem to have progressed for girls, but boys reading habits have not shifted much. A 2006 study of boys reading at an advanced level demonstrated that even these boys preferred short works full of highly visual language, books with humor, and that they were open to a range of genres but prefer imaginative fiction to realistic fiction (Cavazos-Kottke, 2006). Another study from the early 2000s showed that, although girls are being pushed toward more traditionally male interests, boys are still not allowed into feminine territory (Jacobs, 2004). Not surprisingly then, male characters tend to be portrayed as rebellious, aggressive and stoic, and despite the push for girls to look outside of stereotypical female interests, many female characters in young adult literature are primarily interested in finding a love interest (Jacobs, 2004).

The most recent study on gender preferences in reading, however, showed that this new generation of young adults is different from its predecessors. Girls are reading a lot more science fiction, particularly with post-apocalyptic themes, and there are many more strong, active female characters, such as those in *The Hunger Games* and *Divergent* (Brendler, 2014). Furthermore, there is a move away from the stereotypical tough, active male character. “Lad lit,” young adult literature with male leading characters who focus on real-life problems and emotions, is gaining a foothold in the market (Brendler, 2014). However, these changes still exist within the pattern of teens wanting to read about a character of the same gender.

Research has demonstrated that is incredibly important that educators, librarians, and publishers are aware of the changing needs of teens. From an educational standpoint, teens are much more highly motivated to read when they are allowed to develop and

nurture their own reading interests (Cavazos-Kottke, 2006). If publishers are only putting out young adult books that will catch the eye of girls, and if teachers do not have many options that might entice a teen boy, this could bolster the argument that boys' lack of choice is affecting their reading abilities.

Teens' Interaction with Book Covers

The research discussed above deals primarily with content of young adult literature without mentioning cover art. While teen preferences in cover art as related to gender is not discussed more than a passing statement here or there, there has been a lot of discussion about how teenagers engage with the design of the books they are considering reading. When it comes to teenage audiences, cover art has incredible power to grab attention or turn teens away (Lohmiller, 2008).

Many studies have shown that cover art is one of the top priorities when teens are considering what they want to read. In one study, teens rated cover art the second most important factor when picking a book, only falling behind what they might need for a school assignment (Adams, 2001). Another study of Maryland teens showed that book covers and friends' recommendations were the most important factors in their deciding what to read (Monnier, 2009). Even when teens hear what the book is about first, and seem genuinely excited about the plot, upon seeing the "lame" cover they will refuse to read it (Jones, 2007).

So, if teens are this picky about what their book covers look like, the question that follows is, in their opinion, what is good cover art? They seem to have no strong preferences about whether characters or more abstract objects are present on the cover (Miller, 2011). However, if the cover was abstract to the point that the teens could not get a sense of what the book was about, that was a turn off (Sullivan, 1998). Finally, if the

cover art can connect to the teens' lives and personal experiences, teens will be more likely to be interested (Rinehardt et al, 1998). Some experts in teen reading trends note that this particular appeal to teens can be a downfall as well when it comes to designing cover art. Things that matter to teens, such as clothes, slang, fashionable hairstyles, etc, all change incredibly rapidly, so what was a "cool" book cover at one point quickly becomes outdated and "lame" (Hunt, 1996).

Social Aspects of Teen Reading

Teenagers are not making their reading choices in a vacuum. They are surrounded by peers, teachers, and librarians, and these all impact what teens choose to read.

Teenagers are very aware of others' watching them, and when choosing what to read they often consider if they can be seen reading certain books (Lohmiller, 2008). In one study, a teenage girl even admitted to replacing the dust jacket of some "embarrassing" books with the dust jacket of more socially acceptable titles (Jones, 2007). Adults may see this sort of behavior and be mystified or consider the teens to be acting silly, but this concept of teens worrying so much about the opinions of their peers is part of normal teen development. At point in their lives, teens are building their identities, and bullying or social ostracism could be devastating (Brendler, 2014).

For the most part, teens do not just keep a quiet eye on what their peers are reading to pick up on trending books. Reading is becoming more an act of social bonding for teens, where reading the same materials as friends can "reinforce their membership in the group" (Howard, 2010). Some more advanced teen readers do not take advantage of their friends' recommendations because they are not up to the same level, but there is still a social aspect here; often these readers are trying to be "cool" and "rebellious," or they hide what they are reading so as not to appear as an outsider (Howard, 2010).

Many of the ideas that teens have about what is acceptable for their peers to see them reading revolve around gender norms and expectations, particularly for boys. As mentioned previously, boys tended to get hostile and defensive when discussing the differences between what girls and boys like to read (Schultheis, 1990). In this study, the least defensive answers showed that boys are, at best, “insecure” reading things that are stereotypically seen as belonging in the female domain (Schultheis, 1990). In reading and in other spheres of life, it has been pointed out that while girls are often applauded for breaking into traditionally “male” territories, boys who wander into the traditionally “female” areas are ridiculed (Brooks, 2000). In addition to what they read, the idea of boys reading at all may fall into the category of “feminizing.” Many teen boys are “solitary readers,” possibly because our society does not recognize reading for pleasure as “a valid male pastime” (Howard, 2010).

When researching and discussing teen reading preferences, it is vital to keep this social dynamic in mind, especially when bringing ideas about gender norms into the mix. Teens’ ideas about gender may be changing, but if they perceive that society at large or their peers may ridicule them for demonstrating their gender in certain ways, or stepping outside of the traditionally “male” and “female” boxes that our culture has created, they are unlikely to want to openly demonstrate this change in attitude. Even if a book’s plot could be appealing to teenage boys, if the cover is sufficiently “girly,” they will most likely not read the book for fear of being judged.

Publishing in Young Adult Literature

There is a basic foundation for understanding teen reading preference by gender and how teens interact with book covers, but teens are only half of this equation. The practices of publishers producing young adult literature must also be considered.

Publishers do know how important a book's cover art is for catching the attention of teenagers, and they also know that traditional advertising for books does not work; the teens have to see the book on the shelf and want to grab it after only that initial impression (Yampbell, 2005).

When it comes time to design cover art, the editor, art director, and sometimes the author are given input, but the publisher has the final say in what actually goes on the front of the book (Miller, 2011). When it comes to young adult literature, publishers have to keep two audiences in mind: the teens themselves, who do have buying power, and the adults (librarian and teachers, predominantly) who buy books in large quantities for teens (Kies, 1995). To see what interests teens, publishers do a lot of research into pop culture (Miller, 2011). They will also talk to these teachers, librarians, and booksellers about what teens like, but very rarely are teens themselves ever asked their opinions (Kies, 1995). This is an important point to consider for both publishers wishing to sell books and adults who want to see teens reading more.

Like teen reading interests, the history of young adult literature publishing shows some changes over the years. In the 1980s, publishers would look mostly for books that had male characters, knowing that these would sell to a wider audience (Segel, 1982). Again, this goes back to the idea that girls will read anything, but boys will only read boy books, and so the publishers catered to the male audience. There are more books with female characters, but even today the main character is often the only factor that publishers consider when deciding whether to market the book to male or female audiences (Seigel, 2015).

More recent trends in young adult publishing may show a pattern of emphasizing what they believe are female interests over those of male readers. “Chick lit” has become a favorite niche in the young adult publishing market; when taken as a whole, these books have almost nothing in common except for the fact that publishers think girls will enjoy them (Graham, 2006). Furthermore, studies have shown that teenage girls are more likely to buy books than teenage boys, so publishers will sometimes feature a female character on the cover, regardless of that character’s importance to the story (Kies, 1995). Since “chick lit” in actuality contains huge variety but is marketed as “female,” and since books that might otherwise draw attention from male audiences are presented with misleading covers, publishers could be harmfully limiting their audiences for the books that they are producing in this fashion. However, in the early 2000s, it was questioned whether this could be a lasting trend, since there were so many on the market that it is hard to make them stand out from one another (Danford, 2003). By analyzing the cover art of young adult books from the last few years, this research study can determine if this “chick lit” craze is still popular, or if there is a more balanced number of books for teen readers of each gender.

Boys’ Reading Troubles

In recent years it has been noted that boys are scoring remarkably lower in reading and other subjects that rely heavily on reading than girls in the same grade level and do not use as many reading strategies as girls do (Denton et al, 2015). Further, this is not just a problem in America; across the US, UK, Canada and Australia boys are falling behind in reading (Henry et al, 2012). Remedial reading and writing classrooms are filled predominantly with boys; as boys fail at reading, they become unmotivated in school and this in turn creates a cycle of struggle and loss of self-esteem, called the “Matthew effect”

(Sarroub et al, 2016). This is particularly troubling since poor reading performance is linked to leaving school early (either dropping out of high school or not continuing with college), which in turn leads to less advantageous employment or even unemployment (Henry et al, 2012).

There are varying explanations for these low scores, but many researchers, educators and parents are arguing that the feminization of reading and a lack of regard for the types of materials that boys generally want to read are to blame. They say that since publishers are disproportionately publishing books for girls, and (female) teachers or librarians are only promoting books for girls, boys see reading as a feminine activity and view their own reading preferences as undervalued (Moeller, 2011). For teenage boys struggling to form their masculine identities, enjoying a traditionally feminine activity is a huge taboo. The solution, according to this line of thinking, is to make reading more “manly” (Scott, 2014). Boys need publishers to sell more teen boy books with manly themes like sports, war, and technology with strong male characters.

There has been a great deal of push back against this explanation for why boys do not like to read and are not skilled at reading. First, it reinforces the idea that anything with feminine qualities is inherently of lesser value; second, it prescribes an incredibly narrow definition of male interests and what it means to be masculine (Scott, 2014). By promoting “boy books” about the topics mentioned above, educators are telling boys that these are the things they should find interesting, and if they do not have an interest in these “boy books,” then they are not displaying proper masculinity (Scott, 2014).

Putting aside these arguments about how masculinity should or should not be constructed, there is evidence that boys’ reading ability is greatly affected by their

interest in what they are reading. Many studies have shown that all groups learn better when they have interest in the topic, but boys show a remarkable level of increased comprehension when they like what they are reading (Oakhill et al, 2007). There is also evidence that, while boys and girls tend to like the same genres when it comes to leisure reading (with fantasy, action and mystery being the most popular), girls tend to enjoy and have interest in teacher-assigned books more than boys (Manuel et al, 2003). Since English-speaking boys are doing so poorly in reading, and their ability is tied so closely to interest, it is imperative that they have access to books that they will enjoy.

Methods

This paper explores whether or not there is a gender bias in young adult publishing. In order to accomplish this, the researcher gathered 175 images of young adult books published between the years 2012 and 2015. These books came from Publisher's Weekly Best Books, The New York Times best sellers list, and Kirkus Review's Best Teen Books. For a full list of the books used in this study, see Appendix A. Many of these books have multiple editions with different cover art. When this was the case, the researcher used the cover art shown on the list where the book was found; if there was no cover shown on the list, the researcher attempted to find the cover art used when the book was first published for this study.

Once the books were collected, the researcher began a content analysis using an inductive coding method to determine whether the books would primarily appeal to girls, boys, or if they were gender neutral. During this analysis the researcher took into account all of the information provided on the cover, such as the gender of the author, the gender of the characters pictured (if any), the color scheme, gendered words and names in the title, the blurb on the cover (if any), font, and if a genre could be discerned from the cover art.

The researcher determined the number of books in each category (boy, girl or neutral) and then asked a colleague to code the books using the same criteria. The researcher used a Cohen's Kappa calculation in order to determine intercoder reliability. The researcher and the second coder had an overall agreement rate of 80%. The Cohen's

Kappa values for each category were high enough to demonstrate that the coding scheme is reliable. The boy category had a value of .791, the girl category had a value of .741, and the neutral category had a value of .779.

In keeping track of the number of female or male authors and gender of the characters pictured, the researcher counted the number of female, male, and combined occurrences, as well as the number of occurrences where gender was ambiguous. When both male and female authors were present, the researcher counted the book in all three categories of male, female, and both. For example, the book written by John Green, Maureen Johnson, and Lauren Myracle contributed two tally marks to the female author category, one to the male author category, and one to the both category. This gives a clearer picture of how many male and female authors are producing books. When counting the figures pictured on the covers, however, if both genders were represented each book just gave one tally to each category, regardless of how many male or female characters were pictured. The researcher chose this difference because some of the books have crowds of people pictured, and attempting to count out each figure in the crowd would have been impractical.

Findings and Discussion

Out of the sample of 175 young adult books, 37 (21.4%) are categorized as boy books, 50 (28.57%) as neutral, and 88 (50.29%) as girl books. This study also reveals that an overwhelming number of the authors who are writing young adult books are female. 120 of the books have female authors compared to just 56 with male authors. 16 of the titles had authors who chose to simply use their first initials or the name was otherwise gender ambiguous.

Some of the female authors wrote books that were categorized as boy books or neutral, such as *Unbroken* by Laura Hillenbrand and *The Unlikely Hero of Room 13B* by Teresa Toten, so the gender of the authors writing for the young adult audience does not necessarily point to a gender bias in the target market. However, if educators and librarians need to give boys reading and writing role models as the research suggests (Sarroub, 2016), then encouraging more male authors in this industry would be helpful.

When coding these books, patterns quickly emerged as to what would make a book seem “girly” or “masculine” to teen readers. Young adult publishers no longer seem to be using traditional color schemes (pink=girls and blue=boys) as the predominant factor in marketing their books to a certain gender; 139 of the 175 books had colors that were gender neutral. However, the quality of the colors used is still a subtle sign as to whom this book should appeal. The book covers that would most likely appeal to girls tended to have soft colors that often blended into one another, such as *Under a Painted Sky* by Stacey Lee and *The Runaway Queen* by Cassandra Clare and Maureen Johnson.

The books for boys, on the other hand, tended to have starkly contrasting, bold colors, such as *The Alex Crow* by Andrew Smith and *Hellhole* by Gina Damico.

As the sources from the literature have suggested, the gender of any characters present in the cover art played large role in determining to which gender the book would appeal. From the whole sample, 73 of the books had female characters depicted. Out of these, 51 (69.86%) were classified as girl books. Most of the female characters depicted on the books that ended up being classified as for girls were very passive in nature, either standing serenely or laying down. Only 36 of the 175 books depicted male characters on the cover, and of these 18 (50%) were classified as boy books. Of these characters, most of the men and boys were depicted as looking tough or active.

Other contributing factors that determined whether a book would be classified as a girl book or a boy book had more to do with the overall impression that the cover gives. Girl books tended to have cursive or more flowing fonts for the titles, whereas boy books seemed to favor bold, big fonts. If the cover art and title gave the impression that the book was predominantly about thoughts and feelings, gossip or drama, romance, fashion or etiquette, or had a fairy tale quality, it was geared towards appealing to girls. On the other hand, books that appeared to be about action, adventure, nonfiction, violence, technology or science fiction were the books that appeared to be marketed to a male audience.

The gender-neutral books did not show as many clearly defined patterns. About half of the books in this category have cover art that made it very difficult to determine what the book might be about, and so it was impossible to judge whether it would be more appealing to a male or female audience, such as *We Are All Made of Molecules* by

Susin Nilson and *Not If I See You First* by Eric Lindstrom. A few of the books in this category covered subject matter that might be of interest to teens regardless of gender, such as the civil rights movement. The other half of this group contains books that displayed a mix of gender interests. Some had action or adventure themes with female characters, some had a main character of one gender but the author was of the opposite gender, one was about the social life of teens but had a male main character, and one (*Beyond Magenta: Transgender Teens Speak Out* by Susin Kuklin) simply ignored the traditional boundaries of gender.

Not many of the books in this sample made use of names or gendered pronouns in order to appeal to one gender or the other. Of the titles that did contain pronouns or titles (such as queen, knight, etc.), 42 were gender neutral, 13 were female and 11 were male. When names were used in titles, 15 were female, 4 were gender neutral and 8 were male. The names and pronouns had no significant impact on whether the book was classified as a girl book, a boy book, or neutral.

Conclusions

From this study, there does appear to be some gender bias in the young adult publishing industry in favor of books that would appeal to girls. However, there is not enough of a disparity to solely blame lack of selection for boys' tendency to struggle with reading. By combining the numbers of books that appeal to boys and books that are gender-neutral, we see that roughly half of the books in the sample should be acceptable options for boys to read. When the numbers for the girl books and gender-neutral books are combined there are obviously still more books that are acceptable for girls, but this is to be expected since the research has shown that girls are more open to reading a greater variety of books. Further, since 15 of the girl books depicted tough, active female characters engaged in a variety of activities, they could easily cross over into the gender-neutral territory if boys were not conditioned to avoid female characters.

It is also very clear from this sample of books that the publishers are relying heavily on gender stereotypes in cover art to make it clear who should be interested in reading these books. If, as this study suggests, there are a reasonable number of books geared towards a teen male audience and boys are still not reading, then educators who claim that boys are reading poorly because all of the books are about girly issues need to reevaluate their position. The problem with the available pool of young adult books may not be the number of books for boys, but the kinds of books. The stereotypical "boy book" may not be what teen boys want to read today. The success of author John Green,

who is consistently on the New York Times Bestseller list, may demonstrate this shift in what appeals to the male teen audience today.

This is all conjecture, however. Further research should be conducted to see what teens of each gender look for when evaluating the covers of books, as well as what kinds of stories they want to read. Since culture is ever changing and the available gender preference studies have not been conducted recently, it would be interesting to see if the teens of today have the same interests as the teens of ten to twenty years ago. It would also be enlightening to have teenagers themselves classify these book covers as either for boys, for girls, or neutral, and to question them about what factors made them decide to categorize the books in certain ways. For example, how much attention do they pay to the gender of the author? Do they recognize the gender stereotypes present, and do they feel these are accurate representations of their lives? If they knew what the story was about, would they put the book in a different category if it had different cover art?

Until the teens themselves weigh in on what they want to read and which marketing techniques would be most successful for them as consumers, nothing in the publishing industry is going to change. Publishers are in the business to sell books, and if they believe publishing more books by female authors and about stereotypical female interests will make more money, that is exactly what they are going to do.

Appendix A

Many of the books used in this study appeared on multiple lists. I will only report them, however, in the first list on which I found it. Similarly, since books can appear many times on the New York Times Bestseller, the books will only be listed here in the first year they appeared.

Publisher's Weekly Best Books

2014

The True Tale of the Monster Billy Dean by David Almond
The Impossible Knife of Memory by Laurie Halse Anderson
Through the Woods by Emily Carroll
Pointe by Brandy Colbert
The Family Romanov by Candace Fleming
Half Bad by Sally Green
Poisoned Apples: Poems for You, My Pretty by Christine Heppermann
The Story of Owen: Dragon Slayer of Trondheim by E.K. Johnston
Glory O'Brien's History of the Future by A.S. King
Beyond Magenta: Transgender Teens Speak Out by Susin Kuklin
We Were Liars by E. Lockhart
Say What You Will by Cammie McGovern
I'll Give You the Sun by Jandy Nelson
Threatened by Eliot Schrefer
Grasshopper Jungle by Andrew Smith
This One Summer by Mariko Tamaki
The Strange and Beautiful Sorrows of Ava Lavender by Leslye Walton
Noggin by John Corey Whaley
Belzhar by Meg Wolitzer

2015

Simon vs. The Homo Sapiens Agenda by Becky Albertalli
A Song for Ella Grey by David Almond
Symphony for the City of the Dead by M.T. Anderson
The Game of Love and Death by Martha Brockenbrough
Drowned City: Hurricane Katrina and New Orleans by Dan Brown
Saint Anything by Sarah Dessen
Magonia by Maria Dahvana Headly
All the Bright Places by Jennifer Nive

Shadowshaper by Daniel Jose Older
The Shepherd's Crown by Terry Pratchett
All American Boys by Jason Reynolds and Brendon Kiely
Bone Gap by Laura Ruby
The Hired Girl by Laura Amy Schlitz
X: A Novel by Ilyasah Shalrazz with Kikla Magoon
Challenger Deep by Neal Shusterman
Nimona by Noelle Stevenson
Trouble Is a Friend of Mine by Stephanie Tromly
MARTians by Blythe Woolston

New York Times Best Sellers

2012

The Perks of Being a Wallflower by Stephen Chbosky
Divergent by Veronica Roth
The Fault in Our Stars by John Green
Insurgent by Veronica Roth
The Book Thief by Markus Zusak
Looking for Alaska by John Green
Thirteen Reasons Why by Jay Asher
Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children by Ransom Riggs
The Raven Boys by Maggie Stiefvater
Every Day by David Levithan
Grance, Gold and Glory by Gabrielle Douglas
Dodger by Terry Pratchett
Paper Towns by John Green

2013

Legend by Marie Lu
Code Name Verity by Elizabeth Wein
Confession of a Murder Suspect by James Patterson and Maxine Paetro
Tilt by Ellen Hopkins
Shiver by Maggie Stiefvater
An Abundance of Katherines by John Green
Through the Ever Night by Veronica Rossi
The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian by Sherman Alexi
If I Stay by Gayle Forman
Prodigy by Marie Lu
Scarlet by Marissa Meyer
Etiquette and Espionage by Gail Carriger
Homeland by Cory Doctorow
The Madness Underneath by Maureen Johnson
I Hunt Killers by Barry Lyga
The Prince by Kiera Cass
Eleanor and Park by Rainbow Rowell
Ruining You by Nicole Reed

Dark Triumph by Robin La Fevers
The Selection by Kiera Cass
What Really Happened in Peru by Cassandra Clare and Sarah Rees Brennan
The Elite by Kiera Cass
While It Lasts by Abbi Glines
The 5th Wave by Rick Yancey
The Rithmatist by Brandon Sanderson
The Runaway Queen by Cassandra Clare and Maureen Johnson
The Moon and More by Sarah Dessen
Crown of Midnight by Sarah J. Maas
Asylum by Madeleine Roux
Smoke by Ellen Hopkins
Fangirl by Rainbow Rowell
The Dream Thieves by Maggie Stiefvater
Steelheart by Brandon Sanderson
Battle Magic by Tamora Pierce
Endless Knight by Kresley Cole
Unbreakable by Kami Garcia
Confessions: The Private School Murders by James Patterson and Maxine Paetro
They Eye of Minds by James Dashner
Never Fade by Alexandra Bracken
Teardrop by Lauren Kate
Curtseys and Conspiracies by Gail Carriger

2014

Alliance by Mark Frost
Independent Study by Joelle Charbonneau
Hollow City by Ransom Riggs
This Star Won't Go Out by Esther Earl
White Hot Kiss by Jennifer L. Armentrout
Panic by Lauren Oliver
Being a Teen by Jane Fonda
Sea of Shadows by Kelley Armstrong
The Treatment by Suzanne Young
Dangerous Creatures by Kami Garcia
Where She Went by Gayle Forman
Uncaged by John Sandford
Isla and the Happily Ever After by Stephanie Perkins
The Rule of Thoughts by James Dashner
The Infinite Sea by Rick Yancey
Skink—No Surrender by Carl Hiaasen
The Young Elites by Marie Lu
The Ice Dragon by George R.R. Martin
Atlantia by Ally Condie
Unbroken by Laura Hillenbrand
Let It Snow by John Green, Maureen Johnson and Lauren Myracle
Girl Online by Zoe Sugg

2015

Firefight by Brandon Sanderson
I Was Here by Gayle Forman
Red Queen by Victoria Aveyard
To All the Boys I've Loved Before by Jenny Han
The Duff by Kody Keplinger
Welcome to Shadowhunter Academy by Cassandra Clare and Sarah Rees Brennan
Vanishing Girls by Lauren Oliver
Shadow Scale by Rachel Hartman
The Lost Herondale by Cassandra Clare and Robin Wasserman
Dorothy Must Die by Danielle Page
The Wicked Will Rise by Danielle Page
An Ember in the Ashes by Sabaa Tahir
A Court of Thorns and Roses by Sarah J. Maas
Me and Earl and the Dying Girl by Jesse Andrews
Off the Page by Jodi Piccoult
P.S. I Still Love You by Jenny Han
Finding Audrey by Sophie Kinsella
The Heart of Betrayal by Mary E. Pearson
Outrage by John Sandford

Kirkus Review Best Teen Books of 2015

The Tightrope Walkers by David Almond
Never Always Sometimes by Adi Alsaid
Cut Off by Jamie Bastedo
Fallout by Gwenda Bond
The Scorpion Rules by Erin Bow
Weird Girl and What's His Name by Meagan Brothers
Hellhole by Gina Damico
Boys Don't Knit by T.S. Easton
Willful Machines by Tim Floreen
The Accident Season by Moira Fowley-Doyle
See No Color by Shannon Gibney
Conviction by Kelley Loy Gilbert
The Shadow Behind the Stars by Rebecca Hahn
What We Saw by Aaron Hartzler
Juniors by Kauai Hart Hemmings
The Boys Who Challenged Hitler by Phillip Hoose
The Lost Marble Notebook of Forgotten Girl and Random Boy by Marie Jaskulka
A Thousand Nights by E.K. Johnston
The Truth Commission by Susan Juby
Illuminae by Amie Kaufman
Archivist Wasp by Nicole Kornher-Stace
I Don't Live Here Anymore by Gabi Kreslehner
Scarlett Undercover by Jennifer Latham
Under a Painted Sky by Stacey Lee
March: Book Two by John Lewis

The Astrologer's Daughter by Rebecca Lim
Not If I See You First by Eric Lindstrom
Turning 15 on the Road to Freedom by Lynda Blackman Lowery
Infinite In Between by Carolyn Mackler
Ink and Ashes by Valynne E. Maetani
Becoming Maria by Sonia Manzano
My Seneca Village by Marilyn Nelson
The Rest of Us Just Live Here by Patrick Ness
We Are All Made of Molecules by Susin Nielson
Out of Darkness by Ashley Hope Perez
Lizard Radio by Pat Schmatz
Most Dangerous by Steve Sheinkin
More Happy Than Not by Adam Silvera
The Alex Crow by Andrew Smith
Honor Girl by Maggie Thrash
The Unlikely Hero of Room 13B by Teresa Totin
The Emperor of Any Place by Tim Wynne-Jones

To see images of the covers used in this study, go to
<https://www.pinterest.com/shannon1366/masters-paper-book-list/>

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