

**CHILDREN'S BOOK AWARDS IN AUSTRALIA:
THEIR EFFECTS ON THE LITERARY MARKETPLACE**

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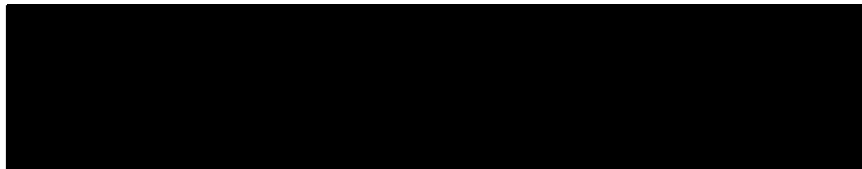
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CERTIFICATE OF ORIGINALITY

I certify that the substance of this thesis has not already been submitted for any degree and is not currently submitted for any other degrees.

I certify that to the best of my knowledge any help in preparing this thesis, and all sources used, have been acknowledged appropriately.



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This project has had a lengthy gestational period and was nurtured, both consciously and unconsciously, by my husband Darrell, numerous professional colleagues, friends, fellow conference delegates over the years, citizens of the children's literature cosmos both near and far and the progression of supervisors who recognized the importance and the potential of the research. The birth of this thesis is an exciting new stage in the sequence.

The initial impetus for this research arose from my position as a NSW judge for the Children's Book Council of Australia (CBCA). My tenure as a judge was an experience of deep significance in my development as a teacher and critic of children's literature. The process of judging and awarding opened a whole new field of personal intellectual debate and I will always be grateful to the CBCA for their role as a catalyst.

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the outcomes resulting from the formal recognition of selected children's literature in Australia for six stakeholder cohorts. For the purposes of this research, the recognition was in the form of a children's or young adult literary award. The process leading to an award is documented in policies, reports and handbooks and some publicity is evident in the media, journals, online sources and popular literary magazines. However, the outcomes of this personal, corporate, organizational, social, cultural and economic activity have not been examined to date and this research project addresses the question of exactly what happens to the selected stakeholders after the winning announcement is made. Out of the general focus question there arose subsidiary questions relating to the strength of the impacts, the longevity of the impacts, the current knowledge of a range of awards and responses in terms of income or impressions of award related promotional activity.

Selecting meaningful and relevant populations to survey and to clarify relevance and vocabulary in questioning involved a pilot study and resulted in a survey structure of six cohorts to represent the affected field. The survey method involved mailed questionnaires. In the construction of the questionnaires it was apparent that cohort-specific questionnaires would be necessary for there were very few avenues of questioning which were common across all cohorts. As these questionnaires were developed the research design evolved into six mini-projects which had some elements in common but also unique features and perspectives.

The evolution of book awards over time is explored in this work. Recognition and dedicated publishing of Australian children's literature slowly developed out of children's literature published in Great Britain, the mother country. This thesis briefly follows this growth and development of literary works for children and the awarding of prizes for exceptional quality, revealing the shifts in perception of the nature of the child reader and society's perception of what constitutes a quality child's book in Australia. Book awards for children's literature did not arise spontaneously but were an expression of interest, respect and maturity in the development of Australian literature.

Theorists who underpinned this research and informed the thinking, range across a sixty year spectrum. This correlates with the changing literary thought of the day, an independent and rapidly developing Australian publishing scene and the growth of an Australian children's book award environment. Three principal scholars were selected to provide a research based framework to the contemporary view of reading and children's literature and the competitive environment in which awards and prizes have developed.

The methodology involved a mixture of both quantitative and qualitative data gathering. While analysis benefited from the precise clarity of simple quantitative approaches, it was recognized that having qualitative approaches allowed conceptual and discursive data to provide the personal depth in responses. Each of the cohorts had unique experiences and as each responded to the questionnaire, their reflections formed the substance. Collectively these developed into a discourse of outcomes.

The synthesis of results offers snapshots of key elements related to this research. Some book awards have minimal outcomes while others have significant outcomes. The conclusion uses the evidence, as well as scholarly literature, to highlight issues concerning the relevance and nature of book awards in contemporary society and examines the challenges to the conventions of the past by the emergence of innovative formats, digital illustration and interactivity.

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Acronyms & Abbreviations

ABPA	Australian Book Publisher's Association
ALIA	Australian Library and Information Association
ANZAC	Australian & New Zealand Army Corps Day (25 th April)
ASLA	Australian School Libraries Association
BILBY	Books I Love Best Yearly (children's choice award, Queensland)
CBC	Children's Book Council (common name for CBCA)
CBCA	Children's Book Council of Australia (often shortened to CBC)
COOL	Canberra's Own Outstanding List (children's choice award, Canberra)
CROW	Children Rate Outstanding Writers (children's choice award, South Australia)
CYBER	Children's Yearly Best Ever Reads (children's choice awards, Tasmania)
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
KOALA	Kid's Own Australian Literary Award (children's choice award, NSW)
KROC	Kid's Reading Oz (children's choice award, Northern Territory)
NAIDOC	National Aboriginal & Islander Day Observance Celebration (July)
NSW	New South Wales, Australia
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America
WAYRBA	Western Australia Young Readers Book Award (children's choice award)
YA	Young adult
YABBA	Young Australian Best Book Award (children's choice award, Victoria)
YARA	Young Australian Readers Award (children's choice award, national – now discontinued)

Foreword

This thesis has arisen out of years of thinking about the issues associated with children's book awards. The personal intellectual debate heightened following a remarkable two years as the NSW Judge on the national panel for the Children's Book Council's 'Book of the Year' awards. This intense experience offered opportunities to read and review hundreds of contemporary books of fiction for all ages from infants to 18 year olds and to debate them in rigorous 'literary combat' at the annual judge's conferences. Further, it offered insights into the process of the awards and long after the mandatory two years was completed, there still lingered the question of whether the whole business really meant anything, whether it had lasting value and whether it made a difference. This thesis explores these questions.

Prior knowledge allowed a degree of understanding to the reading of responses to the questionnaires and while still striving to maintain objectivity it deepened the potential for analysis. Being a parent enabled a deeper understanding of parent's responses. Training and teaching in economics offered understandings of the commercial world of the publisher and the bookseller who have different imperatives from other cohorts. Teacher librarian experience has included handling TAFE students, students at a Juvenile Justice Centre and classes over many years from pre-schoolers to Year 12. Public Library experience included valuable years managing a Branch Library and ten years as a Children's and Young Adult Librarian in a city library overseeing the children's and youth service to the city library and its branches.

From all these assorted experiences, it has been a privilege to have been very involved with the promotion of quality books and significant amongst these has been the promotion of children's awarded books. The Children's Book Council's 'Book Week' has always been a frenzied highlight of every year with the months leading up to it involving an exploration of the CBC shortlist, devising activities for all ages which promoted awareness, discussion, reading, debate, analysis and oral reviewing. KOALA awards have had a lesser role but they were also used. Overseas awarded books have

frequently been purchased, displayed, read aloud, discussed and enjoyed and new and challenging perspectives and understandings have been discovered. However, despite using the tools of book awards to select and use literature, there is still some doubt as to their veracity. What happens after the award is announced? Do the awarded books represent what they are supposed to represent? What is the long term effect of these awards? Do they make a difference?

Chapter 1

Introduction: The Nature, Concept and Contexts of Australian Children's Book Awards

The books we received are testament to the talent of Australia's authors, illustrators and the publishers, talent that enables us to enjoy such literary excellence...many authors, illustrators and publishers [take] risks to produce exciting and innovative approaches in all categories¹

1.1 Introduction

This research project aims to analyse the impacts of commonly accepted children's book awards on selected stakeholders, within the Australian literary environment. While the range of respected book awards mostly applies to Australian publications, for some stakeholders a small range of international awards are also considered important. Within Australia, the formal award event generates a field of questions and issues which will be explored.

Children's book awards in Australia date from 1946. The first awarding body was the Children's Book Council of Australia (CBC²) whose mission encompassed promotion of Australian contemporary children's literature, advocacy in the promotion of literary experiences for children, encouragement for authors to present works of literary merit and for publishers to embrace originality and innovation with proper regard to aesthetic qualities of language. Since 1946, the CBC awards have expanded to five annual awards. Other separate awards have also been instituted, including children's choice awards in

¹ Judges' Report 2008, Children's Book Council of Australia, *Reading Time*, Vol 52 No.3:3

² CBC: Common acronym for the Children's Book Council of Australia – in this thesis it only refers to this Australian children's book awarding organization.

each state. The impact of each of these varies. This study examines the range of Australian book awards as they apply to children's literature, the perceived validity of awards as a measure of quality, the benefits or otherwise of such acclaim, the experiences of affected individuals or organizations and the overall contribution of awarded literature to cultural capital.

To understand the issues adds depth to the knowledge about the specifically Australian children's literary award environment which began over sixty years ago. However, to date, there has been no examination of the outcomes of these awards and this original research serves to fill a gap in scholarly investigation to date. It focuses on firsthand experiences of a range of stakeholders. There is also value in researching the veracity of award status as a measure of quality in children's literature. Each adult-judged award has a panel of judges and the chapter heading quotation for this chapter serves as an example of the standards sought by one panel of judges in the judging process. In terms of media exposure and publicity, prize money, market forces and longevity of impact, it was expected that adult-judged awards would be the dominant awards in Australia. This research tests this hypothesis by examining the experiences of a range of stakeholders and their experience of a range of awards.

Book awards are a public and formalised means of evaluating literary quality in a competitive literary environment. Generally adult-judged awards have firm criteria which are believed to measure literary quality within a given framework. This research, however, reaches beyond this kind of award: the term 'book awards' is inclusive of both competitively judged children's awards and awarded titles decided by popular children's choice vote. The context of this study is children's and young adult literature in Australia, generally accepted as literature for the under eighteen year old market. Awards are not the only means of evaluating literary quality but they do present a formal and objective means, and they carry significance for stakeholders. While the kinds of impacts following a book award announcement will vary, so will the strength, significance and duration of the impact. For this research, the timeframe was set as a five year period.

A robust corpus of literature, both popular and scholarly, relates to awarded children's and young adult literary titles. Listings of the awards both past and present, literary comment, author analysis and review of the titles are all available. However, to date, there has been little consideration of the impact of children's literature awards for a range of identified stakeholders. Though exposure of children's awards is dwarfed by the much larger adult award processes, they share the same basic objectives: to highlight quality literature or in the case of children's choice awards, the most popular literature. Awards for literature can be seen as literary evaluation offered by a particular judging process within its portfolio of criteria.

Though a literary prize may be announced at a moment of time the outcomes have economic-cultural multiplier effects which may extend for years. US academic, James English, has examined the nature, impact, literary environment, social debate and the role of adult literary awards in America's contemporary arts culture (2005a). This was pioneering work which has been a seminal source for this thesis. He details the dramatic rise of the 'awards industry' in America and explores the outcomes. Though there are obvious economic benefits in terms of prize money or a surge in sales, he developed an enlarged picture of outcomes, which were embodied in the term 'cultural prestige'. This term refers to post-award social, cultural and status or reputation outcomes, all of which contribute to the mix which comprises his view of 'culture':

The rules or logics of exchange in the market for what has become to be called "cultural capital"... are the economics of cultural prestige... [and] it is a matter not of reducing culture to economics ... but of enlarging the notion of economics to include systems of non-monetary, cultural and symbolic transaction (English 2005a:3-4)

English modeled an investigation which influenced this examination of the Australian children's literary environment. However, the contexts are quite different and it remained to identify the Australian stakeholders and to explore their experiences, seeking to identify the ramifications of children's book awards in Australia. Both the former task of identifying stakeholders and the latter concept of the environment within which awards operated, proved to be complex, with interrelated variables.

Taking these complexities into consideration the primary question of this thesis asks: What are the outcomes for identified stakeholders, following the announcement of a children's book award in Australia?

Embedded in this question are considerations about who is affected, the significance and strength of impacts and what kinds of impacts occur. Such an enquiry required an identification of the stakeholders and the particular awards which influence them within the context of the children's literary environment in Australia. It is hypothesised that both producers and consumers of children's literature experience a significant impact following the announcement of an awarded title. Together these two groups form the children's literature environment within which children's book awards operate.

A pilot study was devised to clarify key questions and to identify the key cohorts and their relationship to each other. This assisted in the research design. Questions arose when it became clear that there were a number of discrete populations and a range of outcomes of various strengths for different stakeholders and different book awards, over a time period. This led to the development of secondary contributory questions:

Are all awards similarly respected, delivering similar outcomes?

Which awards have most widespread economic impacts across affected cohorts?

Which awards have most widespread cultural acceptance across the affected cohorts?

What is the longevity of the impacts following an award announcement? Does the longevity vary with different kinds of awards?

In order to address these questions it was necessary to develop a framework which encompassed the relevant concepts in the field. The research design evolved into an enquiry into the award experiences and outcomes for six cohorts, using targeted questionnaires. The responses to these comprise the data contained in this thesis.

1.2 The Children's Literary Award Environment

The research required a definition of several key elements. At its foundational level, there is a need to define the nature of children's literature and in association, the nature of children's literary awards. Related and interacting with the awards are the affected cohorts who produce and consume awarded children's literature and who experience impacts from the announcement of an awarded title. The project evolved to reveal a complex matrix of interacting clusters, based on these elements.

1.2.1 The Meaning of 'Children's Literature'

Embedded in the objectives of this enquiry is an understanding of what is meant by 'children's literature' because children's book awards apply to what is understood to be genuine literature for children and exemplify a judgment of quality within this range.

A definition of children's literature is problematic. For some, children's literature is simply written material which is intended for a child audience (Townsend 1987), though historically, oral literature needs to be also recognised, for it nourished children for many centuries before the written form was freely available. Narrative writings were principally adult books which were appropriated by children for pleasure and this was the literary culture of the day until well into the eighteenth century. Evaluation was at a personal level by parents, tutors and other enabling adults, without the aid of formal or institutional assessment.

Globally, but especially in the western world over the last fifty years, literary output has contributed a significant mass of material written specifically for children using a great range of imaginative literary forms. In discussing what makes a children's narrative different from an adult narrative, Babbitt (1973:156), McDowell (1976:140) and Saxby (1997:20) identify the unique characteristics that determine a child readership: the vocabulary, the pace of narrative, the age of protagonists, the range of emotions involved. Many critics have a very broad view of the meaning of 'children's literature' asserting

that the essential ingredient is simply the engagement of the child-reader. Saxby (1997:39), Dickinson (1973:10), Leeson (1985:142) and Fadiman (1946:xvii) all support this proposition as they pay respect to the enjoyment and variety of needs embodied in the 'republic of childhood', advocating a smorgasbord of reading, all of which will be categorised as 'children's literature'. The proliferation of texts has been paralleled by a growth in recognition of the importance of children's illustration and in literary evaluation, there is recognition of a mutually dependent relationship. This same period saw the growth of contemporary children's literature collections in bookshops, public libraries and schools, the appointment of dedicated children's staff in these institutions and the establishment of the first book award for children's literature in Australia.

In the definitions of children's literature, several writers emphasise the concept of the 'implied readership' or the 'child audience' (Leeson 1985:142, Fadiman 1946:xvii, Chambers 1980:252). Others write that definitions of children's literature and childhood itself are 'enmeshed within the discourse of children's literature' (Lesnik-Oberstein 1996:17) where elements are independent and not interacting in a predictable way. Aside from the question of whether this view is limited by the form of literature (narrative or otherwise) or the format of delivery (written or oral), this highlights the response that discourse is an essential element in the definition of children's literature. It recognizes the relationship between written or spoken word, the child and the unpredictability of the child-response.

Hearne and Sutton point out that '... every textbook, every special section of a journal, every guide to research and theory in the field attempts to articulate a manageable and practical definition of children's literature' (1992:94). Hunt (1991) devotes a whole chapter to this conundrum, pointing out that even the word 'literature' implies a range of interpretations and value judgments, concluding that children's literature uniquely defines itself in terms of its audience, with an implied relationship between reader and text (1991:1;56) This relationship is further examined by Huck (1976:6) who feels that children's literature is defined by the range of children's emotional responses to literature. Chambers (1980:252) and Saxby (1997:38) define children's literature as

writing which establishes a relationship with a young reader, demonstrates an appropriate linguistic range, embodies an understandable frame of reference (intertextuality) and introduces appropriate inherent ideologies (Saxby 1997:23). These values are reflected in the criteria which apply to children's book awards.

Sutherland and Arbuthnot (1986:5) discuss variables which, they feel, uniquely constitute children's literature: literature for ages and stages of child development, varying levels of comprehension and reading responses. Hillman (1999:2) introduces the element of high quality, beautiful writing, profound ideas, engagement of the young reader in vicarious experience, memorable plots and characters and books which measure up through critical judgment. Nodelman (1996) and Lukens (1995) both add layers of complexity to this: Nodelman views children's literature as a socializing agent which explores values and social interpretations which in turn bring strong cultural messages. Lukens concurs, advocating in addition, that children's literature has to have elements of pleasure, interest and entertainment, giving child readers insights and stimulation to their imagination. Just over ten years before the writing of Nodelman and Lukens, Hoggart had asserted that children's literature seeks the meanings in human experience through an exploration of thoughts, dreams and stories (Chambers 1983:8).

The relevance of the institution of children's book awards is itself questioned. This discussion tends to focus on who or what is the arbiter of quality. Countering to this view, some writers go so far as to say that children need a certain amount of 'pap or roughage' in their reading diet to provide bulk and practice, security and mastery and that these kinds of literary works are still children's literature (Saxby 1997:39, Dickinson 1973:101). These writers claim that for enjoyment and suiting the changing moods and occasions of readers, a smorgasbord of reading is required in the children's literary diet. Some writers emphasise that though quality is to be valued, there should be an awareness of the needs of children and an understanding of '...the republic of childhood' (Leeson 1985:142) where children's enjoyment of a book is measure enough of what is children's literature. It is possible that the criterion of 'quality' is actually an adult construct which

has overtones of political correctness to the extent that meaningful, pleasurable, child-reader engagement is overlooked (Fadiman 1946:xvii).

Because there is no agreed definition of children's literature there are ramifications for the awarding of literary prizes for this category. All children's literary awarding bodies build their platforms on an understanding of what constitutes children's literature. Adult judges are, as well, bound to operational criteria for their awards which often have been decided decades before. However, these parameters are interpreted according to the literary environment and understandings of the day and over time, these interpretations may change and adjust. It is not surprising that debate often follows award announcements.

Different issues are debated following young adult literary awards: with even fewer firm definitions for this genre than for children's literature, the awarded titles attract a very wide spectrum of criticism. In recent years the CBC's acclaim of Sonya Hartnett's hard-hitting young adult novels and Matt Ottley's *Requiem for a Beast*, have aroused strong criticism for a variety of reasons, resulting in ongoing controversies. The CBC's picture book category further inflames the debate, with a trend towards awarding picture books which are suitable for older, young adult (YA) readers rather than conforming to the previously accepted principle of picture books being suited to young readers – examples of YA picture books are *Home and Away* by Ottley and Marsden, *Dust* by Thompson et al, *The Arrival* by Tan and *Woolvs in the Sitee* by Spudvilas and Wild. This picture book category is an evolving one correlating with an evolving definition of the genre even though the formal criteria have not changed. Controversy is the result of confusion and lack of knowledge concerning the criteria which inform the judging process.

Literary discussion shows that the boundary between literature for children and for young adults is increasingly blurred (Saxby 1997:20). In this discussion 'children's literature' will also include 'young adult literature'. While recognising that there are exceptions, conventionally producing and consuming groups tend to link children's and young adult literature and separate them from adult literature. Evaluation, whether formal or informal,

also tends to follow this pattern. It should be noted that sometimes categorisation of a particular book is accepted for trivial or commercial reasons. If market operatives decide that a book is a children's book and it is publicised as such, or if booksellers or librarians place a title in the children's section of a shop/library, then in a sense it becomes a children's title. Marketing, reviewing or displaying may determine the categorisation of the work.

While children's literature does not generally receive as much public recognition and acclamation as adult literature, research will show that it plays a very important role in the professional and personal lives of a significant part of the Australian population and as well, it plays an important economic role in the Australian market. It comprises nearly 10% of all titles on the Australian market (Thompson 2009). Though the share of this which can be attributed to award winning children's and YA titles cannot be determined, the sales which the awards systems generate will form a valuable part of this market share.

1.2.2 Children's Literature Awards in Australia

The passage of time with its changing array of influences on societal perceptions of childhood and young adulthood will be reflected in what is appropriate and relevant literature for children and young adults. When applying the award process to this same literature it is probable that awarded titles for children's literature will reflect these shifts. Regardless of this changing literary environment, book award systems have never claimed to perform the function of streamlining reading for readers. Rather, they offer a means of evaluation from a specified body of people who collectively agree that a given book is excellent within a given set of criteria. The conferring of a book award for a title places this title alongside all the other reading available to children but announces it as excellent literature, or most popular literature, according to the awards criteria.

In the several steps in the sequence of creating a book which wins an award through to the reading of a book by a child, many decisions are made by adults. The producers who

create, make editorial decisions and market the literature are adults. At the consuming end of the process, adults have substantial input into the range of awarded literature presented to children and these adults are 'gatekeepers' or 'enabling adults', the latter term devised by LaMarca (2003). Historically, evaluation of quality was undertaken through a personal assessment by the 'gatekeepers', such as parents and teachers, and this process continues for children's literature today. The institution of conferring book awards and prizes, which offer an objective judgment of quality literature, is a relatively modern phenomenon. Most influential awards in terms of economic and social impact are merit-based awards judged by panels of adult experts. The awards stimulate debate and controversy, argument, reviews and opinions and these are expressed through professional associations, literary magazines and the media, journals, sales figures for booksellers and borrowing rates from libraries. The criteria of the awards vary, resulting in a diversity of awarded titles. A comparison of criteria for book awards is beyond the scope of this research project and could comprise a serious research direction in the future. For this research project it is taken as given that the primary role of most literary awards is that of highlighting excellence according to a specific charter of criteria. Children's choice awards recognise popularity which may, or may not, highlight quality.

The most basic forms of literary evaluation are simply the personal response to a story, conversational exchange, peer/parent/teacher/tutor opinion and interest in passive book display – these have always existed. Historically, a second tier of evaluation gradually developed as children's literature became an area of professional study and analysis and the evaluative tools came to include book reviews, reading lists, school library and public library collection development decisions (Hearne and Sutton 1992:2, Horning 1997:152) and publishers' advertising. A third tier is the formal recognition of children's literary quality through awards and prizes, author and publisher accolades, media and journal coverage and booksellers' 'Top Reads'. Within this third tier, there are three kinds of children's and young adult book awards: children's choice awards based on popular child-reader vote, adult judged awards from a wide range of children's literature and adult judged awards for children's literature from specialised agencies. Awards are a formal evaluation of children's and YA literature, based on established criteria. Though

the criteria mostly do not change, there are subtle interpretations which change over time. These changes are shifts in perception in relation to changes in society and the literary environment within which they work. These influences may include social, cultural, educational, religious and moral standards of the day. The judging context is thus part of the judging process implemented by panels of experts or literary luminaries from a wide range of experiences and professions. The development of children's book awards in Australia began in 1946 and there has been a proliferation of awards since then, with each of them undergoing these processes over time. Table 1 lists the development of Australian book awards up until 2001. It should be noted that national awards are bestowed on authors/illustrators who are Australian citizens and titles are judged by a national panel. Premier's Awards are open to any Australian title but they are all judged by a state-based panel appointed by each particular State government. Children's choice awards for each state can be bestowed on any Australian work but are judged by the child readership within each state.

Table 1: Range of Children's Literary Awards in Australia

Inaugural Date	Principal Area of Influence	Title of Award	Adult Judged or Children's Choice
1946	National	Children's Book Council of Australia	Adult Judged
1952	National	Children's Book Council of Australia: Picture Book Award	Adult Judged
1979	NSW	NSW Premier's Literary Awards: The Ethel Turner Prize	Adult Judged
1982	National	Children's Book Council of Australia: Book of the Year Award for Younger Readers	Adult Judged
1986	South Australia	South Australian Festival Awards for Literature: National Children's Literature Award	Adult Judged
1988	Victoria	Victorian Premier's Literary Awards: Children's Literature (discontinued after 1995)	Adult Judged
1990	Western Australia	Western Australia Premier's Book Awards: Children's Book Award	Adult Judged
1993	National	Children's Book Council of Australia: Eve Pownell Award for Information Books	Adult Judged
1996	Victoria	Victorian Premier's Literary Awards: Young Adult Fiction	Adult Judged
1998	Western Australia	Western Australia Premier's Book Awards: Young Adult's Award	Adult Judged
1999	NSW	NSW Premier's Literary Awards: The Patricia Wrightson Prize	Adult Judged
1999	Queensland	Queensland Premier's Literary Awards: Best Children's Book	Adult Judged
2001	National	Children's Book Council of Australia: Early Childhood	Adult Judged
2002	Queensland	Queensland Premier's Literary Awards: Best Young Adult Book	Adult Judged

Continued over

1980	Western Australia	WAYRBA: Western Australia Young Readers Book Award	Children's Choice
1986	Victoria	YABBA: Young Australians' Best Book Awards	Children's Choice
1987	NSW	KOALA: Kid's Own Australian Literature Awards	Children's Choice
1990	Queensland	BILBY: Books I Love Best Yearly	Children's Choice
1991	ACT	COOL: Canberra's Own Outstanding List (discontinued after 2001)	Children's Choice
1991	Northern Territory	KROC: Kid's Reading Oz Choice Awards	Children's Choice
1991	South Australia	CROW: Children Rate Outstanding Writers (discontinued after 1998)	Children's Choice
1999	Tasmania	CYBER: Children's Yearly Best Ever Reads	Children's Choice
2001	National	YARA: Young Australian Readers' Awards	Children's Choice

Sample of Special Interest or Genre Awards

1982	National	Christian Book of the Year Awards	Adult Judged
1987	National	Children's Peace Literature Award	Adult Judged
1988	National	Family Therapy Associations of Australia Award for Children's Literature	Adult Judged
1991	National	The Multicultural Children's Literature Award (discontinued after 1995)	Adult Judged
1994	National	Wilderness Society Environment Award for Children's Literature	Adult Judged
1995	National	Aurealis Awards	Adult Judged

Source: Murphy (2004: 4-6)

Another level of influence in Australia involves internationally based children's and young adult literary awards. Prior to 1946 Australian knowledge of children's book awards was confined to American awards (Newberry and Caldecott Awards) but since the development of Australian awards, overseas awards have competed with Australian awards for attention. However, particularly in State Libraries and some public and school libraries, prominent international awarded titles are still acquired for collections.

The impact of formal awards and prizes as literary recommendations of quality will be examined more thoroughly later in this work. Most adult-judged winning titles are not chosen because they are (or will be) the most popular children's book – most exemplify what a judging panel has defined as quality literature according to their criteria. Often awarded titles break new ground, deal with disturbing social issues, use new and challenging literary styles, present different formats and represent the cutting edge of literary quality to extend the boundary of the contemporary literary form. Some of these awarded titles will be popular and some will not: all awarding bodies for children's

literature embrace appeal to the child/young adult reader as one of the criteria but not all winning titles succeed in this regard.

1.2.3 Concept of Quality in Children's Literature

Though the children's literary field includes narrative, fictional and informational work (Townsend 1976:17, Hunt 1991:1;56, Huck 1976:6, Sutherland and Arbuthnot 1986:5, Lesnik-Oberstein 1996:17, Chambers 1980:252 and 1983:8, Saxby 1997:23) acclaim for non-fiction work is not commonly endowed with the same kudos as the fictional genres. Criteria for quality in awarding may favour narrative works over other forms and promotion of awarded fiction exceeds that for non-fiction.

The concept of quality has no objective fixed meaning and in children's literature it varies with almost every reader, both child and adult. Children's choice selections highlight popularity but for the child-voter in this process, the winning title is seen as the 'best' book. In adult-judged awarding processes, panels use a list of criteria to review and debate the eventual winning titles. The awarded books are then advertised as 'quality literature'. Controversy often follows these choices as other independent readers judge differently for themselves.

1.2.4 Evaluation of Children's Literature: The Development of Children's Book Awards

The first children's literature award was the USA's Newbery Medal in 1922. Prior to 1922, evaluation of literary material for children was in the hands of concerned, enabling adults. The inaugural Newbery Medal, to be '...given annually, for the most distinguished contribution to American literature for children' (Association For Library Service to Children 2009:1, Carpenter & Prichard 1995:376) added a new objective evaluation to the less formal methods of evaluating children's literature. In a paragraph in the charter of establishment of the Newbery Medal, the benefactor, Frederick G Melcher and the American Library Association Board stated that the purpose of the award was

to encourage original and creative work in the field of books for children. To emphasise to the public that contributions to the literature for children deserve similar recognition to poetry, plays or novels. To give those librarians who make it their life work to serve children's reading interests an opportunity to encourage good writing in this field. (Assoc. for Library Service to Children, 2005:1).

The Newbery Medal includes fiction, non-fiction and poetry (Brown 1999:1, Noel 1990:79). The Caldecott Medal, added in 1937, acknowledged children's book illustration (Association for Library Service to Children 2005:3, Brown 1999:1, Noel 1990:86). These awards have had significant impacts in Australia on consumers even after Australian awards were established. These awards did not replace personal evaluation by enabling adults but offered external, objective evaluation as judged by experts or celebrated panels of selected adults. For 24 years (1922-1946) these American awards were the only influential children's literary award for Australian audiences. Australian awards for children's literature date from 1946 (Smith and Hamilton 1995:10, Children's Book Council of Australia 2006:1). A range of children's book awards has subsequently been developed by librarians, organisations and government sources, all committed to highlighting quality children's literature. (Noel 1990:32, Western Australia Dept of Education and Training 2006:1, White and Turton 2007, Schmidt and Schmidt 2000:1, Knudsen 1982:14).

Until well into the 1950s, the main overseas source of reading material for children in Australia was British in origin and it is only in comparatively recent times that there has been a generally accepted and highly valued, uniquely Australian, children's literary output (Niall 1987:4, Saxby 1997:91). However, British awards for children's literature have not been benchmarks for quality in Australia. In the United Kingdom (UK) the children's literary award system was slow to take root. The Carnegie Medal was inaugurated in 1936 to mark the centenary of the birth of Andrew Carnegie, philanthropist and benefactor of libraries. It is awarded to the author of the year's most outstanding book for children. Other well known awards are the Kate Greenaway Medal (for children's book illustration – 1955), The Guardian Award (1967), the Whitbread Award (1972, which from 2005 has been replaced by the Costa Book Award) and the Nestle Smarties Book Prize (1985, but now discontinued) (Noel 1990:60, Western

Australia Dept. of Education & Training 2006:1). These awarding bodies and their awarded titles are publicised in Australia and this research will briefly examine their level of influence in the Australian literary environment.

Along with a decline in relative literary influence emanating from Britain came a recognition of the literatures of other nations; the larger libraries and booksellers are now aware of award winning titles from the USA, Canada, New Zealand as well as international awards such as the Hans Christian Andersen Award (Noel 1990:3, Brown 1997a:1). Canadian book awards are possibly not so influential in Australia but the high quality in the field of Canadian children's and young adult literature has resulted in a growing respect for these titles (Brown 1997b:1), and their award lists are noted by some librarians and booksellers. New Zealand has five major awards which are noted widely in Australian professional journal literature commonly accessed by librarians and booksellers (Brown 1998:1). In this way there is an awareness of winning titles which influence the choices presented to the reading cohort.

Awards and prizes are not the only ways in which children's literature is publically evaluated. While an award itself is a tool of evaluation, awarded titles are most commonly evaluated again in a secondary round of evaluation through reviews and featured articles in professional journals (such as *Reading Time*, *Magpies*, *Literature Base*, *Scan*, *Australian Bookseller and Publisher*), popular journals (such as *Good Reading*) and the media (such as *Sydney Morning Herald*), and of course recommendations between readers and community book clubs. This exposure has a powerful impact on all the parts of the book industry from the author and publisher through to the consuming public. It is postulated that the flow-on effects generate social, economic and cultural and symbolic outcomes for the stakeholders. Though this research focuses on the impacts of awarding titles, it is important to recognise that there are widely used alternative methods of evaluating children's literature which do not come with the commendation of an authoritative awarding body. Therein lies the strength of the book award process (Guillory 1995:243, English 2005a:51). However, to some extent these other measures of value compete for prominence as a measure of quality in the market.

From the pilot study interviews it was common that purchasers did not always choose literature on the basis of any formal assessment such as an award. The following table illustrates some of the informal elements involved in the selection of reading material for children

Table 2

Informal Selection Criteria for Choosing Books for Children

Aids to Selection	Sources of Evaluation
Published books of recommended reading with reviews	Nieuwenhuizen 1995, Koelling 2007, Howard 2002, Jones, Taylor and Edwards 2003, Saxby 1997, Hubert 2007, Newbery & Caldecott Awards 2009, Kid's Best 2000,
Booklists in ephemeral form	Bookseller's Top 50 and Top 100, Lists in 'Good Reading' Magazine and print media
Book Reviews as a form of advertising	Trade brochures from publishers or distributors, bulletins from Australian Standing Orders, catalogues and booklets from booksellers, reviews in local press by booksellers
Recommended list of reading for specific purposes	HSC required reading and supplementary reading, lists produced by libraries on topics or genres, Board of Studies suggested reading lists
Displays of books by libraries or booksellers which imply some discernment by experts	Themed displays for 'Book Week', 'Library and Information Week', 'Premier's Literary Awards', library displays related to children's choice awards
Book Talks and Storytimes in Libraries	Recommended reading highlighted by librarians, author visits, displays for special events
Discussion and debates in open forums, library groups, literature groups, guest lectures at academic or prestigious institutions, book launches	Events, festivals, conferences, book fairs, book and reading clubs, writing workshops
Word of mouth, opinion, TV/radio discussion	Evaluation by friends, colleagues, informed people, community book clubs and discussion groups, peer group recommendation
Packaging, facsimile medal embossing, attached toy or trinket, innovative covers	Use of marketing tools which may persuade through implying that the book is 'special'

1.2.5 From Stakeholders to Cohorts

Early in the project it emerged that there was a wide range of stakeholders who experienced impacts following the announcement of a book award. This required a matrix of approaches to discern the unique responses following the announcement of a

book award. To facilitate the examination, stakeholders needed to be grouped into categories based on some commonalities, for research management.

Authors and publishers of children's literature who enter titles for judging, have an economic interest in the outcome. Authors devote time, effort and talent to creating a product. Publishers incur costs of production and for sustainability these need to be covered. Choosing to publish a book is an investment of money, time and expertise which has an expectation of a profitable return. This is a baseline for publishing any literature and if a piece of literature wins an award then this phenomena offers publicity and substantially increased sales which fortunately may extend well into the future. The means of making awarded literature available to consumers involves booksellers who, by this function, become part of this group of 'producers'. On the other hand 'consumers' of children's literary works which win a book award have a quite different kind of interest – they read, engage or not, examine, analyse, enjoy or not, recommend or not and essentially have reactions which have little to do with economic variables. Within these two broad groups six sub-groups were identified and they became the cohorts: in the producer's group, authors, publishers and booksellers were identified while the consumer group was distilled into cohorts of public librarians, teachers and teacher librarians and thirdly, parents. In the consumer group the cohorts are recognized as 'gatekeepers' or 'enabling adults', reflecting the role they perform in the exposure of children to literature and by extension, the role they perform in exposing awarded literature to children. These enabling adults strongly influence the reading environment to which children are exposed in both personal and professional ways and their attitudes toward awarded titles will impact on children. This research examines each of these to understand the book-award announcement experience.

Children were not included as a cohort for a variety of reasons. Principally, the pilot study revealed that the depth of information, recollection and analysis relating to awarded literature which could be supplied by children and even teenagers was not sufficient, clear or precise enough to support the research. Children viewed awarded books as books which had been pointed out as 'good' books but could not say why they were

acclaimed. Teenagers were dismissive of awarded books, revealing that they just liked to read what they were interested in or what their friends recommended though they recognised that awarded literature probably highlighted 'quality literature'. Most children and to some extent young adults, have very little purchasing power for independent purchase and are dependent on gatekeepers for access to library collections. The gatekeepers have purchasing power and often substantial influence on reading choices and will highlight (or not) awarded book titles and thus direct outcomes from children would be difficult to assess. This role of gatekeeping offers a rich field for future research. Finally, the applications and processes required to conduct research with children are a significant and lengthy hurdle and one without certainty of success. In terms of existing knowledge there have been many studies of children's choices of literature, including longitudinal studies, and while these do not focus on awarded books, they offer related material. Morrow and Richards (1996:90) have, as well, raised ethical issues related to social research with children, positioning children as vulnerable, incompetent and relatively powerless in society.

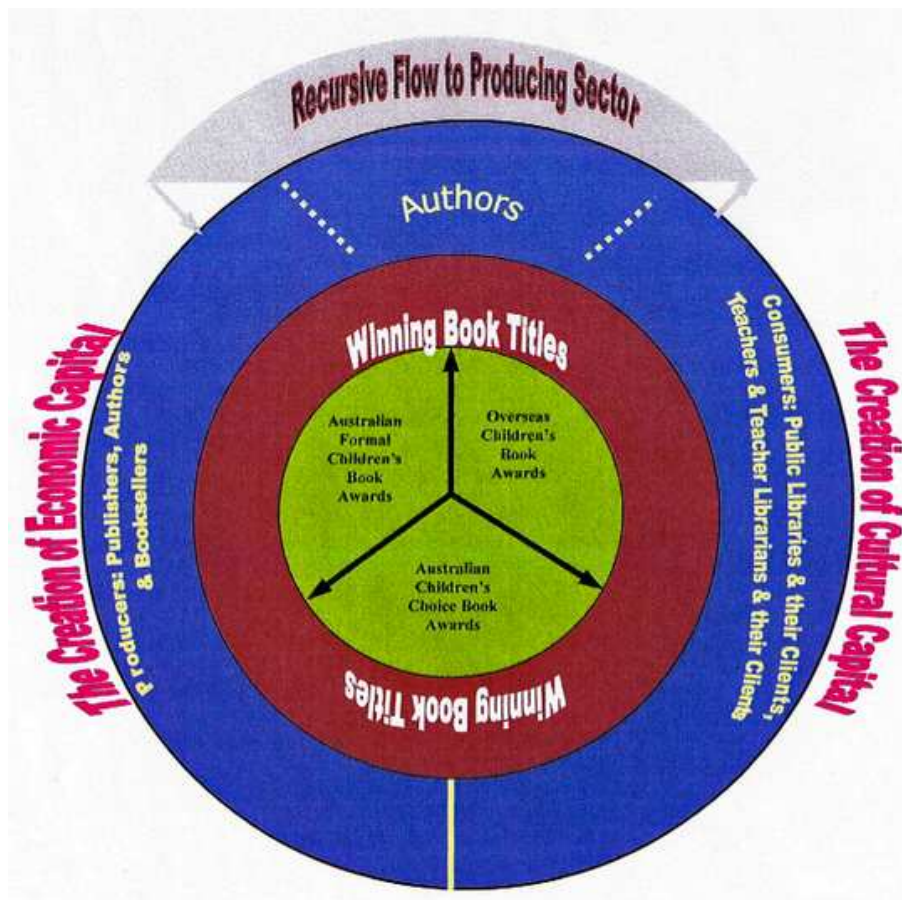
Gatekeepers or enabling adults often express a priority mission to place the right book in the hands of the right reader at the right time, engaging readers and feeding them with literature that enables them to thrive and grow, in the creative, imaginary, intellectual and literary sense. Book awards offer a method of evaluation which contributes to literary choices by gatekeepers. Awarded children's titles are marketed with a winner's tag in the economic market while in the cultural market, awards work to develop a literary environment which applauds exemplary children's literature and publicly values it. Each of the consuming cohorts reacts to this awarded literature in a different way, approaching the event from a unique perspective. An intersection of reader engagement and book title acclaim following a literary award announcement is an optimal intersection for both producers and consumers.

Pilot study interviews and focus group discussion resulted in a determination of cohorts linked by common action – 'producers' were identified by an economic motivation while

'consumers' were non-economically motivated. A model was constructed for this project to represent the field of stakeholders and their relationship to each other; see Figure 1:

Figure 1.

Interrelationships of Producers, Consumers and Book Awards



Source: H.Fisher (unpublished 2005)

The model shows the relationship of the cohorts and illustrates the interrelationships within the book award environment. The publisher's mission is to invest in publications which will sell well. Booksellers gather stock in the hope that the promotions and the media attention following a book award announcement will bring additional sales. Authors write and hope for wide sales of their book and financial reward. They are depicted as straddling both groups though they are defined as producers. As pilot study

discussions revealed, authors operate in a uniquely creative way that is linked to sustainability but without a dominant priority of the profit motive. If their book is published they receive an economic return and if it wins an award then the marginal increase in income is positive and welcomed. However, authors also placed a high value on non-economic outcomes and so they are not wholly defined by the profit motive. At its simplest level, viability for the people or organisations in this group has an economic base. Their activity can collectively be described as ‘the creation of economic capital’. As well, there is a dedicated group of stakeholders for whom the interest in the activity surrounding the announcement of a book award is not financial – their interest and associated activity relates to personal and professional pleasure or interest, academic study, library collection development and review. This activity can be collectively described as ‘the creation of cultural capital’ (Bourdieu 1984, English 2005a). One group is dependent on the other though except for the bookseller cohort, consumers may never meet the producers.

The basic model is a snapshot of a very short term process. It depicts the relationships between the cohorts and the overall group. Additional to this is a longer term perspective involving a recursive flow from the consuming sector back to the producing sector: the creation of cultural capital develops out of the creation of economic capital but in a second phase, a demand for the winning title feeds back to the producing sector for some time. The demand for the winning title may consume the available supplies of the title and indicate a need for a reprinting. As well, the titles of a winning author’s previous books may see a resurgence of demand, resulting in peripheral demand. This serves to not only extend the process of creating economic capital for a period of time but to also facilitate a flow-on to a second round of creation of cultural capital.

The experience of both economic and cultural capital involves multiplier effects following a winning book award announcement. Prior to the award winning announcement, a given volume of sales of a book title exists in the market. Following the announcement, actions occur which may include promotions and advertising, media attention, activities and displays followed by purchases for library collections,

development of classroom collections or school library acquisitions and purchases for personal pleasure. These actions in turn result in a flow of income to the producers' sector and contribute to the mix which comprises cultural capital. The economic flow in turn stimulates further production. For producers these multiplier effects are part of the production and marketing of the product while for consumers they are part of the consumption process. The multiplier impacts are elements of the ordinary process of producing and consuming products, including literary products, but dynamic and significant multiplier effects occur where a catalyst enters the field. Such a catalyst is the announcement of a winning children's book title. This thesis will assess the impact on each of the stakeholders following the announcement of such an event.

1.3 Cohorts and Awards: The Relationships

This research project required that cohorts be identified and that relevant children's literary awards in Australia be selected. A list of awards was compiled from respected professional sources such as ALIA³, ASLA⁴, CBC and State Library of New South Wales. Information was also available in commonly circulated professional journals such as *Reading Time*, *Literature Base*, *Magpies* alongside the children's literature database *The Source*, web sources of known awarding bodies, school websites and school and university databases.

The identified awards are listed in Table 3:

³ ALIA – Australian Library and Information Association

⁴ ASLA – Australian School Library Association

Table 3.

**Children’s Book Awards Identified by Australian Professional
Literature and Focus Groups**

International Awards	Australian & NZ Awards	USA Awards	Canadian Awards	UK Awards
Hans Christian Andersen Medal	Children’s Book Council of Australia Awards	Newbery Medal	Canadian Library Association’s Children’s Book of the Year	Carnegie Award
Phoenix Award	YARA Award	Caldecott Medal	Other Canadian awards	Kate Greenaway Medal
Mythopoeic Award	Nan Chauncy Award	Other US Awards		Smarties Book Prize (disc. 2008)
Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award	Aurealis Award			Whitbread Award (now called Costa Book Award)
	Ena Noel Award for Children’s Literature			Other British awards
	Children’s Choice Awards eg., KOALA, KROC, WAYRBA, YABBA, BILBY, COOL, CYBER, KANGA			
	Ethel Turner Prize for Young People’s Literature			
	Patricia Wrightson Prize for Children’s Literature			
	Crichton Award for New Illustrators			
	Various Premier’s Awards in each State			
	NZ children’s & YA book awards			

Each of the awarding bodies makes annual announcements of a winning title. Not all cohorts respond in predictable ways and not all awards exert the same influence.

Accompanying the book award and population contexts, a third context is the scholarly framework for the research. A review of both theoretical and contemporary academic literature reflects the field and informs understandings of the children’s literature award environment. This is the substance of Chapter 2. Theorists, contemporary thinkers and analysts form a foundational context for the development of this work.

1.4 The Pathway To Evaluation of Literature By Awards

‘Gatekeepers’ or ‘enabling adults’ choose literature for children using a variety of evaluative tools for selection and this research seeks to determine the extent to which book awards are part of that evaluation. The social attitudes of any time in history are an inherent part of any literature and for children’s literature in particular, these attitudes influence how decision-makers perceive and evaluate children’s literature. Each stakeholder, within a given societal environment, evaluates the available literature with whatever tools are at hand and children’s book awards are one of the tools of evaluation.

1.4.1 Brief Historical Background to Literary Evaluation

Evaluation for centuries was conducted without any formalization. Even from the first identified writing of children’s literature, the clay tablets in Sumeria dating from 2112-1000BC, the writing contained exercises for writing, lullabies, proverbs and fables, stories of young lives and dialogues and debates (Adams 1986:26). Literature was seen as a tool for character building and the inculcating of moral values and codes of behavior and this was strongly embedded in the children’s literature in the centuries up until the mid nineteenth century though Dennis (1996:1) argues that from the very beginning children’s oral and written literature was designed both to instruct and to entertain. Evaluation of quality literature involved a personal assessment by adults such as parents, tutors, teachers and governesses and children’s literature reflected the social values of the day and society’s view of children. The history of children’s literature can be seen to reveal the changing attitude of society toward children and changing cultural values (Huck 1976:55).

Benton (1996:39) contributes to an understanding of the changing historical nature of children’s literature and its evaluation, which is embedded in the relationship between society’s values and perceptions of the child. He offers snapshots of the literature available to children and by inference, the filtering process of their caregivers or enabling

adults. In terms of acceptance by adult gatekeepers, this is the literature which is evaluated as being worthwhile and valued and thus presented to children.

Over the last one hundred years there has developed an additional method of evaluation in the form of an institutionalised evaluative mechanism for children's literature – the children's book award. This is objective and operates within a framework of formalised criteria. This does not replace the personal evaluative process, but acts as an adjunct to it. Collectively, the decisions of both an institutionalised evaluative mechanism and the personal process by individuals, add up to what Pierre Bourdieu termed 'cultural capital' incorporating the arts, society's values, education, societal behaviour and social mores (Bourdieu 1986:241). These change over time.

1.4.2 Children's Literature Evaluation in Australia

By the second half of the nineteenth century, the view was gradually accepted that children were discrete individuals with particular personalities, inner lives, dreams, imaginations and physical needs. Australia's literary scene, including the children's literary scene, and the evaluation of worthwhileness, still reflected British values with a mix of Australian themes and British themes until well after the Second World War. From 1841 there were Australian publications for children. Evaluation took the form of an intersection of cultural values, the child-reader's engagement and the personal judgment of gatekeepers. However, Turner and Sutherland's authoritative work, *The Development of Australian Literature* (1898) completely ignored any mention of writing for children in Australia. Their estimation of what constituted worthwhile or valued literature, was adult British literature and this influence lasted for possibly the next fifty years in Australia. Evaluation of Australian children's literature in this period, to some extent, had a colonial framework based on British values.

Australiana in the form of anthropomorphic narrative became very popular from the 1930s as exemplified by Dorothy Wall's *Blinky Bill* (1933) and there was an emergence of engaging and adventurous stories in an Aboriginal context with titles such as

Davison's *Children of the Dark People* (1936) and Durack's *The Way of the Whirlwind* (1941). However, on the whole, the 1930s offerings exhibited 'A patronising attitude to children, meretricious writing and shoddy book production... run-of-the-mill adventure, mediocre school and family stories and extravagant Australianiana ...' (Saxby 1997:98). Muir speaks of the stories and their illustrations of this time as predictable and commonplace (1982:100).

A dramatic change in children's narrative themes and critical evaluative thought, with an 'upsurge in creative energy...' (Saxby 1997:8), emerged after World War II. In Australia, the formation of the CBC and its annual children's book award, beginning in 1946, offered status, authenticity, integrity and pride which ranked alongside awards for adult levels of literature. Schools and public libraries slowly recognised the inherent quality of Australian children's books and the potential links to literacy and literary interest. Specialised library staff began to be appointed. As well, publishers began appointing specialist children's editors. Entertaining children's literature had become accepted as valuable and worthy of study and the establishment of children's book awards played a part in this validation.

Benton (1996:58) claims that each age reinvents the child in its own image and it is argued that this is reflected in the titles which are awarded as quality literature of the time. At any given time, the social environment or culture is predominantly constructed by adults and children's reading material will reflect this. If, as Postman (1982) states, childhood is a construct of culture, then children's literature is a mirror or a manifestation of that culture and so too are the awards which evaluate it.

Children's book awards reflect a view of society over time and it might be expected that they would be in the vanguard of social change. However, the criteria for book awards is notoriously static and so while awarded titles may demonstrate a certain pushing of the boundaries of literature in terms of genre, style, format and structure, they may also represent a time-lag in the reflection of society.

1.5 Debate in the Award Environment

In the past one hundred years there has been critical review of literature through journals, academic texts and discussion papers, although children's literature was not as seriously considered for comment as adult literature for the first half of this period. Awards for children's literature are a much more recent phenomena, beginning officially with the American Newbery Awards in 1921. In contemporary times there are evaluative opportunities offered through websites, blogs, book trailers, journals, media articles, magazine coverage, and proceedings of professional associations, conferences and meetings. These are strong forums for review and debate. In these, book awards are presented as an institutionalised, objective judgment of quality and generally the awards are imbued with status, respect and influence within the community at large but often the judge's choices are contested. The position of each of the stakeholders is assessed in this research.

Book awards for children's literature carry significance in the Australian literary scene. For producers there is a substantial economic impact. For consumers, book awards are an evaluative tool, impressing by being a formal, objective evaluation of quality literature, affecting such elements as purchasing, borrowing, reading, studying, reviewing, enjoying, teaching and sharing.

Not all outcomes of the literary awards process are positive. Despite the economic benefits for producers and the contribution to cultural capital through consumers, the environment generated by the process may also reflect some negative perspectives. Modern communities of art (and the arts in general) have embraced awards for excellence but some critics are uncomfortable about the idea of judging artists (writers, playwrights, composers) as 'winners' and losers'. Berger (2003:253) developed this view which was later paraphrased by English (2005a:2):

[This may be] seen as one of the glaring symptoms of a consumer society run rampant, a society that can conceive of artistic achievement only in terms of stardom and success.....replacing a rich and cultural world with a shallow and homogeneous

[one]....from this vantage point [prizes] are not a celebration but a contamination of the most precious aspects of art.

Berger is a novelist, aesthetic and cultural critic and his background colours his view. Berger (quoted in English 2005a:51) acknowledges that the arts are dependent on political acceptance, economic gain, prestige and power but laments the potential for bias in creativity and the potential for awards to become de facto analytical tools. In extending this thought, awards and prizes may assert an authority over cultural value, distribution of esteem and various rewards within that cultural field.

English further develops this idea when he talks of the bureaucratisation of art where awarding a prize places power in the hands of cultural functionaries such as organisers, administrators, the selectors of judges, the judges themselves and those who devise rules and criteria (English 2005a:52). Money and bureaucracy have always had some part in the arts through patronage, scholarships, philanthropy and income, and realism cannot be denied in the business of merging a creative life with earning a living. However, Berger (in English 2005b:51) particularly saw a danger in corrupting the arts to the extent that they became dependent on awards and prizes for a measurement of quality or otherwise.

It might be supposed that the institutionalisation of the award process would be simpler for children's choice awards since they do not have panels of appointed judges, a bureaucratic organisation with financial interests and political influence but their organization still involves a bureaucratic scaffold, even if it is a volunteer network. Each state has such awards, resting their reputation on the absence of the above structures. Volunteers generally hail from the public library sector and they organise, publicise and conduct the voting schedules, then advertise the most popular children's titles. However, even these awards can be seen as identifying popular 'winners' and offering a potential for financial gain. Countering this, it needs to be recognised that these kinds of awards deliver a low powered impact, advertising as they do, children's favourite titles after the fact of reading. This means that the post-award impact on market sales will be small.

Even in the high powered stakes and operations of the CBC awards, it needs to be noted that the process depends very heavily on the goodwill of volunteers and elected, unpaid judges who have a tenure of two years⁵. This lack of payment and appointment turnover may, if it was generally known, lessen the criticism of bureaucratic bias and political influence.

It might seem that literary awards would offer substantial monetary rewards and dictate accelerated demand for the awarded literature in the market but English claims that the correlation between commercial success and the prestige from winning a major prize has grown weaker rather than stronger in the twentieth century (2005a:152). A newspaper editorial by Miller (1996:C13) written nine years earlier, refutes this for children's book awards, claiming that children's book awards still matter because purchasing adults are generally less familiar with quality children's literature and thus respect guidance and facsimile prize seals on covers, highlighting the awarded titles in the genre. She makes the claim that the Newbery Medal (USA) for children's literature and the Caldecott Award (USA) for children's book illustration are more powerful than a Nobel Prize (world wide) or the Pulitzer Prize (USA) for adult literature. In support she claims that many bookshops have a whole section dedicated to award winning children's literature, vindicating exceptional interest in American awards for children's literature. This commodification of winning titles does not seem to be as entrenched in Australian culture as it is in the USA.

Critics of book awards claim that the act of awarding can obscure the suffering that the prize inflicts on the non-awarded (English 2005a:111). The process, hype and media attention given to award winning literary works may mean that very worthwhile titles are overlooked or even obliterated in the overall marketing of the field. Writing in the Canadian popular press, Yanofsky said that 'To not be nominated these days is to be cast out into a kind of literary limbo' and then quoting a US publisher continued: 'There are only so many books that can be paid attention to. If a book isn't on a list there's a sense in which it doesn't exist' (Yanofsky 2008:1.8).

⁵. English calls this a cost in 'social capital' in lieu of money (English 2005a:119).

Aside from the criticism which applies to the very notion of awarding prizes for literature, a frequent criticism in the popular press and professional journals relates to the specifics of the judging process. The composition of judging panels is a constant concern even before their judgment is delivered with complaints depending on the philosophies of the interested parties. The critics complain about the selection of judges, the political agendas of judging panels, the lack of contemporary literary awareness of the judges and the apparent misalignment with reader's interests.

Additionally, trade perceptions add another dimension of criticism. In 2004 when the National Book Awards in the USA listed five finalists who were relatively unknown, not only were the judging panel and the process impugned, but also a comment was made which, for some, firmly placed commercial viability as one of the underlying criteria for an award: 'The finalists, all New Yorkers, are not well known and their books are obscure or esoteric or both as well as poor sellers ...' (Mehegan, 2004:F1). Thus criticism may be threefold: the composition of judging panels, the criteria used in arriving at finalists and the requirement that the title should have commercial potential.

Debate and criticisms in literary circles and the media about the judge's choices for awards thrive following an announcement of an award. Though, in principle, debate is healthy and controversy is part of the process, it can become bitter and divisive and can override the higher value of applauding quality literature. English gives some examples of critical comment from media sources in the USA (2005a:187): 'The Booker Prize is rubbish' (Howard 1982:12); the Booker 'needs all the help it can get' (Foster 1980:13); 'the [Pulitzer] prize's record of failure approaches perfection' (Gass 1985) 'Everyone hates the Pulitzers' (*Newsweek* 1986); 'The Turner Prize is an odious and disgusting scandal' (*Daily Telegraph*, 1995); 'Mere razzamatazz... a laughing stock... an annual rusty nail.. hammered in the coffin of fiction' (Craddock 1985:15); 'An embarrassment to the entire book trade' (Herbert 1994:13); 'Who needs the Booker? The sorry state of a literary prize' (*The Economist* 1989:16). Common criticisms are leveled at the corruption or bias in choosing winners, conflict of interest, lack of expertise or objectivity by judges and in one case at least a story of scandal which in fact substantially increased interest in

the book award (The Booker Prize, outlined by English 2005a:203). Sloppiness and lack of expertise in judging a winner was leveled at the Australian Publishers' Association's 'Australian Awards for Excellence in Educational Publishing' when their 2009 winner, 'Studies of Religion,' was shown to contain several glaring errors as reported in *Newsmouth*, December, 2009. In an interesting perspective, Todd (1996:64), dismisses as fatuous the denunciations directed, in this case, at The Booker Prize, and says that the prize's loftiest critics are its best allies as "The Booker thrives... by getting it wrong (as it cannot fail to do) in the eyes of so many established experts".

Other involved people in the field such as authors, artists, critics, librarians, teachers and academics often criticise, complain, express disdain for procedures and outcomes of awards and seemingly have little respect for such awards. Authors sometimes take the stand that they will refuse an award. Despite this debate and derision, evidence shows that most of the affected cohorts are substantially influenced by literary awards.

[There are] intrinsic paradoxes. Prizes are both eagerly sought after and reflexively disdained. They are covered in the media with breathless awe and at the same time, with savage mockery. They affirm the disinterested autonomy of artistic labour even as they undermine it by placing a cash value on its products (Scott, 2005:63).

In practice, most winners accept their awards and allow the promotions which follow; publishers rush into a further print run, extend their advertising and promotion and send their star author on book tours. Booksellers may erect signs and prominently display the book, consumers read of the award and buy the title, librarians and teachers consider it for collections and class sets (Krakovsky 2005).

English (2005a:225) looks beyond the primacy of money reward, that is a prize, to examine acclaim which has value in terms of cultural capital, a concept which was first discussed by Pierre Bourdieu (in Brubaker 1985:775). Bourdieu's concept of symbolic capital recognizes that intangible assets such as enhanced reputation and acclaim are capable of generating an economic return, and are elements in the mix which constitute the whole prize for the prizewinner and contribute to the cultural assets of a community. This illustrates the relationship of acclaimed literature, cultural capital and the wider

community through the medium of the marketing process and it is based on the awarded title which authors have created and which publishers and booksellers drive. Bourdieu explored the relationship of culture, economics and sociology and wrote of a tension between these variables.

The paradoxes may indicate a dilution of cultural or aesthetic value through the focus on commercial value and the unjustified respect for ‘winners’ in the media and promotional agencies. Bourdieu himself recognised the potential schism between a work which contributed to cultural capital (but which did not win a prize) and the bestseller or awarded book (or other works of art). In fact, there are gradations of cultural capital in a multiplicity of markets with both economic and non-economic outcomes. There is a complex relationship between commodification of literary prize-winning titles and the outcomes for affected cohorts. Contrary to accepted wisdom, English (2005a:330) demonstrates that there has not been much correlation between bestseller lists of books in USA and award winning books (eg. Pulitzer Prize winning titles). In Australia, possibly the most vigorous sales of children’s books over an extended timeframe are the titles by Paul Jennings but he has never won a major children’s literary award. It is clear that though awarded titles cannot be said to be independent of commerce and often the awarded title is sold to the market with the ‘brand’ of the award, the awarded title is often still a long way from ‘bestsellerdom’. In summarising the conundrum, English pointed out that we lack agreed-upon means of measuring literary value and prizes highlight excellence but this does not necessarily mean that the objects are excellent; prizes may generate commercial success but it is possible that they will not and prizes go to the best which may also be popular but sometimes it is not.

Scott, writing in the popular press under the heading of “Medal Fatigue”, comments:

...the prizes, transparently trivial, implicitly corrupt and utterly detached from any meaningful notion of literary value, will be greeted with cynicism, derision and, if we’re lucky, a burst of controversy..... the very idea of handing out medals and cash for aesthetic and intellectual achievement is absurd if not obscene. (*Scott, 2005:63*).

In a capitalist system, what can be bought and sold as a product has a broad definition and if an awarded book with attendant media attention enables the product to attract

market advantage, then in economic terms this is acceptable. In a discussion of a prestigious French book award, Buss adds: 'The real irony ... is that the prize money has become negligible ... the support for literature comes ... from the huge sales the award guarantees. There was no way of escaping market forces, after all.' (Buss 2003:7). As evidence revealed, for winners of a CBC award, the real prize is in the form of post-award sales. Lofty ideals are not comfortable bedfellows with capitalism.

English argues that the work of culture, especially the work of producing cultural capital, has increasingly been accomplished through institutions which spawn cultural competition and awards (English 2005a:51). Authors are often introduced and referred to by not only their published titles but also by their awards. Overall, the writing fraternity demonstrates some dependency on awards and their publicity, for promotion and expansion of the market. Every author writes to be read and every publisher produces to sell and so the realities of the market have to be recognised and to some extent, complied with.

In the broader cultural context, there is a criticism that book awards have tended to focus almost exclusively on fictional material when informational texts can be evaluated with equally rigorous appropriate criteria (Duke 2008:13). The first major nonfiction award for children (USA: Orbis Pictus Award for Outstanding Nonfiction for Children) was only established in 1990 (Zeece 1999:235). In Australia, the CBC annual award portfolio includes an award for information books but most other awarding bodies focus on fiction. Children's choice awards can include any form of literature, but every book so far awarded has been fiction.

Another perspective presents the view that book awards are only relevant at a moment of time because they are an expression of the time period (usually the preceding year) and offer a representation of where literature is right now (Ulin 2006:E1). In this view, awards are necessarily subjective, reflecting the judges' views at a particular time. This is at odds with the general determination of most awarding bodies to codify rules and criteria for awards to give a stamp of integrity to the awards. Children's book awards in

USA, UK and Australia have not changed the criteria for most of the life of their major awards. Evaluation is undertaken by rotating panels of judges and their decisions are formulated within a firm criteria framework which blends established values with contemporary literary culture.

Recognising the realities of awards within the big picture establishes their place in our literary environment. 'Awards are an imperfect process ... [but] nevertheless we're still celebrating books – and opening doors to new points of view' (Myers, quoted in O'Connor 2005:E1) and English commented (2005a) that if the awards process is flawed that doesn't mean that awards don't matter. Further, O'Connor sums up the impact of literary awards as recognition of a particular aspect of contemporary culture where there is a showcasing of a literary community and the subtext of marketing which brings respect and cash inflow (2005:E1).

Further debate has centred on the glitz-style hype of some award presentations. Promoters offer visibility, excitement and glamour but some feel that this is a marketing gimmick staged by a nervous book industry (Mehegan 2005:A1). However, Rocco, a literary editor and a former Booker Prize judge, has heard all the arguments and firmly states that 'Visibility ... has nothing to do with quality' (2004:88) and that quality finds its place in the market regardless of the glitz. Elaborate presentations are short lived promotions which do not necessarily support an awarded title in the longer term and possibly have no impact on the growth of cultural capital.

In contemporary critical analysis, English has made a significant contribution to the field of examining book awards in the cultural context. He analyses the role that money plays in the business of arts awards; he examines the bureaucratisation of the arts, the composition of judging panels, the debate and the validity of awarding a winner, within a constantly changing literary environment. He recognises the multi-functional role which awards play when they are bestowed. He writes of the 'economy of prestige', giving credence to both cultural and economic elements. His writing has modeled analysis of

book awards and some of the elements of his work will inform the approaches in this thesis.

1.6 Research and the Search for Reality

This research seeks to explore the reality of children's book awards in Australia over a five year period. Using a pilot study to clarify the common issues and to determine the groupings of affected cohorts, the research design evolved into six mini-research projects. The aim was to gather direct evidence, from each cohort concerning a range of impacts following the announcement of a children's book award. Collectively this evidence would offer indications of the validity of the awards for children's literature from the consumers' point of view, and the commercial impacts from the producer's point of view. Book Awards are intended to highlight and reward exemplary literature and the questionnaires included opportunities to express opinions about awards as measures of quality in the literary market.

1.7 Outline of the Dissertation

This first chapter has set out the foundations for this dissertation, defining the concepts underlying the research framework, outlining the contexts of enquiry and the epistemologies which underpin the whole process. It also faces the critics of awards, discussing the controversial issues.

Chapter Two examines the work of theorists and analysts who inform this enquiry and the academic literature which provides the reference points prior to the applied surveys. The theorists have been selected for their historical and contextual positioning in terms of children's literature. A three-tier approach has been adopted which begins with theorist's examination of the individual's personal processing of a piece of literature. The second tier analyses the embedding of acclaimed literature into the realm of cultural capital while the third tier offers a critical analysis of the contribution of prizes and awards to the literary environment of the USA.

Chapter 3 offers an outline of the overall research strategy with discussion of each of the stages, the tools employed and the application of them. The approach adopted to suit the multi-faceted task involves mixed methodologies and includes a pilot study using interviews and conversations, surveys using questionnaires and scholarly library research. The analysis utilises both quantitative and qualitative data.

The subsequent chapters, four to nine, report on the responses to the questionnaires and analysis of responses. Each of the cohorts represents a specialised perspective on children's book awards and their responses are critical to the understanding of answers to the questions of this thesis.

This corpus of evidence is then integrated and collated to offer a synthesis of the questionnaire results, highlighting both commonalities from different cohorts as well as differences. Though population generalities cannot be assumed from such small samples, the evidence offers a snapshot from the cohort samples to inform some conclusions regarding annual children's book award outcomes.

The concluding chapter offers a judgment about the state of the current children's literary award environment in Australia and the likely ramifications and challenges for their future.

Chapter 2

Theorists, Analysts and Critics

One good source is worth more than a score of mediocre ones and one accurate summary of a good source is sometimes worth more than the source itself⁶.

2.1 Introduction

Scholars and critics have analysed the growth of children's literary awards, the nature and qualities of winning titles, the criteria for the awarding process, reviews of winning titles and criticism of the award process. There are reviews of titles, articles about authors, interviews with authors, discussion of the genre, analysis of the style, dissection of the narrative and other elements of the literature. In Australia these aspects have been debated for decades since the development of Australian awards (Linning 1995:4, LaMarca 1997:47, Hillel 1995:3). However, there is a paucity of literature which relates to the post-award experiences of affected stakeholders following the advent of winning a children's book award.

Australian children's book awards are part of an established process which has not, to date, been examined from an ex-poste perspective. Books which receive awards are generally believed to be a demonstration of quality literature resulting from a judging process involving decisions by experts or a popularity vote by the child readership. Following the announcement of an award, there will be outcomes which will vary with the type of book award and the range of affected people or organisations and each impact will vary in nature, strength and longevity. Some outcomes, such as financial rewards, will be clear but others, such as prestige and reputation following the winning of the award, will be less quantifiable.

⁶ Booth, Colomb and Williams 1995:73

This chapter examines the relevant research literature surrounding the recognition of exemplary literature for children, to underpin the research.

2.2 Theoretical and Analytic Foundations

As shown in Chapter 1, two major population groups, producers and consumers, are affected by children's book awards. They are defined by their *modus operandi* and their relationship to an economic base: producers, become responsible for the 'creation of economic capital' through producing and marketing a literary product within an economic environment (Webster 2003:196). Consumers are involved in the 'creation of cultural capital' through acquiring and interacting with a literary product within a great range of social environments and through these actions, they become agents in the transmission of literary culture.

The work of key theorists and critics in textual and cultural studies, such as Rosenblatt, Bourdieu and English, serve as a foundation for this study. A three tiered approach traces scholarship from the personal response, to examine market outcomes and cultural perspectives. Rosenblatt examines the processes inherent in the act of reading while Pierre Bourdieu analyses the social framework of society in which both converging and conflicting elements are associated with the creation of cultural capital. Rosenblatt offers a microscopic view of the individual reader while Bourdieu and English offer a macro-perspective of culture generally. In particular, English analyses the wider contemporary culturescape of awarded literature by surveying the adult award process in the USA, the current rhetoric, the effects on the participants, the politics and the criticism. His examination of the personal and wider cultural impacts of awarding literature resonates with the award environment in Australia.

2.2.1 Louise Rosenblatt: The Personal Reading Response

The demand for literature is predicated by the process of reading itself and the way in which readers assimilate the text is a foundation for this research. Louise Rosenblatt, in the USA, examines personal and individual reading approaches to offer layers of

meaning and understanding to the literature under discussion. Rosenblatt, writing from an educational perspective, emphasizes reading for meaning. Writing in 1938, Rosenblatt offered a departure from convention in *Literature as Exploration*, arguing that the reader's own interpretation is crucial: 'The student needs to be given the opportunity and the courage to approach literature personally ... He should be made to feel that his own response to books...is worth expressing' (1938:81). She states that literary texts do not inherently contain the source of meaning but that the reader's prior experience means that intellectual, aesthetic and emotional elements affect understanding: '...The symbols [letters on the printed page] take meaning from the intellectual and emotional context the reader provides' (Rosenblatt 2005:63). Following Rosenblatt's ideas, Roen and Karolidis describe the action of reading as transactions with different texts for different purposes which fall along an efferent—aesthetic continuum (simply a reading-for-meaning and reading-for-pleasure continuum), with mobility back and forth along the continuum, even during one reading experience (2005:59). In the process of awarding children's books via adult-judging, the initial reading context is that of the judge. They bring their wide experience of literature as well as their personal intellect, aesthetic and emotional responses to a piece of literature. They experience the reading processes described by Rosenblatt and in doing so formulate a judgment regarding the comparative worth of a piece of literature from a field of literature. At a later stage, consumers will read awarded literature, with the same process applying.

Rosenblatt saw the teacher as a catalyst of discussion, assisting in responses to text and facilitating understandings (developed in Rosenblatt 1978). During the 1930s, but extending even to the 1950s, teachers taught literary skills with close, concise, attentive analysis with an emphasis on recall, discouraging expression of a student's own individual response (Church 1997:71). A body of theory, research and practice in pedagogy emerged in the 1960s and 1970s, resulting in a paradigm shift away from text as an authority, toward a text and reader relationship (Rosenblatt 1968a:339, Purves 1975:463, Purves and Beach 1972:57). Rosenblatt states that

...the special meaning and more particularly, the submerged associations that these words and images have for the individual reader will largely determine what the work

communicates to him. The reader brings to the work personality traits, memories of past events, present needs and preoccupations, a particular mood of the moment and a particular physical condition. These and many other elements in a never-to-be-duplicated combination determine his response to the peculiar contribution of the text (1938:30-31).

Rosenblatt (1938:115) asserts that the teacher has a place in the presentation of literature, sharing the validity of interpretation with the student, facilitating judgments of quality and superiority in expression according to given criteria. Rosenblatt suggests that 'If we are to teach literature, certain kinds of experiences ... must be brought about... helping students to have such experiences' (2005:63). This work lays a foundation which is relevant to the judging of children's publications, the actions of enabling adults, including teachers, librarians and parents who present awarded literature to children, and the child-readers themselves. The layers of reading and evaluation by adults stand as a significant evaluative force in the ultimate presentation of awarded books to children. This represents a significant round of gatekeeping by these enabling adults.

Rosenblatt postulates that reading is a specific, personalised experience where all interpretation of the words is internalised and responsive to the individual's prior experience and emotions. Rosenblatt and others (Tucker 1980, 1981, Watson 1980) talk of 'transactional theory', alluding to a contract between author and reader. Thus, the reader participates in the creation of meaning (Benton 1979:68, Protherough 1983:3, Vandergrift 1990:27, Schutte and Malouff 2006:2, Hirsch 1967:6). Bradbury supports this, asserting that the destination of a piece of writing is, in reality, the true voice of writing (1987:22). In the context of a panel reading to judge a children's book award, the reading of a text by several judges on a panel will result in multiple meanings which will vary from person to person (Felluga 2003:1). Though Rosenblatt writes mainly of the teacher and the child reader, the reader could be a literary judge, a book reviewer, librarian, teacher, parent or child-reader. Each evaluates the text idiosyncratically to bestow an interpretation and a value on the title. This in part explains why there is no single community acclamation of a winning title: the debates and controversies following an award winning announcement are an expected response.

This thesis examines the award process in terms of adult readers who are judges and gatekeepers for children and examines their view of awarded literature in terms of their role. Beyond the adult experience of awarded literature Crago (1979:140), Chambers (1991:13), and Saxby (1997:61) suggest that child responses to reading do not differ in any significant way from adult responses. Hunt postulates that what differs is not the principle but the idea that the child response occurs at different developmental stages and at different skill levels, leaving the processes of the response as essentially the same (1991:11).

2.2.2 Pierre Bourdieu and the Creation of Cultural Capital

Bourdieu offered scholarly analysis which encompassed relevant fields of thought for this research. His perspective embraced the identification of two overarching systems at work in society. First, economic systems where position and power are determined by money and property; second, the creation of cultural capital where experience, knowledge and cultural practice form the currency, being acquired either through conscious, purposeful activity and learning or unconscious means such as socialisation or community habits. At a fundamental level, Bourdieu postulates that collectively, all competencies, experiences and learning become capital (Bourdieu 1977b:487, Bourdieu and Passeron 1979:14, Bourdieu 1986:241). He further postulates that the formation of cultural capital is a dynamic process over time and cumulatively becomes ‘the habitus’ within the social fabric. Bourdieu wrote that “Habitus ensures the active presence of past experiences [which] tend to guarantee ... constancy over time [and] more reliability than all the formal rules and explicit norms...”(Bourdieu quoted by Harker 1992:16). Bourdieu goes on to say that a structure is at the heart of this concept, mediating between subjectivity and objectivity for cultural emergence (Bourdieu in interview with Wacquant, in Bourdieu 1989:43, Calhoun et al 1993:90). Though Bourdieu did not write with book awards in mind, the application is clear – there is a clear structure embodied in the award process, with outcomes that stretch from the judges’ decisions about winning literature through to the reception by the consumers in the wider market. The end product of this

process, the core of which is 'the habitus', may be absorbed into the realm of cultural capital.

Cultural capital involves all the hierarchies which range from individual, personal experiences through to whole society movements and events. It embraces those objects which serve to offer experience and from such tangible objects, intangible experiences such as knowledge, learning and pleasure in literature and art are derived. Bourdieu collectively named the tangible objects 'objectified cultural capital'. They have economic value, but for consumers they are principally a matter of experience, pleasure and academic analysis. Each of these intangible experiences depends on some tangible object such as a piece of literature, an object of art or a drama performance to act as a catalyst for the experience. The catalyst becomes the 'object' which is an element in the mix that becomes 'cultural capital'. These concepts can apply to awarded children's literature and its processes.

Objectified cultural capital can refer to a judgment of quality literature which is awarded through the evaluation of critics, experts or readers themselves, as in popular vote awards. The title becomes objectified as an object of cultural capital through acceptance by the community of the special status conferred by the award. The community is comprised of readers and though their reading may begin as an individual experience it may become aggregated with others who have had similar experiences. Thus the awarded title evolves into an element of cultural capital in the wider societal spectrum, facilitated by the collective acceptance and absorption of the qualities valued by society.

Bourdieu added symbolic capital to the list, referring to attributes such as recognition, prestige and admiration; English later developed the concept of symbolic capital as another form of currency following the bestowing of an award for literature. Any intangible attribute only receives value and power by being recognised as legitimate by society – it does not depend on the field (society) having practical knowledge of the cultural capital item or experience but becomes accepted as valuable (Bourdieu and Boltanski 1975:95). For some individuals, these experiences are both material and

symbolic, enabling success in the development of deep appreciation, understanding and pleasure (Harker 1990:13). For a culture, these objects are accepted as valuable.

These elements of economic capital, cultural capital, objectified cultural capital and symbolic capital are vital parts of the world of literary prizes and awards. They operate in a multi-layered way from the moment of an award announcement and some of the impacts are predictable and some are not. While Bourdieu recognised the element of economic capital in the mix he did not elaborate on the relationship of economic capital to the other elements. He thought that economic privilege (which could be prize money and post-award sales) could translate into cultural capital. This concept was later developed by English.

The work of Bourdieu offers clear analytical concepts for examining the outcomes of awarded literature. His theories of cultural capital, objectified cultural capital and symbolic capital informed the approach of this research (Beasley-Murray 2000:100, Williams 1963:311, Milner 2005:72, Throsby 2001:103, Swartz 1997:76, Connor 1992:234, Lareau and Weininger 2003:569, Bennett and Savage 2004:7-14).

Contemporary thought concerning 'culture' includes a very wide interpretation of the concept. Bennett and Savage state that there is no agreement about the definition of culture (2004:12) though generally it is acknowledged to exist and to be important. Especially in the 1950s and early 1960s, debate on the nature and place of culture and cultural capital was very active. In 1963, Williams (1963:311) wrote that culture not only includes a body of intellectual and imaginative work, but is also a whole way of life. An outcome which results from the consumption of awarded literature or any other cultural icon is the progressive accretion of the elements or qualities or the object itself, to the cultural capital continuum. The extended debate over the meaning of cultural capital occurs partly because the word 'capital' had formerly only had economic connotations (Beasley-Murray 2000:100). Williams and others contribute to an enlarged concept of cultural capital so that Milner observes parallels within the work of Foucault, Williams, Bourdieu's 'cultural capital' and Habermas's 'cultural sociology' (Milner 2005:72).

While cultural theorists have embraced economic concepts, so too has the reverse occurred.

In recent years, some economists have turned their attention to linking economic concepts and cultural issues. Like Bourdieu, Throsby (2001:103) postulates that cultural capital can exist in tangible goods in the form of 'objectified cultural capital' and thus can include award winning literature which acquires prestige and sometimes notoriety. Awarded titles will be perceived as having what Bourdieu calls an 'aesthetic disposition' (1984:25) which he suggests refers to an attitude of positive appreciation toward an element which provides a pleasurable experience. Objects thus endowed become the cultural capital in an embodied form (Swartz 1997:76). In the context of this research, awarded book titles can be seen as having an 'aesthetic disposition'. As well, it is evident that there can be an 'aesthetic disposition' toward intangible things such as ideas, beliefs and customs (Throsby 2001:46).

In reflecting on the passage of time, Throsby recognises that cultural capital is an intellectual heritage passed from one generation to another. Ritenour (2003:103), in a critical examination of Throsby's *Economics and Culture*, searches for a clear delineation of exactly what, generationally, will be absorbed into the fabric of cultural capital and what will not. This can only be a rhetorical question. Similarly, Guillory expresses concern about the kinds of literature which become absorbed into the literary canon. He introduces the element of formal organisations, or structures, which may include producers and also awarding bodies, who highlight quality literature and secure longevity:

An individual's judgment that a work is great does nothing in itself to preserve that work unless that judgment is made in a certain institutional context, a setting in which it is possible to insure the reproduction of the work, its continual reintroduction to generations of readers (Guillory, 1995:237).

Longevity of literature, including awarded literature, then depends on an institutional judgment that it is special and thus acclaimed and has a possibility of reproduction in the future. In relation to this dissertation, literary prizes and awards provide an institutional

judgment of quality but it must be recognised that, in the end, the decision to reprint is a producer's decision and it will be economically based. There are many examples of awarded children's books which have stood the test of time and been continually reproduced. In United States, *The Travels of Dr. Dolittle* (Lofting 1921) won the Newbery Medal in 1922 and has had many reproductions, the most recent being in 2001. In Australia, the award winning title *Possum Magic* (Fox 1983) has been reproduced many times over in its life of twenty five years. Obviously these books are award winning titles which have longevity and thus fit the criteria for Guillory's canon—formation. However, to justify reprinting they must also have been judged as having a potentially profitable market. Some awarded books may lose the kudos of the award after a time but some will be so fine or popular that they will be preserved in the cultural fabric over time. Awarded literature has no guarantees concerning longevity and passage into the cultural heritage of a society. The consumption of such objects is so subjective that it is not predictable and so the absorption of acclaimed literature into the cultural capital of a society is equally unpredictable.

Connor (1992:234) argues that 'The critical definition of culture ... is orientated towards evaluation, which is to say, around selection, preference and judgments of quality'. Extending to an even broader determination, Lareau and Weininger (2003:569) state that 'Our [new, broader definition of cultural capital] emphasises micro-interactional processes whereby individuals' strategic use of knowledge, skills and competence comes into contact with institutionalised standards of evaluation'. For culture, the authority of the awarding institution in terms of award evaluation is an important variable. As well, Guillory recognised that literature, awarding institutions and consumer elements embody some level of systematic control and regulation and so the formation of literary canon cannot be a completely democratic process (1995:238). In summary, cultural capital encompasses deep knowledge, insights, new understandings, identification and imaginative growth as well as technical and academic skills, the growth of discernment and evaluation, ability and talent. These are the product of an investment of time and experience.

Scholarly literature relating to the recognition and development of cultural capital has proliferated since the work of Bourdieu (Lareau and Weininger 2003:569, Connor 1992:234, Bennett and Savage 2004:7-14, Swartz 1997:76, Savage et al 1992, Skeggs 1997, Treiman 2002). In this development, new insights and understandings have emerged – one example is the writing of Bennett and Savage who suggested that the 1990s saw a belief in the notion that spreading cultural capital might help achieve more inclusive forms of cultural citizenship and influence policy making (2004:9).

The fundamental concepts derived from these theorists and critics inform an understanding of the contribution awarded children's book titles make to the creation of cultural capital. Children's literary titles are simply a specialised category of literature and awarded children's literature is simply acclaimed 'quality literature' according to specific criteria at a particular time. Though Bourdieu and others did not write or hypothesise about awarded children's literature, as literature such titles may form part of cultural capital. Guillory's view of the literary canon takes Bourdieu's view of culture, including literary culture, to a final stage of community respect with a long term presence. In research within Australian, some contextual adjustment of thought will apply to the findings of these theorists.

2.2.3 James English: Reality in a Contemporary Award Environment

English, offers important elements of critical analysis to the field of literary awards in his *The Economy of Prestige* (2005a) when he examines the canvas of awarded literature for adults in America. He offers a contemporary, analytical perspective on these awards. His perceptions present a dissection of an important segment of literary culture with all its dilemmas and contradictions:

Under [certain] circumstances, cultural prizes can be, at one and the same time, both more dubious... than they used to be and more symbolically effectual, more powerfully and intimately intertwined with processes of canonization. That is the central paradox of our contemporary awards scene (English, 2005a:216).

His work has acted partly as a model for the examination undertaken in this research. He uniquely dissects the award economy of contemporary America, analyzing the historical background, academic insights and contemporary media coverage in the context of adult literary awards in America. English's writing embodies analyses of the part played by awards in the cultural fabric of a country. Each element of culture builds upon the past stage and though specific details might be forgotten over time, each adds to the cultural amalgam that is part of a cultural continuum.

Early in *The Economy of Prestige* English identifies the ambivalence surrounding awards:

The custom of awarding prizes, medals or trophies to artists [and writers] .. is both an utterly familiar and unexceptional practice and a profoundly strange and alienating one. It is familiar inasmuch as it has a long history dating back to at least the Greek drama and arts competitions of the sixth century BC... Yet it remains a strange practice inasmuch as we continue to be discomfited by what seems an equation of the artist with the boxer or the discus thrower, by a conception of art as a contest ... from which there must emerge a definite winner... (2005a:1).

Despite this paradox, English demonstrates that there is a proliferation of awards, most specifically in the USA, for literature and the arts, as well as several layers of response to these awards and prizes, affecting the author/creator through to the individual consumer. He also recognises the separation of the economic and cultural variables along a continuum, ranging from the personal impacts on the winners of awards through to the impacts in the national economy and the cultural history of a nation (2005a:4).

English sees capital as an expansive term, much larger than the accepted economic sense, defining it as 'anything that registers as an asset and can be put profitably to work in one or another domain of human endeavour' (2005a:9). He stresses a close relationship between the economic and the cultural forms of capital. Accordingly, literature is part of the field of cultural capital. Prizes or awards can be seen as effective institutional agents of 'capital intraconversion' where, in a very tangible progression, gaining an award may bring an immediately heightened demand for the winning title and a surge in demand for the author's previous works. English shows that short term impacts may be followed by

subsequent rounds of impacts, though the transactions are continually contested and adjusted with complex interests and conflicting market forces at work (2005a:10). Some of the impacts, such as extended volumes of sales, are economic while other impacts, such as enhanced reputation and prestige, may be non-economic.

According to English, awards and prizes for literature perform many functions. Socially, awards can be a structural device around which cultural events and formalities may be organised. The award announcement attracts media attention, celebrity moments (even 'Hollywoodization' : English 2005b:160) and brings together a range of cultural players such as publishers, illustrators, authors, teachers, parents, children, librarians and academics who might not normally acknowledge each other closely.

As well, 'Institutionally, the prize functions as a claim to authority ... to produce cultural value...[a] distribution of esteem and reward on a particular cultural field [regarding] ...what may be recognised as worthy of special notice' (English 2005a:51). Thus awards and prizes signify a cultural measure of quality and value. Guillory comments that '...it has always been in the interests of the scholar-teacher to discover and preserve the best works ... precisely in order to fulfill their institutional function of disseminating that knowledge we call literacy' (1995:240). In the context of this research, awarding institutions include bodies whose *raison d'être* is to judge quality children's literature according to their prescribed criteria. Their selections may be ephemeral or they may demonstrate value for all time, moving the awarded title into literary canon status. Longevity has to be bestowed by the readers and is beyond the brief of the institution. Guillory goes on to show that such institutions only survive as long as they meet the demands of consumers (1995:243). Thus judging panels are a social construct of a particular time period and their judgments or evaluations of literature are not only constrained by the criteria they work under but also the timeframe and the acceptance of their authority by consumers. From the perspective of awarded children's literature at a less exalted level than canonisation, prize winning titles will, year-by-year, add a cumulative institutional judgment of quality to the elements which comprise culture.

Overall, English postulates that art and literary awards have three distinct outcomes. First, prizes contribute to cultural capital where the object, such as an awarded book title, becomes lauded as excellent quality. This could be called the commodification of culture which is similar to Bourdieu's objectified cultural capital. Second, awards contribute to cultural capital via the economy of prestige where fame and exposure through the publicity relating to the prize, media attention, journal reviews and the other means of highlighting a winning title, act to create a cultural environment around the author or illustrator which has multiplier effects within the literary culture. This can be termed symbolic cultural production. Third is the economic outcome which, for awarded literature, is partly prize money, partly post-award sales and orders for backlisted titles (English 2005a:75).

English points out that the outcomes for most awarded works are a package of rewards so that while prize money may be substantial, it is not the totality of an award. Prize money is partly symbolic and for producers of winning titles, there are other quite distinct sorts of value which circulate in other markets (2005a:156). In the case of children's literature, the 'prestige' element within the 'cultural' market and the on-going economic market, reflected in post-award sales, are important, interrelated, interactive, dynamic and symbiotic. English insisted that there has been a '...complex history of the relationships between the different forms of capital, the different markets and the different hierarchies of value whose interactivity, effected in part through the agency of prizes, enables cultural production' (2005a:329).

The relationship of the commercial and the cultural elements in the production, sale and consumption of awarded literature is a reality but not one which most of the affected individuals or organisations would discuss in detail. Confidentiality may be one of the reasons but some unease may also contribute. English writes that...

Part of the standard wisdom about cultural prizes is that they have furthered the dilution of cultural or aesthetic value by commercial value; they have helped to bring about an ever closer alignment between the works recognized as 'best' or 'most important' and those which are simply the bestselling or most popular (2005a:329).

This idea is anticipated by Bourdieu when he argues that economic power over the 'instruments of consecration' has never been as wide and deep as it is today (1986:347). However, in following the fortunes of prestigious awarded titles in the USA, English shows that since the 1960s, only one of more than thirty winners of the Pulitzer Prize has been associated with significant commercial success. English concludes that, in fact, there has been a dilution of economic (commercial) value over time for award winners (2005a:331). But, in the field of children's literature, this evidence cannot be left uncontested: winning a Newbery Prize for Children's Literature is said to guarantee 100,000 copies in hardcover sales in the first year and significant ongoing sales for years or even decades afterwards (English 2005a:360). Many American bookstores have a specialised Newbery or Caldecott section in their stores, where these books are seen as contemporary classics.

2.3 Parameters in the Research Project

This project investigates the outcomes of the book award process. It identifies children's awarded literature as its focus and relates this to stakeholder-cohorts, the role of awarding institutions and the outcomes for cohorts. From this basis, it develops views on the nature and scope of the book award scene, the particular ways in which awards in Australia operate, the efficacy of book awards as evaluative tools and community awareness of book awards and their criteria.

2.3.1 The Debates and Controversies

Surrounding the children's literary award winning environment both in Australia and overseas, is a wide diversity of perspectives, views and criticisms of the award process and winning titles. In recognising the regular debates which follow book award announcements in Australia, author and critic McVitty writes that 'In the children's book world a topic guaranteed to generate more heat than light is Book Awards' (1980:4)

Critics in Australia have debated book award issues – the process, the judges, the choices of winning titles (Murphy 2004:11). Much of the debate centres on the merits of adult-judged and awarded titles which did not prove popular with readers. In addressing this issue Fincher (1992:76) makes the comment that ‘Popularity does not equal excellence but ideally, in a perfect society, should reward it’, revealing that there is sometimes a perceived schism between ‘best’ books or ‘quality literature’ exemplified by award winning books, as opposed to books which are popular with children. Australian author, Gary Crew poses dichotomous questions when he wrote: ‘...must art and popularity be mutually exclusive? Must the novel of literary worth be too esoteric for popular readership?’ (1992:2).

Long-standing respected writers and critics of children’s literature in Australia, Alderman (1983:19), Morrow (2001:18) and Saxby (1987:16) agree that literary excellence is not always accessible to a wide child audience but they go on to make a powerful case for the importance of literary, merit-based judgments. They argue that such judgments are important for the growth of both literature and the child. In support of awards which highlight literary excellence, Tyrell (1987:22), Zahnleiter (1996:235), Macleod (1992:35) and McVitty (1983) assert that it is important to reward literary merit so that the margins of literary excellence can be stretched and tested and exemplary standards established. Awarded titles may not always be immediately popular and acceptable in the mass market but standards are tentatively set, high quality and groundbreaking work is rewarded with prestige and acclaim. Linning suggests that such awarded books in the hands of enabling and informed adults such as teachers and librarians, may, in the end, be the very titles that encourage children to grow (Linning 1995:7).

On the other hand, describing the CBC winners in a particular year, Grieve represented the negative stance:

Seven judges ... unerringly hone in on a book which is too adult, too difficult, not popular, forgettable or just plain boring when it is perfectly plain to any librarian and the entire population of Primary School X that the best book has, with short sighted obstinacy, been overlooked (Grieve, 1987:1).

Such a view is not unique to any year's awards. Critics and academics such as Bauer and Sanborn (1981:53), McVitty (1981:15), Stodart (1982:8), Alderman (1983:17), Linning (1995:4), Hillel (1995:4) and Scutter (1995:16) have analysed and criticised the CBC judging process, acknowledging a belief that there is a conspiracy or hidden agenda related to the final choice of winning titles. Commonly critics allude to political correctness though the same criteria have endured for decades. The underlying problem of community lack of knowledge and understanding of awards and CBC awards in particular is fundamental in this contentious environment. This is discussed in Chapters 10 and 11.

Awards fall into two broad categories with regards to judging, adult judged awards and children's choice awards. Some critics of the adult-judged awards assert that children's-choice awards avoid the negative issues associated with adult-judged award issues. In support of children's choice awards, Kimmel (1982:42), Leeson (1985:47), Bell (1998:10), Rolfe (1985:1) and Knudsen (1982:16) feel that the stance of adult judges awarding quality children's literature is a mistake when the overriding priority should be engagement of the child-reader. Hunter (1999) suggests that children's choice awards give a voice to children's tastes, encourage child-reader discussion, imply value and respect for children's favourites and stimulate youthful criticism.

LaMarca (1994b:133), comparing the reporting of the adult-judged national CBC awards and the children's-choice State YABBA award, lays the origin of the debate at the feet of media coverage: '...the majority of media attention... emphasises the obvious differences between the books that win the CBC Book of the Year Award and the books that win YABBA...' while Zahnleiter (1996:236) takes the debate to a middle ground suggesting that 'what was or was not short listed and what did or did not win is a healthy means of ensuring discussion' which these authors imply is justification enough for the diversity of awards in Australia. LaMarca (1997:47) and Bauer and Sanborn (1981:56) come to the conclusion that, overall, children's literary awards contribute to the evaluation of children's literature, reflect contemporary standards and operate in a field can include both adult-judged awards and children's choice awards. In this dissertation, adult

selected awards and child-reader-popularity awards are included in the scope of awarded literature and analysed for impacts. It needs to be remembered that even in the adult-selected award criteria, engagement of the child reader is one of the stated criteria.

A further debate reflects the relevance and perceived diminishing value of awards. Australian critics such as Crago (1991:14), Bennett (1999), Foster, Finnis and Nimon (1995), Sheahan (1996:22) and Mappin (1992:162) list and discuss the very wide range of children's literary awards, covering adult-judged awards, children's choice awards, special interest and genre based awards. While the Australian literary environment is not as congested with winners as the American one, it seems that some Australian critics feel that there may be too many awards which undervalues them all. Mappin (1992:162) comments on this proliferation of awards, stating that 'We seem to be getting more and more awards all the time and I have a feeling that each time we initiate a new award it devalues to some extent the other awards which already exist', while Appleton, as a representative of the media, reports confusion over the whole business (2009:33). Murphy (2004:20) concludes that the creation of more awards does not necessarily increase the benefits. These comments tally with those of English. He quotes others who hold the opinion that there are now more literary prizes in USA than there are writers and that attending a literary function reveals that almost everyone has an award of some kind or another and that there is a congested field of winners (English 2005a:325). However, another critic presents a converse opinion. Kirk (1992:150) argues that the Australian literary scene is enriched by a diversity of awards though she feels that one of the challenges of this diversity is the lack of understanding of the nature and criteria embodied by each of the award types. She feels that the awarding bodies have a responsibility to inform about the nature and criteria of awards and that the awarding bodies also have a responsibility to apply the criteria transparently in their choices for awards. Research, in the chapters which follow, will investigate whether the major Australian children's awards still maintain relevance and evaluative influence.

The fact that most of the awards studied in children's literature in Australia have lasted for a considerable period means that they perform a function which a significant body of

people respect. For publishers to enter works for judging each year involves some cost and the balance sheet this has to offer some potential for recovery or better. In the case of the CBC awards, publishers contribute \$88 per book entered for judging plus ten copies of each book (Hamilton 2009) and this may impact on the organisation depending on the scale of operations. As McVitty pointed out, for producers ‘... the most obvious and tangible effects of winning major book awards are measurable in sales figures and bank balances’ (1982:16). Linning (1995:4), Alderman (1983:17), Ball (1992:188) and LaMarca (1995:16) all list producer outcomes from winning a book award as increased sales, boosted self esteem, prestige, enhanced professional credibility and peer acceptance and Klein (in James 1999:5) comments that an award “...buys you time to write”. The CBC awards, in particular, are seen as highlighting contemporary, quality children’s literature, rewarding authors and establishing literary benchmarks (Nieuwenhuizen 1996, McVitty 1982:16) and in thus bestowing the acclaim, they attract attention in the media and the children’s literary market in general. Adding to this, Mappin (1992:162) reflects that ‘In a world rapidly sliding into mediocrity the awards serve as pointers, indicators of what can be achieved’.

A concluding issue for this research relates to the currency of the awards process. Some critics feel that criteria which have not essentially changed for decades, offer a recipe for irrelevance, advising that ‘Staying on the roller-coaster of change is essential for survival’ (Zahnleiter 1996:237). The aims and criteria structures tend to be immutable but the detail, the interpretation and contemporary perspectives can show some elasticity. Because judges change, timeframes and cultural contexts change, new views are presented and altered interpretations of literature reflect a new context. In speaking of the CBC awards, Zahnleiter felt that the CBC had made adjustments but ‘It has to become proactive in the face of change if it is to maintain stability, integrity and vitality as an organisation and if the awards are to continue to grow and flourish’ (1996:238). These debates remain active. Chapter 11 develops some of these issues.

2.3.2 Affected Populations

In the design of this research project, the selection of the affected populations was a significant task facilitated by the pilot project. Scholar, Robert Stake, points out that 'The search for particularity competes with the search for generalisability' (in Denzin & Lincoln 2000:439). He went on to discuss the reasons for developing cohorts based on atypical characteristics, experiences, relationships and their relationship to the research focus. He quotes researchers such as Denzin (1989), Glaser & Strauss (1967), Herriott and Firestone (1983) and Yin (1989) who support generalisation-producing studies, but also honours the particular, idiosyncratic responses of the case study approach (Feagin, Orum & Sjoberg 1991, Simons 1980). Stake calls this 'thick description' and values it highly (in Denzin & Lincoln 2000:439). He and others saw case studies as small steps toward grand generalisations (Campbell 1975:178, Vaughan 1992:173). The methodology adopted for this research values personal responses as significant principles.

The context of each respondent was crucial to their response. As Lincoln and Guba point out (2000:163), social phenomena, human dilemmas, opinion-formation and the nature of individual cases are situational and influenced by happenings of many kinds. As well, in an evolutionary way, research organisation takes place around issues or intrinsic criteria with regard to the framework of variables. While trying to find some commonalities between a field of affected individuals and organizations, there is a tension between the detail of case-by-case studies and a degree of generalisation which could make the research workable (Becker 1992:205). Direct personal responses embodying triangulation which corroborated evidence, led to decisions about cohort-formation. Stake called this 'teaming' (2000:445). Literature which focuses on affected cohorts in terms of awards was very sparse and this supported the need to identify relevant cohorts and explore their experiences. The cohorts were authors, publishers, booksellers, public librarians, teachers and teacher librarians and public librarians.

LaMarca, investigates the role and importance of enabling adults, particularly teacher librarians in the presentation of literature to children (LaMarca 2003) but she also refers

to other ‘enablers’ such as public librarians, parents and teachers. In Britain, Chambers, refers to the importance of creating a reading environment which involves all these enabling adults (1991:Ch.2 & Ch.17). Gillan researched children’s responses to award winning literature in Australia using case studies (Gillan 1983) and similarly, her reflections offer insights into affected cohorts. These studies, as well as those of Rowe (2004) and Turner (1989:195) add to the original pilot study findings. This preliminary study revealed groups of affected people who shared a particular perspective with regard to the announcement of a children’s book award and when analysed these people’s experiences coalesced into six groups. The scholarly literature and the results of the pilot study, informed the decisions concerning which affected cohorts would be studied.

2.4 Conclusion

The above discussion provides the context for the research work which is reported in the following chapters.

A survey of literature revealed scholarly analysis of the relationship of quality literature to the growth of cultural capital. The belief that awarded children’s titles are a measure of quality at a moment in time will be challenged each time an awarded title is announced. Research results reflecting this in the following chapters will add to the discussion embodied in the research. Each awarded title has the potential to act as a building block in the mix of elements that comprises our culture and, in this regard, children’s literary works act in the same way as adult literary works, reflecting what has been judged as quality literature of that time.

Chapter 3

Methodology: Paradigms, Strategies and Tools

*Postpositivism relies on multiple methods as a way of capturing as much of reality as possible*⁷.

3.1 Introduction

Chapter Three demonstrates how research was undertaken to find evidence relating to the focus and contributory questions. The pilot study indicated some approaches and cognisance was taken of the interviews to blend the task of the research with the relevance to the cohorts.

The original paradigms of the project underwent significant adjustment in recognition of the complex relationships. Cohorts represented a diversity of populations and experiences. The research structure thus had to provide a clear scaffold for exploring the issues with a pathway toward meaningful, insightful outcomes. As Guba argues:

[cohorts] are constructions [and so] paradigms inevitably reflect the values of their human constructors. They enter into inquiry at choice points such as the problem selected for study, the paradigm with which to study it, the instruments and the analytic mode used, and the interpretations, conclusions and recommendations made. (1990:23)

The pilot study clarified which were the relevant populations to investigate, the kind of sampling that could be used, the method of obtaining data, the kinds of questions which needed to be asked, the vocabulary which was most appropriate and the practical issue of how the relevant people would be approached. The pilot study revealed that each cohort had specialised interests and questions asked of them had to be relevant, to maintain their interest, and the vocabulary used had to be appropriate. This is a postpositivist approach

⁷ Denzin and Lincoln, 2000:9

where reality is paramount and design admits the diversity of the relevant populations and their perspectives (Denzin and Lincoln 2000:369).

It would have been simple to have had one structured, commonly applied questionnaire across the selected, designated populations. However, because of the diversity of affected cohorts and the wide disparity of their interest in book awards, the paradigm evolved into six mini-projects, each with a discrete questionnaire design. Only a few common elements were retained across the questionnaires. The cost of this restructuring was that the possibilities for cross-cohort comparisons would be rendered more difficult but the anticipated benefit would be that relevant, useful data could be collected from the targeted populations.

3.2 Ethical and Moral Precepts

In formulating a research project, an ethical and moral context underpins the work. Chambers (1985:115) examined ethical issues inherent in the conduct of a research project. Chambers (2000:863) categorised essential elements in an analysis of research methodology: these were ‘accessibility’, referring to openness with participants in the research process and the reporting; ‘relevance’, relating to research activities and participant interest; ‘significance’, embodying the importance of the research to participants; ‘credibility’ which refers to a high standard of implementation and respect for the stakeholders/participants; and a final ethical value, which Chambers (2000:863) called ‘prospect and judgment’. This last criterion moved the interest from the present to the obligation to offer participants and stakeholders an insight into some future benefit, improvement or new perspective. Other scholars and ethicists focused on informed consent, avoidance of any deception or contrivances and confidentiality (Fluehr-Lobban 1994:1, Bulmer 1982:217). These values offered a guiding philosophy within which to work.

Another pertinent view recognised that the qualitative researcher is not an entirely objective, authoritative, politically neutral observer. He/she is situationally positioned

and in using dialogue, either in spoken or written form, there is a plurality of meanings which arise from the discourse, mode of questioning and the interpretation of the responses (Lincoln and Denzin 2000:1049, Bruner 1993:1, Abram 1996:269, Christians 2003:3, Kittredge 1996:4, Macnaghten and Urry 1998:7, Lankshear and Knobel 1997:2). In assembling evidence Lincoln and Denzin argue that

the representation becomes the art ...[where] as bricoleurs, we all know we are not working with standard issue parts ... and so we cobble... The moral imperatives of such work cannot be ignored. We face a choice... of declaring ourselves committed to detachment or in solidarity with the human community (2000:1061).

Lankshear and Knobel (1997:7) introduce the concept of the 'use value' of research, similar to Chambers' 'prospect and judgment', referred to above. This alludes to the time and effort which participants will give and the imperative that this should be for a useful purpose, meeting a want or a need. This purpose can be on a practical level or a deeper or philosophical understanding of an issue which will extend the body of knowledge.

3.3 Broad Methodological Foundations

This targeted enquiry involved, from the beginning, recording the voices of affected cohorts. From the available tools, the questionnaire format was chosen, involving a mixed methodology of quantitative and qualitative responses for analysis.

Quantitative responses have a long scientific tradition but qualitative evidence has been more controversial. The dualistic tradition debate suggests that quantitative and qualitative approaches represent opposite ends of the spectrum. Generally, concerns have centred on reliability and bias of qualitative data (Brannen 1992:3, Glaser and Straus 1967:38, Hammersley 1992:39). However, post-modern approaches view expedient qualitative methods as representations of reality (Denzin and Lincoln 2000:184, Punch 2003:42). To this end the qualitative researcher can be seen as a *bricoleur*, a maker of quilts where the bricolage exists out of respect for the complexity of the lived world (Kincheloe and Berry 2004:2). The bricoleur attempts to deconstruct an experience by allowing expression of the event and the influences and ramifications of the event (Berry,

Ch. 5 in Kincheloe and Berry 2004). The same concept is developed by others who saw the metaphor in terms of a montage (Levi-Straus 1966:17, Weinstein and Weinstein 1991:161, Nelson *et al.* 1992:205). This bricolage or montage is a postpositivist technique, supported by Becker (1998:2) when he asserts that

whatever strategies, methods, or empirical materials are at hand [are used]. If new tools or techniques have to be invented or pieced together then the researcher will do this. The choices as to which interpretive practices to employ are not necessarily set in advance.

Nelson *et al.* (1992:205) adds that ‘... the questions depend on their context, what is available in the context and what the researcher can do in that setting.’ Bryman (1988:94) and Punch (2003:42) conclude that combining quantitative and qualitative methods capitalises on the strengths of both and compensates for the weaknesses of both (also Brannen 1992:3, Brewer and Hunter 1989, Creswell 1994, Miles and Huberman 1994:279). Both quantitative and qualitative elements were adopted in the research design.

This research follows an *ex-post facto* approach. Cohen *et al.* (2000) translate this as ‘from what is done afterwards’, meaning that the project is a retrospective investigation of effects following an event. According to Sayer (1992:242) a project of this kind exemplifies ‘extensive research’, concerned to discover some common properties and general patterns for a given population with a focus on ‘taxonomic groups’. Members of these groups share similar attributes but need not actually interact with each other. In this research project, this latter concept describes most of the cohorts, where respondents act independently with little or no interaction with others in the same cohort or between cohorts on a personal level.

This research can also be described as having a phenomenological perspective where the essence is the gaining of understandings through the telling of experience of events embodying both space and place (Robinson 1998:407). The educational thinker, John Dewey, always placed a high value on the nature of experience as revealed in narratives, transforming the commonplace or the personal experience into a valuable contribution to

real understandings, within a social context (Clandinin and Connelly 2000:2). It was important for this research project that there should be opportunities for respondents to freely express unique experiences. This data would then reveal evidence of experiences in common within cohorts and between cohorts as well as diversities.

Due to a developing awareness of the complexity of the cohorts and the diversity of interests that each cohort demonstrated, it was necessary to develop a strategic plan. Initially this was simply a sequential list (called the ‘Task’) though necessarily, tasks soon overlapped. As the project developed, the means of accomplishing the tasks were revised and refined to result in an action plan. It was also necessary to re-examine each part of the plan to test it for relevance and necessity. The questioning of the necessity for the action grounded the process. Table 4 summarises the steps undertaken in the implementation of the research and its reporting.

Table: 4

Outline of Research Design

Stage	Task	Action Plan	Rationale
1	Formulation of Focus Question	Assessment of past research, review of current literature.	To assess the volume of scholarly literature on Australian book award outcomes. Little evidence found.
2	Pilot Study	Informal interviews, professional conversations – phone calls, personal contact, e-mail.	Hypothesized stakeholders needed to be verified, hypothesised questions needed to be discussed for relevance, any unexpected areas of enquiry needed to be discovered
3	Identification of cohorts, decisions about sampling and geographic distribution of questionnaires, scholarly and professional periodical reading.	Synthesis of pilot study information, merging with a range of library and online research, planning a scaffold for thesis production.	Following the pilot study prior knowledge had to be merged with the new information for a valid grasp on the field, establishment of definitions, confirming a clear vision of the research direction.
4	Preparation of questionnaires	UNE research requirements needed to be observed and prepared. Some questions could be commonly applied across cohorts but unique questions needed to be adopted for different cohorts. Complex matrix developed so that each questionnaire was relevant for each cohort.	It was important that respondents were only asked questions which were pertinent to them. It was important that the respondent’s time was not wasted. Relevance was paramount for cooperation
	Continued over ...		

5	Approvals from University of New England (UNE) and Department of Education & Training (DET)	Applications to UNE. Approval number was given. Applications to DET based on UNE approval – authority given.	Research cannot be conducted without UNE approval. DET approval was sought so that research could be undertaken with staff and parents in public schools.
6	Distribution of questionnaires and organization of the relevant enclosures	Each package to contain relevant approval details, invitation to participate, reply-paid envelope. Postal distribution – two postings may be required. Encouragement to participate by telephone and letter.	Due to the geographic distribution of the six cohorts and the decision to survey both urban and regional sites, personal interviewing was not possible.
7	Library and online research	Library, databases, web searches, periodical searches, popular press, media, professional journals.	It was necessary to read as widely as possible to ascertain the scope of contemporary writing on children’s book awards.
8	Literature review, theorists and their applicability, analysts, historical foundations for children’s literature and children’s book awards	Discernment of relevant theorists, information relating to the literary foundations and the historical emergence of book awards for children’s literature, searches for contemporary critics.	Theorists underpin the analysis of reading and children’s literature. Children’s book awards narrow the scope of research to the valuing of awarded children’s literature by different cohorts.
9	Collation of results	Quantitative data assembly where appropriate, discourse analysis and packaging or bundling of similar responses within cohorts and exposure of diverse perceptions within cohorts from qualitative data.	Each cohort consists of diversity of respondents and a wide range of responses was expected. Quantitative questions would allow tallying but qualitative responses would be more demanding but were essential for complete understanding.
10	Analysis of results, resolving difficulties	Problems would be met as they arose.	Raw data needed - further personal depth needed to present a complete picture.
11	Planning thesis	Given the data collected, the structure of the thesis was finalised.	Many structures of the thesis were discarded before the clearest structure was decided upon.
12	Reporting	Chapters written.	Revisions were necessary to clearly report results and derive conclusions which relate to the primary and secondary questions of the research.

3.4 Formulation of Focus Questions

The composition of focus and contributory questions was the result of two processes. Firstly, the essence of the research was embodied in the initial focus question: What were the outcomes of the awarding process for children’s books in Australia? This was the impetus. However it quickly became obvious through the interviews and discussions during the pilot study that there were many associated questions and outcomes which

stretched both further in time and more widely in impact than previously imagined. These perspectives were essential for a complete picture of the field of outcomes. Thus the enquiry field came to embrace elements, such as the strength of the impact from different awards, the longevity of the impacts, the financial gains and non-financial gains which resulted from being awarded and other cohort-specific perceptions.

3.5 Pilot Study

In a pilot study to determine the affected populations, the relationships of these populations and the kinds of relevant questions which would apply to them, a series of interviews, through personal interaction, and by phone and online contact, was conducted. This required composing a list of hypothesised affected populations and a series of possible questions (see Appendix).

The purposes of the pilot study interviews for this research project included clarification of the most appropriate cohort classification, relationships and network connections; their discernment of, and interest in, children's book awards; the kinds of questions which would be relevant; cohort-specific perspectives and terminology which would be meaningful to the respondents (based on Oppenheim 1966:26). Representatives were approached and interviewed.

Approaches were made to publishers, editors, booksellers, book distributors and agents, workers in book sections of department stores, authors, public librarians, university librarians, school librarians, parents, children and young adults. The interviews focused on their experiences of the announcement of an awarded children's title. Some of the interviewees revealed a total lack of knowledge about, or interest in, awarded children's literature. The people responding with this view included sales assistants in the book section of department stores who were mostly unaware of awarded titles, and booksellers who were not interested in overseas awarded children's literature.

Interview notes were then used to structure the research project, assess the relevancy of lines of questioning and to check on the appropriate vocabulary for different populations. In interview engagement, it became clear that the motivation underlying the interviewee's interest in book awards was a matter of significance. Some participants spoke of awarded literature predominantly in economic terms and others in terms of evaluation of quality literature, interest, engagement and satisfaction. This clearly divided the participants into two distinct groups which were later described as 'producers' and 'consumers'. At a later stage, it also became clear that these two groups contained distinct subsets.

3.6 Identification of Cohorts

The division or bracketing of affected respondents was supported by Booth *et al.* (1995:162). In this research, all the respondents shared the experience of an announcement of an award winning children's book title but not always was this in the same moment of time and not always relating to the same award. What differentiated them into cohorts was their response to this experience.

The producers' group had a commonality of economic purpose and decision making which involved generating or maintaining their market share. The subsets of the producers' group comprised publishers, booksellers and authors, and these have been termed cohorts. While not overlooking commitment and deep interest, the producer group is driven by an economic imperative which dictates that profits must exceed costs and in the business of producing a book, an award will enhance this outcome.

The publishers' cohort contained only a small number of potential respondents because a review of the selected five year period revealed that despite the inclusion of a large variety of commonly accepted and known awards, only fourteen publishing organisations were involved. This did not support a sub-division based on the scale of operations or any other criteria.

The same issue of heterogeneity of scale or nature of operations, arose with booksellers though the issues were different: booksellers varied according to geographic location, whether they are part of a chain or an independent operator, whether they operate a shop-front business or offer customised supply, the degree of specialisation or the scale of operations. It did not serve a useful purpose for this research to sub-divide these either since the pilot study had revealed that interest in children's book awards was actually at quite a low level for booksellers on the whole.

The third producer included authors. They may not generally be thought of as economic producers and generally they were reticent about economic motivation, but they create a product and for continuance of engagement in their craft, commercial reality will be involved. They too encompassed a wide variety with disparate situations and perspectives, successes and experiences. Though each operated independently of the other, there was enough common experience to justify their aggregation into a cohort.

The other group was termed 'consumers'. The selected consumer cohorts for this research were public librarians, teachers and teacher librarians and parents. These cohorts were identified by Markless and Harlan as the 'literary gatekeepers' for children. Markless, writing of the school environment, identified teachers, teacher librarians, line managers and parents while beyond the school environment, he included government authorities, research bodies, professional bodies such as teacher associations, school administrators, the media, parents and public librarians (2009:14, 27). Not all of these gatekeepers were included in this research since the Australian context varies somewhat from that of USA. In the pilot study, these consumers or gatekeepers all expressed an interest in children's literature but none expressed views which had an economic element. Their concern was for literary education, study, analysis, review, appreciation, interest and curiosity or personal satisfaction. Each subset had identifiable characteristics and a unique story to tell. One of the elements in the clustering (bracketing or teaming) of consumers for this research was their sociological/educational role, such as that of a teacher, public librarian or parent, which generated a critical mass of unique perspectives. All the cohorts could have had further sub-division. Parents for instance, could have been

sub-divided according to the ages of their children while teachers could have been sub-divided on the basis of the ages of their pupils. However, it seemed that this would not add enough unique data to provide critical insights and after reflection, three consuming cohorts were decided upon – public librarians, teachers and teacher librarians, and parents. The issue of children as respondents in the research was discussed in 1.2.5.

3.7 Preparation of Questionnaires

In the preparation of questionnaires, some of the questions were dictated by the focus and contributory questions and the need to gain a complete picture of the outcomes. Other questions were suggested by the discussions which had taken place in the pilot study. It was essential that the questioning be relevant to the interests of prospective respondents. Each inclusion or exclusion was decided on the basis of three considerations: relevance to the foci of the research questions, relevance to each cohort and the likelihood of a meaningful response. The mix of both quantitative questions and open-ended qualitative questions in each section allowed for collection of precise data where it was possible and expression of all the shades of experience, viewpoint and opinion.

In early questions three-point scales narrowed the focus to offer robust evidence and lay a foundation for later sections. Later questioning required answers on a five-point Likert scale which would offer a wider range of responses with gradations from strength of agreement to strength of disagreement. The Likert scale is described as a bipolar method measuring a small, defined positive or negative response to a statement with ‘increased precision’ (Wuensch, 2005, Likert1932:1, Dawes 2008:61, Moge 1999, Wright and Masters 1982:136).

The open-ended qualitative questions, acknowledged the variety of participant experiences. It had become obvious from the pilot study discussions that there was such a subjective, ethnographic range of discursive elements that it was necessary to give space for these personal reflections. Lankshear and Knobel support a methodology in research

which involves a range of methods to offer substantive findings and realistic understandings which enable analysis (2004:118).

Table 5 demonstrates the initial scaffold for each section of the questionnaire.

Table 5.

Sections of the Questionnaire and Their Contents

Introduction (i) Impacts of overseas awards (publishers and authors only)	Asked if the respondent had won any overseas awards and how this impacted on their organisation.
(ii) Consequences of winning an overseas award (publishers and authors only)	Asked what the flow-on effects were experienced in Australia after winning an overseas award.
(iii) Setting the Context (for all except booksellers)	Asked for a rating of familiarity with a range of awards which are known in Australia.
Section A All Cohorts Basic experience of award announcement	On a simple 3–point scale respondents were asked for their overall rating of the experience of winning or the experience of hearing about and reading, a winning title.
Section B All Cohorts Strength of impact	Building on Section A, respondents were asked for a more specific rating of the strength of the impact following winning or hearing the winning announcement.
Section C Producers only Income generation	Producers were asked to estimate the percentage increase in income which resulted from winning a book award.
Section C Consumers only Promotional environment	Consumers were asked about the merit of the promotional environment which contributes to the impact, following the announcement of a book award.
Section D Producers only Kinds of non-economic impacts	Producers were asked about the intangible aspects (non-economic) that impacted on their organization after winning an award.
Section D Consumers only Recognition of awards	Consumers were asked to rate on a 5 point scale, the strength of their familiarity with a list of 23 awards, all of which are known in Australia.
Section E Producers only Economic significance of impacts	Producers were asked to discuss the economic significance of the win for their organisation.
Section F Producers only Non-economic significance of impacts	Producers were asked to discuss the non-economic significance of the win for their organisation.

From this overall framework, six dedicated questionnaires were developed.

Following examination of the unique nature of each cohort, six separate questionnaires were composed, related to authors, publishers, booksellers, public librarians, teachers and teacher librarians and parents. The experience of the pilot study offered perspectives informing the tailoring of the relevant questions for the different cohorts. An example is the deletion of questions relating to overseas awards when booksellers had expressed little interest in them.

Designing the questionnaire was informed by a range of scholarly advice (Gay 1992:219, Cheek 2000:408, Janesick 2000:382, Galloway 1997, Dillman 1978:58, Dillman 2000:25, Saris and Gallhofer 2007:16, Oppenheim 1992:100, Moser and Kalton 1979:262, May 2001:80, Knobel & Lankshear 1999:82). This information was synthesised to arrive at the final formats (see Appendix). On the basis of the pilot study it was decided that a timeframe of five years was appropriate for a participant's recall of experiences.

Table 6 indicates a refinement of the design to indicate the positioning of cohorts and their relevant sections.

Table 6

Matrix: Questionnaires and Cohorts

	Publisher	Bookseller	Authors and Illustrators	Public Librarians	Teacher Librarians and Teachers	Parents
Introduction	Discursive comment		Discursive comment			
(i) Impacts of overseas awards	Discursive comment		Discursive comment			
(ii) Consequence of winning an overseas award	Discursive comment		Discursive comment			
(iii) Setting the Context: exploring familiarity with awards	Table to complete		Table to complete	Table to complete	Table to complete	Table to complete
A: Basic experience of winning an award: 3-point scale	5 questions + comment	5 questions + comment	5 questions + comment	8 questions + comment	8 questions + comment	8 questions + comment
B: Strength of impact of winning an award: 5-point scale	5 questions + comment	5 questions + comment	5 questions + comment	7 questions + comment	7 questions + comment	8 questions + comment
C: FOR PRODUCERS ONLY % increase in income: 5-point scale	1 question + comment	1 question + comment	1 question + comment			
C: FOR CONSUMERS ONLY Promotional environment: 3-pt. scale				6 questions + comment	6 questions + comment	6 questions + comment
D: FOR PRODUCERS ONLY Intangible impacts: 5-point scale	1 question + comment	1 question + comment	1 question + comment + 2 questions			
D: FOR CONSUMERS ONLY Strength of recognition of 23 awards: 5-point scale				Table to complete	Table to complete	Table to complete
Continued over ...						

E: FOR PRODUCERS ONLY Economic significance of winning an award in Australia: 5-point scale	1 Table to complete	1 Table to complete	1 Table to complete			
F: FOR PRODUCERS ONLY Rating the intangible impacts: 5-point scale	1 Table to complete	1 Table to complete	1 Table to complete			

The design of the questionnaire was assisted by the recommendations of Robinson (1998:407) and Eyles and Smith (1988:1) to use a sliding scale from the least structured questions to the most highly structured questions in order to suit the purposes of the enquiry. The questionnaire sections move along this scale in a fluid way. Dillman (1978:125) also saw this progression as a logical, gradual perception of the topic, enabling a respondent to make cognitive links, thus encouraging answers which are better thought out and hence more valid.

Within the questionnaire, it was contextually necessary to compile a list of most commonly known children's book awards and awarding bodies in Australia, along with overseas book awards which carry influence in Australia. A list was compiled using published award announcements by professional associations such as ALIA, ASLA and the CBC. Additionally, commonly read professional journals such as *Literature Base*, *Reading Time* and *Magpies* were consulted as well as an Australian children's literature database, *The Source*. Some confirmation was gained from school and university databases and discussion with professionals in the children's literature field. Book awards in Australia embody a variety of awards determined in different ways by panels of judges, covering a diverse range of categories of children's and young adult literature, offering different prize money and exerting different strengths of influence. Some of these awards are judged by panels of adult experts while others are voted for as popular choices of the child or teenage readership.

Due to the wide-ranging locations of the relevant populations and the difficulties of personal contact, it was decided that posted questionnaires would be used. As Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias (1996:216) noted, there are advantages and disadvantages to the use of this method. On the positive side the cost would be relatively low, the researcher would exercise no personal bias, respondents could be entirely anonymous, and could take their time answering reflectively if they wanted to, and a wide geographic area could

be covered. However, the questions would have to be simple and unambiguous, instructions would need to be minimal, there would be no opportunity to develop interesting and valuable discussion to clarify answers, the researcher could not be certain who filled out the questionnaire and there would be a low response rate.

When the questionnaires were composed, parts of them were test-run on a number of the pilot study participants to assess the vocabulary and relevance to the participants. It was hoped that this strategy would reveal ambiguities and inappropriate vocabulary.

3.8 Sampling

The sampling for this project falls into the category of the ‘collective case approach’ (Stake 2000:437) where a researcher studies a number of cases to investigate a common experience, outcome or event. Such a process offers commonalities as well as a variety of experiences, diverse perspectives, reflections and deeper understandings over a range of possible respondents. Stake (2000:437), Flick (1998:50) and Silverman (1993) describe this as a form of triangulation where multiple perceptions are used to clarify meaning and to verify interpretations.

Following the construction of the list of the accepted Australian children’s book awards, a roll of authors and illustrators of awarded titles was compiled covering the previous five years. Because the list of children’s award-winning publishers was so small, numbering only fourteen publishers, it was decided to include all those publishers in the research sample. As well, to secure the widest range of author and illustrator responses from a very diverse output and range of genres and awards, it was correspondingly decided to include in the survey all authors or illustrators who had won recognised Australian children’s awards or prizes within the timeframe. Thus for publishers and authors or illustrators, there was complete coverage.

For other cohorts it was decided to sample an urban area (Newcastle) and a regional area (NSW Northern Tablelands) to encompass a cross-section of socio-economic and cultural

elements. At first this seemed a simple parameter to apply; however, for all the cohorts, except teachers and teacher librarians, further adjustments were necessary. The final disparity in geographic distribution for the six cohorts was governed by the necessity of obtaining balanced and reasonable cohort sample numbers (see tables below).

Publishers, authors and illustrators were Australia-wide in distribution and had 100% award-winning coverage. Booksellers were sampled from both urban and regional geographic areas with an extension for specialist booksellers. Sampling of booksellers offered some particular challenges. There were eight booksellers in the regional area, so this was matched with eight urban booksellers who were randomly selected from the urban area nominated. After pilot study discussions with booksellers an extension was added. Generalist booksellers suggested that specialist children’s booksellers would be better placed, having the greatest knowledge and perception of the outcomes following the announcement of a children’s book award. A search Australia-wide was undertaken and fourteen were selected. This was not simple: many bookselling organisations list themselves as specialist children’s bookshops but in fact they simply have a children’s section in their retail outlets. The specialist booksellers selected were commercial organisations which, as closely as could be ascertained, only dealt with children’s or young adult literature. Thus, the bookseller sample had three parts – urban, regional and nation-wide children’s literature specialists.

Table 7 summarises the final composition of the producer sample.

Table 7

Populations Surveyed in the Producers’ Group

Producing Cohorts	Questionnaires Distributed
Authors and Illustrators	n = 105 = 100% of award winners over the last 5 years in Australia.
Publishers	N = 14 = 100% of award winning publishers over the last 5 years in Australia.
Booksellers	8 urban (NSW), 8 regional (NSW), 14 specialist children’s booksellers (Australia wide).

The consumer group consisted of public librarians, teachers/teacher librarians and parents. Each of these cohorts also had sampling complexities.

The sampling of public librarians suffered from having too few potential respondents in the children's library management role in the selected urban and regional areas. To deliver a larger range of experiences and responses it was decided to survey 25 randomly selected urban children's librarians from an enlarged urban region (Newcastle-Sydney-Wollongong) and 25 randomly selected NSW country children's librarians (from regional NSW). More independent operations, a greater variety of experiences and a wider range of outcomes were likely from this enlarged research area.

Teachers and teacher librarians, as well as parents, were present in sufficient numbers in the selected urban-regional area. To maximise the socio-cultural diversity of these consumers, it was decided to sample through a range of public schools, independent schools and Catholic schools in these urban and regional settings. Contact was made firstly with the principals of the selected schools and followed by an approach to the teacher librarians in these schools. Teacher librarians were asked to distribute specialised questionnaire packages to three teachers and three parents. Anonymity was guaranteed and participation was entirely voluntary. This method of distribution is known as 'snowball sampling' (Black 1999:118, Kumar 1996:153, Fink 1995:22). The advantage of this method is that it is useful where there is no sampling framework within which to work due to inaccessibility of the population but the disadvantage is that there is no way of knowing whether the sampling is representative of the population and the researcher has no control over who is selected. This population was inaccessible to the researcher but was accessible to teacher librarians in schools where there was interaction with interested teachers and interested parents.

A major problem arose when too few questionnaires were returned from the parent cohort. Despite two approaches there were not enough responses. The sample was enlarged to include a range of parents from local sources. While this was less than optimal because it did not match with the planned urban/regional mix, the survey reached

a wide variety of socio/cultural/educational levels. This geographic extension of the sample still complied with the diversity of respondents sought.

In the distribution of survey questionnaires, the following matrix for the consumer cohorts summarises the final outreach:

Table 8.

Populations Surveyed in the Consumer Group

Consumer Cohorts	Questionnaires Distributed
Public Librarians	25 in urban NSW Public Libraries 25 in regional NSW Public Libraries
Teacher Librarians	10 in urban primary schools (Catholic, independent, public) NSW 10 in urban high schools (Catholic, independent, public) NSW 10 in regional primary schools (Catholic, independent, public) NSW 10 in regional high schools (Catholic, independent, public) NSW
Teachers	30 in urban primary schools- as above NSW 30 in urban high schools - as above NSW 30 in regional primary schools - as above NSW 30 in regional high schools - as above NSW
Parents	60 = urban parents in schools as above NSW 60 = regional parents in schools as above NSW + parents employed in a diverse range of occupations locally sought NSW

It was proposed at the start of this research, that teachers and teacher librarians would be researched as separate cohorts. However, during the pilot study it was recognised that a teacher librarian in a school is a specialist teacher with an extra portfolio of library management and so these two were grouped together within the same cohort.

To survey these six cohorts, six separate but related mini-surveys were constructed. There was enough common ground to enable comparisons but also enough difference to respect the unique ‘modus operandi’. Pratt and Loizos (1992:62) point out that this mini-survey approach has a better chance of being relevant, manageable and flexible and that the real concern is to ‘... give a representative account of the group of people studied’. This has been the underlying justification for the disparity in the size of the cohort samples and the geographic drawing areas. What was sought was an explanation of the outcomes from people who were affected by the announcement of a children’s book award, so that

merely matching sizes of cohorts was not an essential ingredient. Sampling options which could be applied to research situations such as this, were explored in Burns (1994:61), de Vans (1991:60), Dooley (1984:245) and Schofield (1996:25).

3.9 Approvals and Enclosures

Following the finalising of the questionnaire composition process, two approval processes for the research were completed: the first with the UNE Ethics Committee and the second with the NSW Department of Education and Training. These required consecutive applications and both took an extended period of time to gain approval.

The package presented to prospective respondents comprised:

- A letter of personal introduction intended to establish credentials, value of the project, authenticity and trust and inviting cooperation.
- An 'Information Sheet for Participants' which explained the research project and contained the relevant UNE 'Ethics Committee Approval Statement' and 'Approval Number'.
- A 'Consent Form for Participants'.
- A copy of The Department of Education and Training authority letter: this was only included in the package which was sent to public schools.
- The appropriate questionnaire.
- A reply-paid envelope.

3.10 Distribution of Questionnaires

Contact addresses for the three producer cohorts were found online. To access public librarians in charge of the children's library service, library managers were contacted in the first instance, seeking cooperation and requesting that they pass the included documentation to the appropriate staff members. Following a very poor response rate, a second round of distribution was undertaken, directly addressing the package to the children's services librarians. This was more successful. Schools were randomly selected

in the established urban and regional mix and contact was made, firstly, by letter to the principals, requesting cooperation and explaining that documentation would be sent to the teacher librarians and secondly to the teacher librarians directly enclosing a package of documents. Enclosures for the teacher librarian, three teachers and three parents were included in each package.

Researchers have shown that posted questionnaires almost always have poor response rates (Gay 1992:219, Dillman 1978:119) with Punch (2003:42) commenting that posted questionnaires commonly only have a response rate of thirty to forty percent while others felt that they frequently were as low as twenty percent (Fowler 1988:45, Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias 1996:230). Discussion and guidance with regard to self-administered questionnaires was offered by Alreck and Settle (1995:183), Babbie (1990:176), Braverman and Slater (1996:24), Czaja and Blair (1996:31), Edwards *et al* (1997:91), Fink and Kosecoff (1998:5), Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias (1996:216), Moser and Kalton (1979:61), Schofield (1996:25) and Suskie (1996:18).

Following the packaging and distribution of the research questionnaires and documentation, the responses were first collated for raw results, then subjected to interpretive analysis.

3.11 Analysis of Results

The only common threads which united cohorts were their interest in children's book awards and their function. Beyond that, respondents interacted with the book award process independently, formed personal viewpoints and judgments and the diversity was reflected in the responses. Even where response numbers were small because the potential population was small, as in the instance of publishers, diversity was still evident. For the larger response groups such as authors and teachers/teacher librarians, the diversity of responses was very wide.

For this research, tabulating the quantitative data offered a first step, allowing groupings of responses and postulation of reasons for differences. These are reported in each of the specialised chapters. Qualitative evidence was sought from the surveys to allow expression of depth and specific experience and the rationale for this is outlined by Glaser and Straus (1967:38), and Moser and Kalton (1979:262). Lincoln and Guba also write of the need for ‘textual revelation’ (2000:182) which alludes to postmodern discourse methods. Lather (1993:674) added that such methods highlight the dichotomy of validity and truth while Lincoln and Guba emphasise the importance of positionality, the judgments of discourse communities, the voice of the discourse communities and the inherently subjective nature of responses. Lincoln and Guba (2000:182) conclude that

Texts have to do a lot more work these days than they used to. Even as they are charged by poststructuralists and postmodernists to reflect upon their representational practices, representational practices themselves become more problematic.

Stimpson (1988:223) went so far as to say that representation itself ‘is a stew... a scrambled menu [and] it serves up several meanings at once’ .

An element of discourse is voice. Voice is an expanded concept moving from the spoken word and the interaction with a researcher to a variety of forms of communication which all claim to represent the truth (Hertz 1997:xi, Lincoln and Guba 2000:184, Tierney and Lincoln 1997). Through their voice, each respondent brings unique perspectives, expressed in a personal way as narrative discourses (Silverman 1998, Fontana and Frey 2000:645, Gubrium and Holstein 2000:487). Coffey and Atkinson (1996:47) described this end result as situated constructions shaped by conventions and understandings. To the extent that the researcher has to de-construct and re-construct the respondent information to enable meaningful reporting, it is a ‘construction’.

This diversity of narratives required study and analysis using discourse analysis. Discourse analysis is not a specific method but rather an approach to thinking about a problem. It attempts to be methodical about the deconstruction, reconstruction and interpretation of text to reveal the essence of the evidence. Potter (1997:144) and Prior

(1997:65) wrote of the interpretive repertoires employed in this process, while Cherryholmes (1988:3) emphasised that discourses are relative to time and space, all bringing an historical background with them. The discourse itself positions people within a contextual framework (Ball 1990:2, Wilson 1977:252) giving them a unique voice with personal interpretations. This approach allowed comments, reflections and narratives to be expressed to form the qualitative evidence in each section. In qualitative responses some were perceptive, reflective and encompassing while others were poorly answered, not well verbalised and sometimes poorly interpreted (challenges identified by Dillman 1978:58). In examining the language of discourse, in whatever form, the aim is to reveal thinking, feeling, believing, valuing and acting which validates the respondent's identification as part of a meaningful group with a culture, a voice and a context (Gee 1996:131, Marsh 1982:34, Luke 1999:167).

In discussing discourse analysis, Gubrium and Holstein (2000:499) used the term 'analytic bracketing' to describe a specific technique in discourse analysis. This interpretive practice involves linking responses which highlight the realities of the whats, hows and whys of everyday life to develop a construct and Gubrium and Holstein called this a new 'methodological hybrid'. As well, interpretation of qualitative responses required researcher-tolerance of a broad interpretation by respondents, in order to extract meaning. Tuominen (1997:350) called this 'user-centered discourse' and even though he was writing of the librarian-library client relationship there are applications elsewhere. The term applies to the analysis of discourse where the researcher is looking for the layers which will include hidden, subtle information provided by another. Wolcott (1990:121) suggested that idiosyncratic or unique characteristics of a study may well be the most important feature of such research. Results and analysis are contained in the dedicated chapters.

3.12 Methodological Issues

Problems included the lengthy delays in getting the necessary approvals to conduct the research, poor response rates requiring two or more approaches to potential respondents,

qualitative answers which did not fit the questions asked, a timeframe of five years which was not adhered to by some respondents and great variations in the detail of the qualitative responses from two or three words to several pages on a single question. Most of the replies were conscientious responses and many answers demonstrated significant commitment and valuable insights. Yammarino, Skinner and Childers (1991:613) write of the difficulties of dealing with diversity in data to arrive at any generalisations but it was recognised in this research that the diversity of experience presented the reality and offered a rich 'bricolage'.

The complexity of this project has been described mostly in terms of the composition of the cohorts. However, awards themselves also embodied a wide range of variables. For instance, awards are judged in different ways with various criteria and with diverse process frameworks. They offer varying amounts of prize money, levels of prestige, media coverage and sphere of influence. Further, some are judged by adult experts and others are children's choice awards. The questionnaires passed no judgments about the importance, economic value or worthwhileness of any of the awards or awarded titles, appreciating that what is a personal reward for one author/illustrator, a coup for a publisher, a stepping stone to deeply productive teaching or the inspiration for a wonderful display by a librarian, might be dismissed by another. This produced challenges in reporting the findings.

Unanticipated issues arose concerning the focus of questions on awarded books. The questionnaires did not refer to any particular awards but the majority of respondents spoke only of CBC awards except when specifically directed to children's choice awards. As well, almost all respondents interpreted winning titles in the CBC process as the shortlisted titles. The CBC announces their annual shortlist to some publicity over four months ahead of the winning titles. Authors and publishers are most excited about being on the shortlist and responses indicate that this is seen as being the 'prize'. Results show that winning other awards is rewarding in terms of prizemoney, especially the Premier's Awards which are financially generous, but overall these tend to be less influential in terms of ongoing sales and prestige. Librarians, teachers and teacher librarians indicated

that they use the shortlist as an evaluative tool or quality benchmark and that the eventual winner's announcement in Book Week in August is almost anticlimactic. Responses which interpreted the questions in this way were accepted as valid for the purpose of this research since they were so common to all cohorts.

In determining the timeframe of five years, the principal concern was to elicit meaningful responses from each cohort. The pilot project showed that participants' clear responses were contained to within a few recent years' experience and that the maximum would be five years. The timeframe thus decided upon put the frame of reference as 2003-2007 although unexpected delays meant that the distribution of questionnaires did not take place until 2008. Thus, this dissertation presents something of a retrospective view but from the comments in the responses it would appear that this is not a significantly damaging or limiting issue.

3.13 Conclusions

Every element of this research project embodied complexities and dealing with these in a methodical way depended on a clear strategy. The resultant six questionnaire designs had to reflect the complexities while remaining clear, relevant and unambiguous and at the same time, address the key questions of the project. The management of the data was another complex task, methodically recording and rigorously analysing, to report on the data, to interpret it and make some predictions for the future. The dominant need was to identify common responses while also presenting evidence of the wide diversity of responses from people who had had experience of an awarded book, both within cohorts and between cohorts.

In the following chapters, the responses for each cohort will be individually examined. Reporting will show figures for quantitative responses and these will be analysed. This will be followed by examination of the related qualitative responses. Analysis will employ some aggregation of those responses to demonstrate common elements and experience, as well as highlighting the unique responses.

Chapter 4

The Responses of Authors & Illustrators

*Cultural prizes can be, at one and the same time, both more dubious ...than they used to be, and more symbolically effectual, more powerfully and intimately intertwined with processes of canonization. That is the central paradox of our contemporary awards scene.*⁸

4.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on Australian authors and illustrators and their experience of winning a children's or young adult literary award. It explores not only the details of the awarding event but also the strength and significance, longevity and the economic and non-economic outcomes of their experience.

Authors are at the beginning of the production process, depending on publishers to undertake production and publicity of their work and booksellers to market the product to consumers. Between publishers and authors/illustrators there is a symbiotic relationship which is mutually dependent and hopefully mutually beneficial if one of their children's or young adult titles is awarded. However, the impact from winning an award is different for authors/illustrators and publishers in the nature, scale and strength.

Many authors' and illustrators' responses showed that winning certain awards was a significant financial boost, an affirmation of the quality of their writing or illustrating and a justification of their 'passionate' involvement. Their responses confirmed what English observed when he wrote of a relationship of economic and symbolic value through

⁸ English 2005:216

awards, even where there is little or no cash value because there is still the literary world's attention and respect which English termed 'prestige'. This symbolic value refers to rewards in terms of fame and reputation and authors and illustrators recognise these as currency (2005a:231). Authors and illustrators invest a great deal in their art and the return on their investment is thus economically based, personally gratifying and symbolically valuable. Responses reveal the differences between impacts on publishers and booksellers and impacts on authors/illustrators in regard to the same book award.

4.2 Defining the Cohort

For the purpose of this research, authors/illustrators are defined as Australians who have created or contributed to a piece of original children's or young adult literary work which has won a recognised award over a given five year period. The objective was to identify the outcomes experienced by these authors or illustrators following their success. One part of the outcome was the economic reward for time, effort, expertise and talent expended in the creation of literary works but this research also gave credence to those non-commercial outcomes such as professional recognition, peer respect, market recognition, increased media attention, invitations to events, conference engagements and literary festivals. In the short run the outcomes may include prize money, media attention and prestige, but authors hope for an extension of this in the long term in the form of post-award sales, invitations to conferences and other speaking engagements, inclusion on school lists or sale of overseas rights and the like.

The author/illustrator sample was the largest cohort sampled in the research project. There was a forty one percent response rate and many responses had attached pages of discussion on some issues although not all responding authors/illustrators answered all the questions.

4.3 Responses

Responses contained a diverse range of author/illustrator experiences and opinions. Quantitative data offered concrete reflections within limited options but the qualitative data offered personal, unique perspectives. Almost all the respondents cited the CBC awards as the most prestigious and rewarding.

Although only five years experience was the intended timeframe, many authors gave details from earlier years and some of this information is included. All authors and illustrators in the survey had won an award from an established list of awards, and some authors had won more than one award for their work. Many authors did not list every award they had won but limited their responses to the ones they considered major awards. Little over half the sample did not respond at all, so some awards are unrepresented.

In order to establish the context for authors/illustrators, the survey began with an introductory table for completion. The respondents could establish their credentials as an awarded author/illustrator and as well, the responses allowed a demonstration of the range of awards bestowed. The collated results are tabulated as follows:

Table 9

Awards Won by Author and Illustrator Respondents

n=41

AWARD	1997-2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
CBCA Older Readers				1	1	
CBCA Younger Readers	2		1			
CBCA Picture Books	1		1			
CBCA Early Childhood	1	1				1
CBCA Eve Pownell Award for Information Books		1	1		1	
NSW Premier's Award			1	2	1	2
Queensland Premier's Award			2	1	1	
Victorian Premier's Award						
WA Premier's Award	1	1	2	1	1	
SA Premier's Award					1	
Ena Noel Award			1		1	
Australian Booksellers Award		1				
Crichton Award for Illustrators				1		
Continued over ...						

Aurealis Award	1					1
KOALA Award (NSW)	7	2		1		2
COOL Award (ACT)		2	1	2	1	
BILBY Award (Queensland)	2		1	1	1	1
KROK Award (NT)	2	1		1	1	
CYBER Award (Tasmania)	1					
YABBA Award (Victoria)	4	2		3	1	1
WYARBA Award (WA)	2	1	1	1		2
YARA Award (Australia Wide)	2	1				
Family Therapist Award (Aust.)					1	
International Award (not specified)	1	1			2	1

To summarise the table, the responses from authors and illustrators in the period show that 41 authors or illustrators won 93 Australian awards in the period under consideration. Dissecting these awards further, 13 CBC awards, 17 Premier's Awards, 51 children's choice awards and 12 other assorted awards were won. Thus, a wide representation of awards is evident. The awards are not equal in terms of award criteria, prizemoney, judging processes or cultural impact and so the strength of impacts for authors and illustrators cannot be directly related to the number of awards. All cohorts reported that the CBC awards result in the strongest impact both from economic and non-economic standpoints; thus, regardless of the sample's figure of 13 CBC awards, which is fewer than Premier's Awards, these 13 awards are the most powerful bank of awards. The Premier's Awards are more generous in terms of prize money but do not result in the best flow-on effects in post-award sales of the awarded title.

The most recognised and prestigious awards in Australia are those conducted by the CBC. This organisation has been awarding in Australia since 1946 and currently contains five categories – Older Readers, Younger Readers, Picture Books, Early Childhood and Information Books. While there is prizemoney for author and illustrator winners, the real prize is being placed on the shortlist, with marketing and cultural environments regarding this as a sufficient recommendation to purchase the title. This is directly related to the nature and scale of the promotional environment which accompanies the CBC shortlist.

For authors and illustrators the state-based Premier's Awards are also prestigious, although the children's and young adult winning titles are often overshadowed by the

announcement of the adult literature winners. However, for authors these awards are financially valuable, offering the greatest prize money to winners. The relatively new Prime Ministers Awards for children's and YA literature will impact in the same way.

The children's choice awards carry acronyms such as KOALA, KROC and YARA and are State based in voting though open to any Australian work. They offer no prize money and responses show that they have minimal economic outcomes. In terms of the potential for on-going sales, they have the least impact. They are relatively small in scale, dependent on volunteers and children's librarians to promote them and often the announcement has minimal impact because it is not backed by media attention or marketing expertise. However, almost every author who responded that they had won a children's choice award expressed deep personal satisfaction with the knowledge that their book was voted for by the child readership in a popularity vote. This offered serious personal affirmation. These awards are built on the integrity of a child's choice. Some authors and illustrators commented that they did not know they had won such an award until some time after the event.

In addition, there is a range of specific awards which are relevant to social and community concerns. Examples are the Family Therapist Award and the Environment Award while others are specialised in terms of genre such as the Aurealis Award for horror and fantasy in young adult literature. These are gratifying for the recipients but like the children's choice awards, they have a lower level impact on authors/illustrators and minimal impact on the cultural capital of Australia.

Thus there is a wide spectrum of awards, all with different parameters and spheres of influence and an equally wide spectrum of impacts on authors or illustrators.

4.3.1 Overall Experience of Winning an Award: Section A

Section A of the questionnaire was designed to determine the basic impact on authors/illustrators following a winning announcement. It records a respondent's overall

response regarding their award-winning experience on a three-point scale, to set the context for deeper reflection to follow. The following table collates the responses:

Table 10

Impact of Winning a Children’s Book Award on Authors & Illustrators

n=41

Paraphrased Question	Very Significant	Not Significant	Somewhat Significant
1. Has winning been a significant professional event in your career?	23	1	10
2. Has winning been a strong motivational force in your work ?	16	7	12
3. Has winning seemed like a reward for your writing passion ?	21	3	11
4. Did winning significantly increase your income?	9	10	17
5. Does winning enhance your reputation and better position you for the future ?	19	3	13

These responses indicate that most authors/illustrators experience positive impact from winning. Since children’s choice awards are part of the mix of awards, some of the responses to Question 1 may reflect low impact outcomes since there is only personal satisfaction to be gained. Seven respondents did not regard awards as a strong motivational force in their work: later responses revealed that authors and illustrators have a high degree of passion and personal commitment for their craft and hopes for an award are not at the core of their motivation to write or illustrate. The responses to Question 3 reflect the feeling of affirmation for authors and symbolic value experienced. The indication of ‘somewhat’ and ‘not significant’ by over half the respondents for the question regarding the increase in income following the winning of an award may seem anomalous but this section of the questionnaire did not differentiate between awards and some do not involve any prizemoney. Economic rewards come initially, in the form of prize money and later, in both the short term and the long term, from post shortlist or award sales. Those awards with prizemoney, media attention and marketing make a significant economic impact on authors and illustrators while awards without these features are gratifying but do not offer a significant economic impact.

Many authors/illustrators added depth to this body of responses through their comments and discussion. Norman Jorgensen (author) commented that the ‘CBC award was the most prestigious even though the Premier’s Award has much greater prize money’. Louise Schofield (author) commented that ‘Children’s choice awards rarely offer any monetary prize but offer approval from the child readership’. This, in fact, summarises the dichotomy. While authors and illustrators welcome and need the economic spoils to enable them to continue with their craft, their philosophy regarding prizes and awards is also personally significant in terms of affirmation.

Authors and illustrators state that being placed on the CBC shortlist is the most significant event and winning the award for a ‘Book of the Year’ of secondary importance. One respondent offered figures: his work had originally had a print run of six thousand copies. Following inclusion in the CBC shortlist, another six thousand copies were printed by the publishers but when the title was announced as the winner, there was a demand for only a further one thousand copies. The respondent went on to state that being on the shortlist was what mattered to most buyers and that there was not the same level of publicity or marketing or general interest in the ultimate winning title. This is the practical side of the author/illustrator’s experience. From response evidence, the experiences of being CBC shortlisted include exposure in the literary market, increased sales, longer shelf life, media coverage/promotion and recognition, interest in previous writing, invitations to conferences and festivals and maybe overseas or professional journal interest. Author and illustrator Leigh Hobbs summed it up as follows:

This is all about exposure. The big value is ...

- a) people learn that your book exists
- b) people may then buy it
- c) people’s reputations are enhanced .. in certain contexts.

Many people in schools rely on the awards process as a guide to what is ‘good’.

Responses included comments about the tradition of placing a facsimile medal sticker on the cover of the shortlisted and winning books. This is designed to send a signal to purchasers concerning the special status of the book, and offer an objective measure of

quality and differentiation as each title faces a purchasing public. Responses from consuming cohorts confirm that this is a worthwhile practice.

Some of the non-economic outcomes listed lead to personal satisfaction and pleasure while others may initially be a non-economic outcome but lead to an economic gain, an experience which Anthony Eaton (author) related: ‘The main increase in income came ... not because of increased sales but from increased public speaking opportunities as a result of an increased profile’. David Metzthen (author) pointed to increased opportunities for travel, to speak at conferences. Others reported a surge in school visit bookings following an appearance or book launch at a conference. Others pointed out, pragmatically, having an award added a credential to their portfolio when applying for grants and it enhanced possibilities for overseas publication of their work which offered potential for increased sales and better positioning in the negotiation of contracts. Depending on the award, authors’ responses generally indicated a mix of outcomes.

Thus the value of the award is not fixed in time, place or economic value: each recipient’s experience is affected by the kind of award received and the level of publicity and marketing undertaken by the publisher, the ancillary opportunities which the award generates, the overseas interest, the prizemoney and the potential for generated, ongoing sales.

Author and illustrator responses were independent of each other and the spread of opinions was very diverse on almost every issue. This was evident, even in the responses to the simple questions of Section A. Libby Gleeson, added the variable of career positioning into the mix of award winning outcomes: ‘The earlier in the career ... the more significant it is’, explaining that after a long career as a successful children’s and young adult author, her award in 2007 was ‘... less significant because I was already established’. This was supported by several other established and successful authors: winning an award was gratifying but the impact for established authors was not significant. Of course it is impossible to know how successful a book would have been

without any award or shortlisting but in the opinion of the majority of authors or illustrators there were at least some positive impacts from the experience.

While most authors responded positively about their experience of being on the CBC shortlist or winning an award, some authors felt that winning some awards brought some personal satisfaction but not much else. Barry Jonsberg went a step further, responding that ‘The impact in all areas has been less than I anticipated’, and Joanne Crawford did not find any increased publisher interest in further writings after winning an award.

4.3.2 Strength of Impacts of Awards: Section B

Section B asked author/illustrator respondents to rate their experience as a winner on a five-point scale to gauge the strength of the impact for them personally. In this section there was no differentiation of the kinds of impact experienced. Table 11 collates the results:

Table 11

Significance of Winning a Children’s Book Award for Authors and Illustrators

n=41

Paraphrased Questions	Extremely Significant	Very Significant	Significant	Low Significance	Not Significant
1. How do you rate the significance of winning ?	15	9	4	4	1
2. After winning, rate the degree of motivation for future writings.	5	7	11	6	6
3. Rate the benefits (both financial & non-financial) of winning.	6	7	13	7	2
4. Rate the financial return as a result of winning.	2	9	9	8	6
5. How long does the impact of winning last ?	5+yrs = 6	4yrs = 2	3yrs = 4	2yrs = 11	1 year or less = 12

From these figures over half the respondents rated the experience of winning an award as ‘very significant’ or stronger. Although many authors/illustrators won awards which included prize money and the generation of ongoing sales, the qualitative responses

emphasised recognition, satisfaction, personal gratification, validation and encouragement to continue writing. David Metzthen went so far as to say that 'Winning is like a Boy Scout badge ... and awards cannot be taken from you .. so it's like an amulet against tough times'. However, authors reported that no matter how gratified, motivated or passionate they might be, writing does take time and they require an income. If financial rewards are not commensurate with the time and effort of winning an award, then their writing may not be sustainable. Questions in this section did not distinguish between economic and non-economic outcomes following an award and so answers were diverse and undifferentiated at this stage.

In terms of the longevity of the impact, some felt that there were outcomes following the winning of a book award, one of which included increased sales which extended for more than two years but nearly half the respondents felt that it was less than two years and some wrote that it could be a matter of a couple of weeks (or in one response, ten minutes). This could have a direct relationship to the kind of award won. Generally, responses showed that a CBC award offered the longest lasting outcomes and children's choice awards the shortest. These estimations correspond with the responses of publishers and booksellers in a triangulation of questioning and evidence. The pilot study had revealed the fact that the majority of sales of books which ultimately win a popular children's choice award, had taken place *before* the announcement of this award and so authors and others in the producer group may only experience minimal post-award impact. With adult-judged awards the principal surge in sales occurs after the shortlist or winning announcement takes place. When respondents were asked questions relating to general experience and longevity of sales, comparisons may have been difficult.

Many of the freely expressed comments which accompanied this section were not actually relevant to the section but extended and highlighted an understanding of the winning experience. Almost all the authors and illustrators wrote about the CBC process. The CBC shortlist is released nearly four months ahead of the winning announcement which heralds Children's Book Week. The shortlist announcement is accompanied by publicity which is a foundation for increasing consumer awareness and may include

author/illustrator appearances and signings, media attention, bookseller promotions, speaking tours for authors, illustrators and judges, displays in libraries/schools and other similar events. Authors' and illustrators' responses showed that purchasing decisions were predominantly made on the strength of the short list because these CBC listed titles were 'stamps of approval' for teachers, parents and librarians and most authors indicated that they felt that these consumers were the principal consumers in the shortlist market.

However, despite the dominance of the CBC process, most respondents also declared that winning any award, except for the children's choice awards, improves an author's/illustrator's prospects of attracting interest from an overseas publisher or inclusion on class lists and Higher School Certificate text options and this can add substantially to the shelf life of the book. This outcome was responded to more fully in the section discussing economic impacts. Winners of awards with prize money rated the experience as significant, with one author commenting that his prize was half a year's earnings. Authors/illustrators, who won CBC awards, also happily accepted the prizemoney and seriously celebrated the power and the value of the generation of sales and described this as being a 'de facto' prize. Writing of the Premier's Award, Barry Jonsberg commented that the prize money was valuable and the honour was gratifying but 'the award had little, if any, effect on sales'. Even winning substantial prize money was not always what it seemed according to three authors/illustrators: tax took more than a third of it and if there were co-authors or an author/illustrator collaboration, it had to be shared.

4.3.3 Economic Outcomes From Awards: Section C

Section C examined information about the impact on income of authors and illustrators through winning a children's book award. Many authors/illustrators have irregular and sometimes precarious incomes, and so a monetary impact from winning a book award may be financially significant. Respondents were not asked directly for income details but asked for percentage changes in their income over a period of five years. The results are tabulated as follows:

Table 12**Economic Outcomes for Winning Authors & Illustrators**

n=41

	1st Year	2nd Year	3rd Year	4th Year	5th Year
200% increase in income	3 authors/illustrators	1 author/illustrator	1 author/illustrator	0	0
100-199% increase in income	2 authors/illustrators	0	1 author/illustrator	0	0
50-99% increase in income	1 author/illustrator	0	0	0	0
25-49% increase in income	7 authors/illustrators	2 authors/illustrators	1 author/illustrator	0	0
0-24% increase in income	11 authors/illustrators	11 authors/illustrators	12 authors/illustrators	2 author/illustrator	1 author/illustrator

The dominant feature of this table is the strong response showing an increase in income of less than 24% for the three years following the winning of their award. This indicates that a significant number of authors and illustrators did not achieve a large surge in income overnight, following the winning of an award. It is possible that the authors or illustrators concerned did not win an award with significant economic benefits or it could be that the respondents were already very successful and so the economic outcomes were not dramatically significant. It is possible that the five respondents who replied that they had achieved a 100-200% increase in the first year of winning an award, may not have had high sales figures previously and so the award was a significant financial event. This was not ascertained from the survey. One respondent, who had received a 50% increase in income in the first year, received this boost through the prize money. Other respondents indicated that the increase in income was due to a combination of prizemoney, increased exposure, profile and generated sales. Another respondent who indicated that they had a 200% boost to his income during the third year after the winning award indicated that this was the result of a literature grant which was probably granted because he had won a book award previously. So, underpinning almost every figure in this table there is a context which was not entirely revealed in responses. What is clear is the rapid decline of the increases in income after two years. Only the lowest percentage increases in income continued longer.

Following a state-based children's choice award, the economic impact may be negligible when translated into a potential market since the votes for children's choice awards come after the event of reading the title. Some authors reflected that these winning titles may possibly have completed their shelf-life by the time of the winning announcement. Media promotion and publicity regarding these awards is not active and even winning authors themselves are sometimes not notified of their award.

The Premiers' Awards offer more generous prize money but generally the children's and YA title winners are not well publicised. One consequence of this is that the potential readership market is not as well informed and so sales do not dramatically surge. Although one author commented that the prize money he received for the Premier's Award was far greater than he could have hoped for from sales, most authors agreed that winning a CBC award brought less prize money than a Premier's Award but that the economic gain was in post-shortlist sales of the title. Thus, financial impacts are not immediate, uniform or linear.

One author felt that winning an award, which was not identified, did not significantly increase his income through sales in Australia, but after the award interest from overseas publishers substantially added longevity to the shelf-life of the book and potential sales overseas into the future. The same can be said for the sale of screen rights. These are purchased and may lead to screenwriting work on the book and royalties in the future. One award winner commented that his awarded book was not, in fact, his most successful book in terms of sales and so winning an award is not always a guarantee of economic success. However another author claimed that winning an award doubled his sales and opened doors to schools visits, festival workshops and conference presentations, each of which increased his income and also brought the bonus of the book being listed as a set class text for schools. A critical element for class text sales may be the kind of book which wins an award. An example is *The Running Man* by Michael Gerard Bauer (published 2004, Omnibus/Scholastic) which was then selected as a Higher School Certificate text supporting the theme of 'Belonging' (2005). This title won the CBC

Award of ‘Book of the Year for Older Readers’ and became a popular class text resulting in post-award school’s sales of up to thirty copies per order.

4.3.4 Non-Economic Outcomes From Awards: Section D

Section D of the questionnaire asked respondents to discuss the non-economic impacts of being an award winner. It asked them first to rate the intangible outcomes like the effect on their reputation or status, which accrued following their success. Generally, responses showed that non-economic outcomes are very important to authors and illustrators. Respondents were asked to explain these outcomes and elaborate on the kinds of promotional tasks and the degree of commitment which was expected of them. For some authors/illustrators the array of non-economic outcomes following an award was positive but for other authors/illustrators the outcomes brought unwelcome pressure, obligation and stress as a result of being an acclaimed creator. The positive responses indicated a potential for further developing their writing/illustrating career. Thus the outcomes and impacts were not uniform and not equally appreciated.

In this section, the evidence revealed that 93% of respondents felt that winning had produced at least some impact in a non-economic sense. Within this group 58% rated it as highly significant or extremely significant. The table below collates the figures for authors’ responses regarding the intangible benefits following winning a children’s book award:

Table 13

Non-Economic Outcomes for Winning Authors and Illustrators

n=41

Question	Extremely Significant	Highly Significant Impact	Significant Impact	Some Impact	No Impact
In terms of career intangibles (reputation, status, promotional obligations, etc) how do you rate the impact of winning your award?	9	9	5	8	2

The intangible elements of an authors'/illustrators' career include all the unquantifiable actions and outcomes which accompany an awarded literary work. The kinds of events and promotions which were listed by authors/illustrators included radio and television interviews, conducting writing workshops and attending arts festivals, school bookings, bookshop signings, readings, speaking or being part of panels at conferences. Many authors included increased numbers of invitations to schools and conferences, but it should be noted that these are not really non-economic outcomes since they would normally be paid at the Australian Society of Author rates. Most authors felt appreciated, reaffirmed and gratified to be so respected although there were a few negative comments. One author who had enjoyed the events commented that there were no negatives but that fame fades fast.

Other evidence of non-economic impacts which authors/illustrators offered included comments that after being shortlisted for a CBC award (or winning a CBC award), publishers treated them with more courtesy and respect, that conversations with publishers involved a greater acceptance of their ideas, that they could speak publicly with greater confidence, that winning an award opened up contacts with other editors and that time and editorial assistance were often offered for subsequent works. Public appearances have the potential to generate income and, often as a by-product, stimulate a flow-on of sales. Further outcomes, which repeated earlier responses, included a competitive edge in applying for fellowships, a quality addition to curricula vitae, a useful tool in applying for research grants, overseas invitations and encouragement of higher level aspirations: one author felt that it positively assisted in getting a placement in a doctoral program. Many authors repeated that the pleasures of winning an award were in terms of recognition, enhanced reputation, affirmation, self-respect, confidence, support, motivation, prestige and the like.

Nevertheless, some respondents did list negative aspects. One author complained that the children's book award typecast him as a children's writer when in fact he felt that his primary place was in the adult literary world. Several authors/illustrators contributed that a lot more was expected of a winning writer/artist which went beyond writing/artistic

creation and others spoke critically of the pressure of having to face the public more frequently. These authors/illustrators did not enjoy the radio, television or newspaper interviews and some also spoke of ‘enduring’ one or two hours of school work a week which was a trial – the emotional stress of this kind of promotion for some meant that it was a demanding outcome.

Some disaffected authors related that they were not called upon to participate in any events following their award. They reported that they were not even interviewed by the local paper or even invited to the local public library and felt that they had not been offered opportunities to ‘sell’ their book. This is possibly an issue with publishers concerning how they use their authors or the kind of book which had won the award. For instance, the book may have won a lesser known award, or may not have been the kind of text that makes a good focus for a talk. It is also possible that their publisher did not use these events to drive exposure and sales, or that the local media and library simply did not know of the award. A small number of respondents were very critical of the expectation for them to do promotional work at all. One author felt that there was an enormous amount of preparation in giving a one hour presentation and often it was expected by schools that it would be for free. In summary, for some authors winning was not an unadulterated pleasure.

The second question in this section asked about the kinds of promotional tasks undertaken, the on-going impacts and the time commitment. The kinds of answers respondents offered included being asked to contribute to anthologies of award winners and being invited to workshops. Even unpaid workshops were accepted by some authors if it seemed likely that there could be increased interest in post-award sales and back-listed titles or it could lead to invitations to bigger events such as literary festivals. In terms of invitations to children’s literature festivals, bookshop signings and conference speaking engagements, one author expressed a special appreciation for teacher librarian conferences because he felt that they did more to promote his books than actually winning an award.

Respondents reported that the time commitment for promotional activity varied from ten days (e.g., the Somerset Children's Literature Festival and the Ipswich Children's Festival) to a couple of hours and frequency was erratic. The most intense activity came soon after the CBC shortlist announcement. One winning author felt that it amounted to about two hours per week in an ongoing commitment but that this was a very small time commitment in an overall career. Another author commented that it was very intense for three weeks after the shortlist and award announcement but tapered off after that. John Heffernan, reported that he had been asked to many more festivals and conferences following his awards and that these were often valuable and sometimes fun. He puts aside four to six weeks per year for promotional matters. One author commented that the low and erratic income for authors/illustrators meant that time could not be given over to much unpaid promotional work and that invitations had to be declined except for selected volunteer commitments which in this case was a children's literature festival.

While this section focussed on non-economic tasks and outcomes following the receipt of an award, it was often mentioned that these tasks were undertaken because some unpaid promotions may result in profitable sales or engagements at a later date. A number of experienced authors commented that first-time winners seem to embrace it all and have the greatest challenge in balancing this aspect of the post-winning period while multiple, experienced winners find a way to deal with it professionally or they are confident enough to simply decline most invitations.

4.3.5. Perceived Economic and Non-Economic Impacts From Awards:

Sections E and F

Authors/illustrators strongly made the point that awards are not all equal in prestige or impact and that the kinds of impacts, both economic and non-economic, are diverse. Some authors/illustrators only had personal experience of one award and so, in an attempt to discern the whole cohort's perceptions and expectations of Australian awards, questions were asked regarding awareness of the range of possible awards and what impacts might be expected from them. Authors/illustrators were asked to rate ten given

Australian awards, firstly according to whether they thought that a range of awards would offer a potential economic impact and secondly, whether they thought that the same range of awards would offer a potential impact in terms of reputation, status and bargaining power. About one third of the respondents did not fully complete the table, offering the explanation that they didn't know enough about some of the awards to offer a view. A number of authors indicated that they simply wrote and waited to see what eventuated without expectations. Even over the range of awards which bring immediate economic rewards in the form of the prizemoney, there are still diverse outcomes in terms of post-award sales and commitments such as speaker engagements.

The Ethel Turner Prize and the Patricia Wrightson Award form part of the cluster of New South Wales Premier's Awards but are imbued with such high levels of respect that they are thought of as separate entities by the literary and professional community. They each award prize money of \$15,000. Despite this status very little media attention is focused on them and the reporting of the awards and recipients is mostly through literary journals. Thus for these awards, the economic outcomes do not extend far beyond the impact of the prizemoney. This contrasts with the experience of CBC award winners.

The following table shows the perceptions of economic impacts held by authors and illustrators, for common awards in Australia:

Table: 14

**Perceived Economic Significance of Awards for
Authors and Illustrators** n=41

Award	Extremely Significant Economically	Very Significant Economically	Significant Economic Benefits	Somewhat Significant	No Economic Significance
Children's Book Council of Australia	12	8	7	6	0
YARA (National Children's Choice)		1	4	7	10
Nan Chauncy Award		1	4	7	8
Aurealis Award (for science fiction, fantasy & horror)		2	7	7	6
Ena Noel Award (for new writer or illustrator)			3	6	10
State Children's Choice Awards – KOALA, KROC, WAYRBA, YABBA, BILBY, COOL, CYBER, KANGA		5	5	11	6
Continued over ...					

Ethel Turner Prize (for young adult literature)	3	1	9	5	5
Patricia Wrightson Prize (for children's literature)	3	2	8	6	6
State Premier's Awards	4	4	10	5	5
Crichton Award (for new illustrators)		2	6	11	3

A majority of authors/illustrators only rated the economic benefit for the Ethel Turner Prize, the Patricia Wrightson Prize and the Premier's Awards as significant, rating the CBC shortlist and awards as more economically significant. This is supported by prior reporting of the dominance of CBC shortlisting, with the major impact resulting from post-shortlist sales. The longevity and potential sales generated by the CBC process were most highly valued by the cohort. The economic impact of the Patricia Wrightson Prize in NSW, the Ethel Turner Prize and the Premier's Awards (in all States) is mainly via the prize money awarded at a given time.

The relatively high figure in the table for economic benefit resulting from Children's Choice Awards, which carry no prize money, is somewhat of an anomaly since most of the responses had indicated that a win in this forum, brought no economic impact. Children's choice awards, generally, do not attract attention from the media, have no marketing promotions and have minimal ongoing sales of winning titles. The anomaly may simply have been the result of overlooking the specifically economic focus of this section of questioning.

Authors/illustrators were also asked to rank the same awards from the standpoint of the potential non-economic outcomes: the impact on their reputations, their status as an acclaimed author/illustrator and their bargaining power in future negotiations, following the winning of an award. The results are tabulated as follows:

Table 15

**Perceived Non-Economic Significance of Awards for
Authors & Illustrators**

N=41

Awards	Extremely Significant	Very Significant	Significant	Somewhat Significant	Not Significant
Children's Book Council	20	6	6	1	0
YARA (national children's choice)	1	1	7	8	6
Nan Chauncy Award	0	4	8	5	5
Aurealis Award (for scifi, fantasy and horror)	0	7	4	9	2
Ena Noel Award (for new author or illustrator)	0	1	8	5	7
Children's Choice Awards (KOALA, KROC, WAYRBA, YABBA, BILBY, COOL, CYBER, KANGA)	3	5	8	10	1
Ethel Turner Prize (for young people's literature)	1	7	8	5	3
Patricia Wrightson Prize (for children's literature)	1	8	9	5	2
Premier's Awards	4	10	7	8	0
Crichton Award (for new illustrators)	2	4	10	9	0

The highest ranking of all Australian awards in terms of perceived non-economic benefits belongs to the CBC awards. The reason for this could be the convention of shortlisting titles nearly five months ahead of a winning announcement and the strong foundation of publicity and marketing which underpins the award process during this period. While the non-economic outcomes, by definition, do not involve the earning of income, some of the non-economic outcomes may lead to income earning opportunities in the future. What is strongly represented in these figures is that few of the awards, aside from the CBC Awards, were seen as 'extremely significant' in the area of non-economic benefits. The nature of the non-economic impacts was reported in Section D. Although children's choice awards were frequently reported as personally gratifying, adult-judged awards were reported to have stronger non-economic effects. The non-economic impacts for the Premier's Award was 'significant' or stronger for half of the respondents while just under half reported the Patricia Wrightson Prize had 'significant' or stronger non-economic impacts. This is possibly due to the high professional respect these awards embody amongst peers and professionals. Thus, there is a complex collection of outcomes.

The last section of the questionnaire asked if the respondents had ever won an international award and if so, what impact they had experienced. Australian authors/illustrators are mostly published by Australian publishers but it is desirable to have overseas publishers purchase the rights for a wider market. Authors and illustrators indicated that an overseas award will bring international familiarity and generated sales with all its multiplier effects and maybe the bonus effect of an interest in an author's backlist of titles. However, impacts in Australia from an overseas award were perceived to be minimal. Overseas success, including awards, honourable mentions and shortlistings were reported by 35% of respondents. Not all of these awards have equal status or marketing potential but they illustrate the reach of this sample of children's and YA work of Australian origin. The author's comments add depth to the facts. The following table paraphrases the qualitative evidence offered by author/illustrator respondents:

Table 16

**Responses by Authors & Illustrators Relating to
Overseas Children's Literary Awards n=41**

Awards, Short Listings, Honourable Mentions	Comments by Awarded Authors
Bologna Ragazzi Award (International)	One author was awarded this prestigious award for a picture book title but it had no financial impact: the author believes this was because the publisher did not direct any media attention to the book or the award though there is a strong feeling of personal accomplishment and acknowledgment from peers.
White Raven Award (Munich) for Significant Young Adult Fiction	Two authors were awarded and their titles were included in the catalogue of significant young adult fiction – they commented that it was a great thrill to be considered significant on the international stage. There was not much economic benefit but a great deal of pride.
Henry Burgh Award for the American SPCA	Honour Book for one author: an award for books that deal with animals.
Picture Book of the Year in Norfolk UK	Children's Choice Award: the Gold Medal was awarded to one author – the author added that it was very emotional to think that the title was voted as the top title by children in another country.
IBBY (International Board on Books for Young People) Award for Teenage Fiction	One author shortlisted in the teenage novel category – the appreciation factor was 'terrific' – no significant economic impact.
Continued over ...	

Children's Choice awards in various states in USA	Five authors reported some success with shortlistings, substantial reviews for both children's fiction and young adult novels – no appreciable effect on sales or income though it was very gratifying to think of an international readership and award. One author said that overseas sales contributed significantly to his income. Another said that his book was still in print and another was reprinted last year. A common perspective was that good literature sells itself but an award draws attention to it in a larger market.
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4.4 Conclusion

The authors' qualitative responses offer significant detail and depth of personal experience to the evidence relating to the process of winning a children's book award in Australia and overseas. Economic impacts following an award necessarily assume significance for authors and illustrators and ongoing sales were seen as the real prize. As creators they also expressed strong feelings in terms of non-economic impacts. For this sample, the strongest non-economic impact is an overarching experience of affirmation. If overseas publishing occurs there is additional economic and non-economic satisfaction due to award-generated sales and the potential for a longer shelf life over an enlarged market.

Authors may not always agree on the judges' choices but there were no responses which stated that awards per se were an unwelcome part of their writing environment. However, not all critics support the view that awards have a place in the literary world. The polemicist, Hitchens (in English, quoting the popularist view, 2005a:242), describes the 'thirst for trophies' as 'putting writers through hoops' adding that 'great, brave, original writers don't need their immortality to be validated'. From the responses of authors, the hoops, both positive and negative, are accepted as the price of success and economic outcomes may be substantial. As well, recognition of awarded works for the author or illustrator and for a society's culture in the larger context represents the symbolic value of such awards.

For any culture, the whole is composed of many contributory parts and the significant mass of collective literary award experiences from awarded authors and illustrators thus contributes to the body of cultural capital. This cultural perspective was examined by Bourdieu from a theoretical stance and by English from an evidence-based stance. Bourdieu wrote of the successful output of literature as social or symbolic capital while English called the literary outcome of awards and prizes, the economy of prestige. Both these concepts illustrate the accretion of cultural capital over time.

In the interdependencies of the producers' group, in which the author is the initial catalyst, the underlying common ground is the economic factor. The author submits to the publisher and the bookseller faces the market with the product. This sequence occurs before a work becomes a prizewinner. The consequences of a prize reverberate back on the author and the publisher in diverse ways and with varying intensities, most of which are unexpected but positive. For publishing organisations and to a lesser extent booksellers, this is reflected in the profit margins while for the author/illustrator, it is income. All three producer cohorts look to another group as the market for their production.

Chapter 5

The Responses of Publishing Organisations

It is said that winning a Newbery Prize for Children's Literature 'guarantees 100,000 in hardcover sales in the first year'. More significant is the high likelihood of a Newbery book maintaining strong sales for years or decades afterward...Many bookstores now even feature a Newbery (or Newbery and Caldecott) shelf where these instant classics may be perused as a set – more or less as though they were titles bearing a common authorial signature or ... the same brand name.⁹

5.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the experience of the publisher cohort as part of the producer group. They are responsible for producing the tangible hard copy of an author and illustrator's created work and generally for publicising the finished title. They have a stake in the competitive environment of awards and each publisher surveyed has experienced a children's book award in Australia.

There is great diversity in the scale of Australian publishing houses producing winning titles, ranging from large conglomerates to businesses which operate from a single building. Scholastic, Hachette Livre/Lothian, Penguin, Random House, Walker Books and HarperCollins are all part of multi-national global organisations. ABC Books, Black Dog Books, Magabala press, Fremantle Press and Koala Books are independent Australian publishers of children's books and operate generally from one building. As well, in submissions for awards there are an increasing number of self-published titles presented for judging. The market competition is fierce, the costs are high and there is constant movement and takeover to jostle for competitive advantage. One publisher, Scholastic Inc., practises vertical integration where they not only publish but also control a niche retail bookselling market. Apart from marketing through commercial booksellers Scholastic has a special strategy in the form of regular catalogue offers to school students

⁹ English 2005:360-361

under the banner of book clubs and in recent times they have acquired Australian Standing Orders which packages recent releases of a range of children's and young adult titles mainly for a teacher librarian market. Other publishers, such as the University of Queensland Press (UQP), are attached to universities, publishing academic titles but also operating as discrete corporate entities publishing a range of material for the wider market including young adult literature. As well, some specialist publishing houses, such as Koala Books, Walker Books and Scholastic Inc., cater exclusively for the children's and YA market. Responses indicate that awards are significant for all publishing organisations, whatever their size and structure, not only bringing immediate economic rewards but also establishing a reputation, which is seen as staking a claim in the small Australian market. As well, awards increase the likelihood of overseas publishing rights which have the potential to expand the market.

Interviews through the pilot study revealed that children's editors in publishing houses are the corporate judges of the marketability of children's or YA literary submissions. They tend to have a 'stable' of authors who have been successful and they view their work for publication with more confidence than the work of an untried author. On the other hand, many publishers are quite courageous in their decision making and accept new authors or manuscripts based on their experience in the literary market. The balance sheet tells the story in the longer term, where the costs of publication must be balanced against the profit yield. Publishing undoubtedly embodies a high degree of commitment to a literary cause but the bottom line is economic sustainability with financial responsibilities to stakeholders and this informs, in the end, decisions to publish children's or YA literature.

English (2005a) analysed adult literary prizes and awards for American stakeholders, including publishers, and some of the findings resonate with the Australian context. This research focuses on children's and YA literary awards in Australia but a publisher's primary role is to produce a successful literary product and many of the perspectives will be similar regardless of location, the scale of operations or the age range involved. English describes a huge resurgence of world wide publishing since 1945 and then adds

that ‘the spread of awards has consistently outpaced the resurgence in literary publishing’ (2005a:326). He estimates that at the turn of the century there were 400 book awards in Britain and 1,100 in America and comments that this is probably a very conservative figure. A simple count for Australia reveals 73 mainstream awards.

Bourdieu argued that prizes may be seen to dilute cultural or aesthetic value by commercialisation, holding a certain grip of economic power such that ‘.. the boundary has never been as blurred between the experimental work and the bestseller’ (1996:347). Bourdieu saw this negatively from his cultural perspective but for publishers, the blurred boundary is what they hope for. Bourdieu felt that commercialisation of literary arts results in a dilution of literary quality but publishing organisations express pride in their award-winning product and many take economic risks and publish challenging material. They enjoy the award-generated economic success if it is a result, while denying that there is a dilution of aesthetic value of the awarded title by their successful exposure to the market. Apart from the aesthetic value of the awarded title, there is also the prestige and the reputation of an organisation which finds itself being a successful publisher of awarded books.

English did not see the relationship as such a linear relationship. He saw the relationship of experimental works, their market and the award or prize system as a complex mix which in diverse ways result in a growth of cultural capital (2005a:329). He sees the publishing world and the prize awarding process as possessing a far from simple relationship and refutes the belief that awards are ‘essentially commercial instruments in disguise, effecting a gradual penetration and domination of literary hierarchies by money’ (2005a:329). However, his view reflects a qualified stance when he later stated that prizes have supported a more and more distinct hierarchy of symbolic value which is by no means independent of commercial activity. Thus there are three forces at work – award prestige and acclaim, prizemoney and the post-award sales. Prizemoney is known and prestige will result although this may, or may not, last. Ongoing sales following an award are anticipated and usually healthy in the short run but these can be very unpredictable in volume and in the longer term depend heavily on the inherent

engagement of the book in the market. Indeed, English quotes examples where an awarded title is far removed from “bestsellerdom”. For Australian publishers, economic returns from the production of a popular book, an experimental or controversial work which sells well or from the production of work which wins an award, will be welcomed and any of these paths to profit is acceptable. The winning of an award is never a certainty and decisions to publish cannot be based on possible awards: apart from the fact that winning an award is an unpredictable, the economic outcomes from an award are somewhat and subject to variables relating to the market and the book itself.

This research reports on the interrogation of the views of Australian publishers who had experienced winning (or being shortlisted for) an Australian children’s book award. These publisher responses show the outcomes to be commercial, symbolic and more. Responses also show that while appreciating some international fame, Australian publishers are significantly influenced by Australian awards within an Australian literary environment. The pilot study revealed an expressed passion for quality children’s literature and a commitment to high standards of publishing.

5.2 Distribution of Questionnaires

A list was compiled of all of children’s and YA award-winning titles for the five year timeframe. All publishers were identified, a total of only 14. This reflects a relatively small national population which only supports a small number of publishing houses. The questionnaire was sent to the children’s editor in each publishing organisation.

Six publishers responded. From personal contact, others had expressed interest but it may have been a matter of not divulging business outcomes, being too busy to attend to the questionnaire or not giving consideration to a matter which might not offer any direct advantage to them. Most of the respondents offered very few qualitative comments so the pilot study became an invaluable tool in establishing the corporate context for this research, within which publishers operate and for some sections of questionnaire interest, the pilot study offered the only qualitative evidence.

5.3 Responses

In the preliminary section of the questionnaire, publishers were asked to indicate any international awards they had won in the field of children's literature. The six respondents all reported international success. Publishers who were part of a multi-national organisation had many overseas award successes to report. Collectively, and within the research timeframe, the international awards received were as follows: two Bologna Ragazzi Awards, one Astrid Lindgren Award, one international fantasy award, one French award, two German awards, one New Zealand award, one Canadian award, one British award, two American awards and one South East Asian Writer's award. Despite a smaller scale of operations and fewer players than other developed nations, Australian publishers have secured a place in the global literary award scene.

Despite winning an international award, nearly half the sample of the publishers indicated that this achievement brought about no significant impact in the Australian market. Publishers saw an overseas-based win as a major justification for their decision making and since many publishers also have relationships with overseas publishing organisations, an award was useful in extending into the overseas market. Examples of Australian titles which have won prestigious overseas awards include: *Way Home* by Hathorn and Rogers (Kate Greenaway Medal), *Josh* by Southall (Carnegie Medal), *Harry and Hopper* by Wild and Blackwood (Kate Greenaway Medal), *The Great Bear* by Gleeson (Bologna Award), *Thursday's Child* by Hartnett (Guardian Prize) and *The Lost Thing* and *The Arrival* by Tan (Bologna Award). For some, the overseas award and its attention brought invitations for their author to speak at literary festivals and conferences and through these means, some extra sales were generated. Other respondents indicated that the overseas exposure brought mostly off-shore benefits, including an increase in income through sales in overseas markets, an enhanced global reputation and an expanded market opportunity for sales of the international rights for titles. One publisher said that winning an international award brought strong interest to the whole publications list and so the

Australian publisher felt strengthened in market position. However, these overseas impacts are beyond the scope of this research and will not be explored in detail.

Some overseas awarded books did not even appear on the shortlists of Australian CBC awards which, according to the opinions of all the cohorts including publishers, is the most significant awarding body within Australia. Literary critic and publisher Mark Macleod claims that a situation such as the CBC overlooking such exemplary literature challenges the CBC's own judging criteria (2010). However, all award processes have different criteria and so judging panels view given titles differently.

Questions and responses focused on a consciously Australian approach. A tally of responses showed some publishers winning an Australian children's literary award with up to fifteen titles over the past five years. One publisher pointed out that they only kept records for high profile awards, such as CBC awards, Premier's Awards in each State and Aurealis Award and did not keep records for children's choice awards or other minor awards. This indicates the relative importance felt by publishers for the range of awards.

The preliminary section was designed to introduce the survey to publishers and to allow them to describe their Australian and overseas award experience which established the publisher's credibility to contribute meaningful responses to the questionnaire that followed. The context of publishing is shown to be complex and multi-faceted as they judge creative works in terms of both quality and marketability.

5.3.1 Overall Experience of Winning an Award: Section A

In Section A of the questionnaire, publishers were asked to express the significance of winning an award within the Australian market. The questions in this section were general in design to construct a context in preparation for deeper reflection in the subsequent sections. The respondents unequivocally answered that winning an award was very significant. The following table outlines the questions and responses:

Table 17

Impact of Winning a Children’s Book Award on Publishers

n=6

	Very Significant	No Significance	Some Significance
1. Has winning an award been significant for your organisation?	6		
2. Has winning an award been a strong motivational force in the work culture?	5		1
3. Has winning an award been seen as a reward for the passion of your children’s editors?	5		1
4. Does winning a children’s book award significantly increase economic returns?	6		
5. Does winning a book award enhance your reputation and better position the organisation in the market?	5	1	

The ‘no’ response for Question 5 is an anomaly. It was supplied by a large publisher in the field and possibly they felt that they had already attained a solid position. One publisher volunteered that being on the CBC shortlist was significant, but less significant than it was five or ten years ago. This was illustrated by evidence showing that the CBC shortlist used to generate increased sales of a title by as much as ten thousand copies while some of the shortlisted titles now might only generate five thousand copies in sales. Thus, there is a significant economic return but it is not on the same scale as in the past. The impact of shortlisting for publishers will be measured by immediate economic returns in the short term with a potential for further sales returns and growth of prestige and influence, international exposure and promotions in the longer run.

Interestingly, one publisher offered the opinion that the Crichton Award (for works with a new emerging illustrator) does not impact on sales to the same degree as CBC shortlists or winning awards, but has generated an increased demand over the last three years. This may reflect an increase in interest in book illustration, an acceptance of the genre of the picture book which encompasses all ages in the market, and an expansion of the illustrated category in the CBC awards to not only include a picture book section but also an early childhood section, which will necessarily include illustration.

5.3.2 Strength of Impacts of Awards: Section B

In Section B questions concerned the experience of winning a children’s book award by publishing organisations. Publishers were asked to place a value on their experience of winning an award. One publisher indicated that the CBC awards were the only awards which delivered an economic return while other publishers reported that they really only consider the big awards such as the CBC awards and the Premier’s Awards in terms of sales. These are well known and can be used to market advantage. Publishing organisations have an economic imperative and in the long run their primary interest is in awards which generate sales. It is recognised that there is a hierarchy of awards for the publishers and beyond the top two or three awards in Australia, the economic outcomes are considered negligible. Later responses to questions about non-economic outcomes showed, interestingly, that there is a worthwhile and subtle range of valued non-economic outcomes from awards for publishers which may, or may not, translate into economic advantage.

The results of the survey for publishers are shown below.

Table : 18

Significance of Winning a Children’s Book Award for Publishers

n=6

	Extremely Significant	Very Significant	Significant	Slightly Significant	Not Significant
1. How significant was winning a children’s award for your organisation?	4	2			
2. How significantly did winning add to the motivation of the staff?	2	3		1	
3. Do key members receive benefits for their role in producing a winning title?		1	1	2	2
4. Rate the economic return through winning an award.	3	2	1		
5. How long does the financial impact of winning an award, last?	5yrs x 1	4yrs x 0	3yrs x 1	2yrs x 4	1yr or less x 0

These results show that all publisher-respondents rate winning a book award as at least ‘very significant’ and that such an event adds a strong element to the motivation of the staff in the majority of organisations surveyed. There was a spread of the length of the economic return from an award but the majority felt that most returns only lasted for two years. Anecdotal evidence supports this as pilot study interviews indicated that the prestigious book awards are very important to all publishers but that the longevity of the award may only be two years. The estimate of longevity correlates with the views of other producer cohorts. Publishers are very sensitive to the strength of the market and their estimate of longevity can be assumed to carry a high degree of informed accuracy. Given that most children’s and YA awards are made annually, this two year or more sales period is actually longer than might be expected with sales figures for an awarded title overlapping the next winning title announcement. One publisher commented that some CBC winners retain good sales figures for years while others barely make a ripple so there is no complete certainty. The longevity of the market in terms of post-award sales figures may be affected by its exposure as an awarded title, but it will still need public reader appeal or school list sales to go on selling for years. An award alone will not ensure longevity.

Publishers expressed a conservative opinion about the accrued economic benefits following the winning an award but indicated that returns are still very positive and certainly sought.

5.3.3 Economic Outcomes From Awards: Section C

Responses could only show marginal percentage increases in overall business income following the winning of a children’s book award, because exact financial details of marginal increases due to winning an award, were not available. The pilot study revealed that questions asking for this information would not be answered. Principally, the pilot study had shown that organisations would find it too difficult to isolate the increase in income due to winning a children’s book award from the general increase in overall business income due to other factors. The responses indicate estimates of the percentage

increase in overall income which might be attributable to the event of publishing a winning (or shortlisted) children's title. Publishers indicated that they estimated a 20% - 100% increase in income in the first year of winning the award, 20% - 100% in the second year after winning an award, 10% - 50% in the third year, 5% - 25% in the fourth year and 0 - 25% in the fifth year. The figure of 100% given by two publishers for marginal increases in income in the first year following an award, is higher than might be expected. While we must respect the response, it seems likely that this question was either unanswerable, misunderstood, that the high figure is attributable to a very small publishing house where the normal total income is low or that the winning title was exceptionally successful. A figure for a 100% increase in income in the second year following the winning of an award by one publisher also seems exceptional.

Some longevity of impact may depend on whether the award was for a novel or for a picture book. In a later section, publishers indicated that winning picture books sold well in the year of winning an award but many did not run to marginal increases in demand or reprinting after that and had faded from the market by the end of the second year. However, novels have a different marketing environment. They are slower than picture books to reach their potential for sales in the first year but enjoy an extended longevity of two or more years. In addition, awarded novels which are selected for class sets may not appear in sales figures until the second year, or later, and this would extend the longevity. Class set sales which often tally 30 copies per order, are a great boost to overall sales figures. Picture books are not so likely to be purchased as class sets.

Publishers' comments added some depth to this picture. If a book wins an award and has firm market popularity, it is likely to be re-issued after two years, usually in paperback form if it has previously been a hardcover copy. It is often re-issued with a fresh cover and so generates a second round of sales, adding to total income. Publishers all agree that without an award, many children's books are out-of-print after two years. Other publishers commented that one of the big advantages of a CBC award is that the publicity often allows titles to remain on current lists. Novels remaining on current lists sometimes allow development of interest in purchases of class sets of 30 copies in an order from

schools. Novels have a different marketing environment and are slower than picture books to reach their potential for sales in the first year but enjoy an extended life of two or more years. Thus, the outcomes for sales and income are not a simple linear result – the popularity, the genre, the potential for bulk orders and the possibility for reprinting all exert influence on output and income.

5.3.4 Non-Economic Outcomes From Awards: Section D

Publishers were asked if winning a book award affected the organisation in an intangible way which included such aspects as the publisher's reputation, status in the market and bargaining power. Responses showed that there were impacts of a non-economic nature which applied to award winning publishers. If publishing houses regularly published winning books then bulk-buyers, such as schools and libraries, were more positively disposed towards the publishers' lists. One publisher also volunteered that authors are attracted to publishers who have had success with awards and so an enhanced reputation for a publishing house may attract the next winning author. Potential for contracts for overseas rights and possible screen rights may also be enhanced.

The publishers all rate winning an award for children's literature in Australia as significant or stronger in non-economic outcomes – three publishers thought that the effect was 'extremely significant', two thought it 'very significant' while one thought it 'significant'. The possibilities for promotions, networking, sponsorship of author talks, participation at conferences, trade displays and general reputation are all important intangible components in the successful operation of the publishing organisation and winning a book award adds an important element to this marketing arsenal. Because of the economic imperative underpinning a business organisation, enhanced marketing tools and opportunities are seen as offering potential for increased sales in the future. In the larger context of the producers' field, the responses from publishers regarding non-economic rewards have, in some respects, elements in common with booksellers, while there are some contrasts in nature with the personal and significant impacts cited by authors in their responses. This is due to the differing perspectives of the cohorts.

5.3.5 Perceived Economic and Non-Economic Impacts From Awards:

Sections E and F

While winning a children’s book award is an important event for publishers in the children’s literature market in Australia not all awards are equal and it was important to assess the relative significance of the range of children’s book awards in Australia for publishers. Publishers were asked first to rate listed awards from an economic standpoint whether they had won these awards or not.

Table: 19

Perceived Economic Significance of Awards for Publishers

n=6

Australian Award	Extremely Significant	Very Significant	Significant	Minor Impact	No Impact
Children’s Book Council (CBC) Awards	3	3			
YARA Award (online): national children’s choice				3	2
Nan Chauncy Award				1	4
Aurealis Award (Sci-Fi,Fantasy,Horror)			2	4	
Ena Noel (New Aust. Illustrator or Writer)		1		1	3
Children’s Choice Awards: popularity awards		1	2	3	
Ethel Turner Award	1	2	2	1	
Patricia Wrightson Prize	1	2	2	1	
Premier’s Awards (in each State)	2	1	1	2	
Crichton (Award for New Illustrators)		1	2	2	1

The awards contained in this table are the Australian awards which were commonly referred to by a range of stakeholders, professional publications and websites, reviewed in the pilot study. Most are poorly served by promotion through the media and announcements of winning titles and reviews are frequently only found in specialist journals or websites.

Although the scope of the awards has very little common ground these were the Australian awards which were known by the respondents in the pilot study and thus, despite dissimilarities, they comprised the list. The level of media interest and journal

exposure may impact on economic significance, since an informed market through the media and journals, transforms an awarded title into an asset with a much improved potential economic return.

It is significant that all producers rated the CBC awards as 'very significant' or stronger while all other awards were seen to attract much lower levels of economic strength. Publishers did not elaborate on this. It is an anomaly that a children's choice award was recorded as having an economic impact since they are popularity awards voted on after the fact of reading by a State-wide child readership. Children's choice awards may be seen to validate the decision of children's editors to publish a title which, it can be inferred, results in healthy sales figures in the period up to the conferring of the award since it went on to become a winning children's choice title. It seems unlikely that they would generate anything more than a minor economic impact for publishers following an award.

Despite the relatively low economic impact of non-CBC awards, those awards are sought by publishers and celebrated and in many cases used in marketing. Winning almost any recognised awards brings some publicity which offers potential for sales and over half the respondents perceived that the CBC awards, children's choice awards, Ethel Turner Prize, Patricia Wrightson Award, the Premier's Awards and the Crichton Award were all significant or stronger in possible economic outcomes.

Section F was designed to have publishers consider the impacts upon reputation, status in the market and bargaining power following the winning of specific awards. This was a more intensive picture of Section D. Responses were as follows:

Table: 20**Perceived Non-Economic Significance of Awards for Publishers**

n=6

Australian Award	Extremely Significant	Very Significant	Significant	Minor Impact	No Impact
Children's Book Council (CBC) Awards	5	1			
YARA Award (national, online)		1	1	3	1
Nan Chauncy Award		1		3	1
Aurealis Award (Sci-Fi, Fantasy, Horror)			4	2	
Ena Noel (New Aust. Illustrator or Writer)			2	1	2
Children's Choice Awards		2	2	2	
Ethel Turner Award	2	2	1	1	
Patricia Wrightson Prize	2	2	1	1	
Premier's Awards (in each State)	1	3	1	1	
Crichton (Award for New Illustrators)		2	2	2	

CBC awards are seen as offering the most non-economic benefits. The majority endorsement of all ten awards as having been 'significant' (or stronger) in non-economic outcomes probably reflects the view of most publishers that any award, if it can be publicised and used in marketing, is a good award, even if it does not directly generate a direct, linear economic return. Within professional Australian literary environments the Ethel Turner Prize and the Patricia Wrightson Award are held in high esteem and applauded. This may account for the slightly higher value for non-economic significance than might have been expected. This may not translate strongly to the market economy but it is professional and collegial recognition.

5.4 Conclusion:

Though this sample represents 43% of the relevant population, it is still small. However, during the pilot stage, discussions with publishers and editors revealed information which added confirmation to some of the later responses to the questionnaire. Publishers need to make profits for economic sustainability and there is an expectation that there will be growth in profits at least in step with inflation and the rate of increase in the costs of production. Costs constantly increase and organisations employ whatever leverage they can to make a profit. Winning an award cannot be part of an organisation's strategic plan

but there is motivation to publish a potential award winner because of the substantial economic and non-economic benefits to be gained.

From the beginning of the enquiry, publishers all expressed the view that winning an award was a significant event, a strong motivational force and a reward for commitment, offering an increase in income and enhancing the organisation's reputation. There are benefits for the organisation in being well placed as a successful publisher in terms of overseas contracts, exploration of backlists of successful authors within their portfolio and recognition in consumer markets. There is a sense of irony that all the publishers either interviewed or surveyed indicated that winning awards was a significant event in the life of the organisation but only six actually contributed to the gathering of data.

English reported on and analysed the American situation as well as some comparisons with British prizes and he included publishers in his coverage. While the Newbery and Caldecott Medals are powerful in the USA's children's literary market and achieve the status of commodification with their specific brand which impacts on the publishers' balance sheets as well as the longevity of the titles (2005a:361), they operate within a very large potential market. It is difficult to compare these outcomes with Australia's situation, even on a per capita basis, when the cultural and literature variables are so different. Some critics, such as Mark Macleod, perceive a lessening of impact of the CBC awards in recent years and feel that some of this is due to the expansion of the CBC awards to five categories which disperses their impact (2010). However, other factors may also be responsible, including the volunteer structure of the CBC executive, Australian cultural factors, lack of an informed market, inadequate media attention and award presentation glamour.

The following chapter will examine the experience of booksellers in this award winning process. Booksellers are an essential link in the sequence that begins with the author, passes through the editing, printing and packaging of the publisher and so to the distribution to the marketplace.

Chapter 6

The Responses of Bookselling Organisations

The major market is institutionalised libraries ... and libraries expect a good bookseller to carry winning titles¹⁰.

6.1 Introduction

The sequence of economic activity in terms of producing literature begins with the work of the author and illustrator, followed by production and publicity by publishers and shop front or niche marketing activity by booksellers. It was hypothesised that they would be responsive to the announcement of awards. As a service provider they are categorised as a producer and in common with other producers they have an economic imperative. This is not to say that they might not be intensely interested in the field of children's and young adult literature, following shortlist and award announcements, but their *raison d'être* is built on the profit motive for economic sustainability. Booksellers are an essential part of this process, acting as middlemen between producers and consumers.

In their position in the process, booksellers have a commercial relationship with publishers and another commercial relationship with the marketplace. They have to be responsive to market demand and acquire book titles which will sell readily. But questionnaire responses indicate that they also have a role in manipulating the book market through advertising, display, sponsorship or discounts to consumers.

Responses from Australian booksellers indicate that the CBC awards process is by far the biggest award process in the booksellers' commercial world and they make predictive

¹⁰ Comment from Bookseller respondent

decisions regarding the potential demand by their communities, following the shortlist announcement. On this basis they may adjust their inventories in readiness for their perceived potential market. In their open-ended responses to the survey, booksellers complained that sometimes obtaining supplies of shortlisted titles is frustrating as Australian publishers are often slow to reprint after a shortlist has been announced. It is then difficult to capitalise on media attention and press announcements of these titles.

Bookseller responses to the announcement of a shortlist or winning title demonstrate a wide range of perceptions. They balance their assessment of the local market's demand potential against the costs of promotion, the time and effort involved in promotion, in order to make decisions about inventory expansion.

6.2 Defining the Cohort

Defining bookselling organisations proved to be somewhat problematic. In the field, generalist bookshops offer a wide range of books for sale and are particularly responsive to popular demand. Some booksellers surveyed were shop front booksellers in neighborhood shopping centers with an intergenerational market. Others surveyed were booksellers who do not have a shop front but operate as home-based middlemen and sell mostly on the basis of orders from institutions such as school and public libraries offering a personalised service. Because they generally have minimal costs in terms of overheads they can offer competitive discounts on orders. They often specialise in serving a niche market like public and school libraries, but some also range more widely.

As well, pilot study discussions showed that it was particularly relevant to record the experiences of children's specialist booksellers who, it might be argued, would know most about Australian children's awards and winning books within the bookselling environment. They could possibly be expected to experience the greatest impact from the announcement of a children's award winning title. However, identifying these children's specialist bookshops was difficult. Although advertising as children's specialists, many bookshops simply provided a children's and young adult section in them, as part of a

larger generalist service. Identifying genuine specialist children's/young adult bookshops involved some lengthy investigation and fourteen were selected Australia-wide for inclusion. These booksellers were added to eight regional booksellers and eight urban booksellers for the complete sample. It is also possible for publishers to act as booksellers either through direct marketing from their publishing house (eg., Scholastic) or offering an online purchasing service – neither of these kinds of booksellers were included in this research as the pilot study had not revealed these as sources of awarded titles. However, these kinds of bookseller may be important in the future. As the first mailing did not elicit a satisfactory response rate a second mail-out was undertaken and this yielded sufficient results.

English (2005a:360-361) acknowledges that booksellers are part of the production-consumption process and points out the special impact the Newbery Prize for Children's Literature (in the USA) has in terms of books sold and profits made. This, of course, reflects a strong American cultural respect for that award as well as a much larger market than Australia. Whether in the USA or Australia, booksellers play a role in generating economic and cultural capital, acting as a bridge between producers and consumers through participation in a dynamic market. In more general terms, English (2005a:347) used the term 'social embeddedness of the money economy' to describe the interrelatedness of the sociological and economic forms of capital and for many booksellers this will be reflected in their decision-making.

6.3 Responses

The responses and experiences offered by booksellers were examined for clusters of common as well as unique experiences. Responses to the announcement of the CBC shortlist and awards were unpredictable. A minority of booksellers indicated that they swung into a program of fax promotion to schools or other possible markets and planned for sales activity to follow. If media announcements brought market awareness, then most booksellers wrote that they were keen to capitalise on this opportunity and build on it through some form of promotion such as posters, prominent displays or other activities.

In this, they play a part in the generation of social and cultural capital while concurrently acting in a commercial world. Other booksellers indicated that they often operated on small profit margins per unit of product and needed to be cautious about inventory decisions. Although sales to school and libraries might seem active, they were obliged to offer a discount to these institutions and the outcome would not be as profitable as might be expected. Generally, response evidence showed that booksellers tend to be responsive to market demand rather than independently proactive regarding awarded titles.

6.3.1 Overall Experience of Handling an Award: Section A

Section A of the questionnaire aimed to establish a personal context, asking booksellers general questions which would start an exploration of their experiences in terms of building an inventory and marketing Australian award winning children’s titles.

Table: 21

Impacts of Book Awards for Booksellers n=10

Questions	YES	NO	Some impact but not significant
1. Stocking awarded titles has been significant.	3	1	6
2. Promoting and selling a winning title added motivation to the work culture.	3	2	5
3. The organisation has become more informed and passionate following the announcement of a winning title.	7	0	3
4. Significant economic returns following the announcement and adding a winning title to inventory.	2	4	3
5. The announcement of a winning title and stocking the title, flows on to attract a larger customer base.	3	1	6

From evidence which informed the pilot study, booksellers’ perspectives were essentially long term and conservative. In both the pilot study and the questionnaire responses, the open-ended questions elicited insights into the factors affecting the behavior of booksellers in relation to awarded children’s literature. They regard their market as locally based (even in the urban areas) and they need to gauge the interest of their local

market before committing inventory costs for uncertain returns. They do not want to be left with unsold copies and so they rely on their experience of local demand to drive the inventory of winning titles. They tend to conservatively predict but can quickly increase inventories if there is a firm demand, stocks being available from suppliers. This means that there could be a slow build up in response to shortlist or award announcements and this could account for the relatively strong rating for ‘some impact but not significant’ after a shortlisted or winning title has been announced.

The only question which elicited a firm response was one that referred to the excitement surrounding a shortlisted or winning award announcement. Almost all booksellers indicated that they embrace the shortlist and winning title announcement with some interest but this did not always translate into deeper outcomes such as a significant increase in the stock of the awarded titles, additional motivation within the work culture, increased economic benefits or flow-on impacts through the attraction of a wider customer base.

One bookseller owner/manager distinguished between bookselling action related to acquiring stocks of shortlisted titles and the stocking of winning titles. She felt that the announcement of a winning title had no impact on business activity at all. This particularly relates to the CBC awards, since the other awards do not have a highly publicised shortlist.

Several booksellers commented that the impact of award announcements has diminished over the last ten to fifteen years. Some offered the opinion that this decline was due to the proliferation of awards and the reduced budgets of school libraries: school libraries have traditionally been major players in the consuming market and there has been a decline not only in book budget amounts but also a decline, Australia-wide, in teacher librarian placements which may affect the perception of the importance of awarded literature. Both of these circumstances could impact on the awarded school-based purchasing of shortlisted or winning titles from booksellers.

6.3.2. Strength of Impacts of Awards: Section B

Section B of the questionnaire was designed to gauge the strength of interest in the announcement of a winning children’s book title. The following table summarises the responses from this cohort:

Table: 22

Significance of Handling a Children’s Book Award for Booksellers

n= 10

Questions	Extremely Significant	Very Significant	Significant	Slightly Significant	Not Significant
Has displaying a winning title been significant for the organisation?	0	3	3	3	1
Does stocking a winning title add motivation to the staff?	0	1	3	3	3
Does your bookshop give extra effort to promoting the winning title: display, booktalks, advice, reviews?	0	3	3	1	3
Are economic returns reflected in increased sales of winning title?	0	1	5	1	3
Is there longevity of financial impact from sales of a winning title? How long?	5+yrs = 1 bookseller	0	0	2yrs = 1 bookseller	Less than 6 mths = 4 booksellers, 1 yr. = 2 booksellers

This line of questioning brought an even distribution throughout the sample. None of the booksellers could rate their activity following the announcement of a winning children’s title as extremely significant although one bookseller said that the impact, such as it was, lasted for five years or more. This does not correlate with the results from the same question in other producer cohorts where two years was the norm. The even pattern could be due to several factors but detail of the responses was not divulged by respondents. Generalist booksellers do not rate the children’s book awards process as a high priority in their overall business activity. Therefore some do not significantly react except to meet demonstrated local demand. For a majority of booksellers, children’s book awards are not high on the scale of entrepreneurial interest and action. However,

approximately 30% of booksellers chose to promote children's awarded books in a more proactive way and reported a range of strategies in the open-ended response section.

In the collation of responses, there was, interestingly, little distinction between the responses of urban, regional or specialist bookshops and contrary to hypothesised trends, the impact of the awards on specialist bookshops was not discernable from other bookseller responses. It was hypothesised that specialist children's bookshops would be more sensitive to awards announcements and more successful in their sales of awarded children's titles simply because of the nature of their business, focusing as they do on children's and young adult literature. However, this was not discernable in responses.

The longevity of impacts from sales of winning children's titles offered another anomaly: a majority of bookseller respondents felt that award winning children's titles had a life of less than two years, while one estimated a five year life in the sales of a winning children's title. There was no supporting evidence offered by respondents, to explain this difference. Most booksellers are very sensitive to market demand and the majority did not see sales extending beyond the year of the award (or shortlisting).

The qualitative, open-ended question in this section asked for details of the kind of promotional activities undertaken to stimulate sales of a winning children's title. This line of questioning was built on the premise that such activity was a measure of the worth or value of a winning title (or a cluster of shortlisted titles) to a bookseller. If a bookseller did not think there were potential sales then promotional activities would not be undertaken. Over the sample, 90% undertook some kind of promotional activity for shortlisted or winning children's titles. The responses ranged from low key in-store displays to sponsorships for awards dinners, hosting of author events and signings, book fairs and school visits, sponsoring judges' talks and presentations at readers' clubs. Other examples of active promotions included mailed and faxed author biographies and reviews, sales offers, poster competitions and the like, leaflets and brochure material focusing on the shortlist and winning titles. One bookseller claimed to have mailed or faxed a promotional brochure to every primary and secondary school in Australia.

All the activities undertaken are designed to raise awareness of the shortlisted or winning titles and thus increase sales for the bookshop. Booksellers conduct a cost-benefit analysis, either formally or informally, based on their particular situation and their experience teaches them which costs bring worthwhile returns. In the long term this will inform decision making with regard to their response to the annual announcements of shortlisted or winning children's titles. For the majority of booksellers surveyed, the promotions will be very low-key, involving book display and poster advertising. In common with other sectors in this study, reaction to the announcement of shortlisted titles was more active than reaction to the announcement of the winning title.

6.3.3 Economic Outcomes From Awards: Section C

The third section targeted the marginal economic return attributable to handling a winning children's title. In order to have some measure of this impact, booksellers were asked to estimate the percentage increase in income following their experience of stocking and promoting award winning children's literature.

Some respondents declined to complete all answers in this section of the questionnaire. This could be due to privacy concerns but also it is possible that the separation of marginal income resulting from the sales of awarded books from the general overall bookselling activity is too difficult to estimate.

In the table below, the responses show perceived marginal income increases due to handling a winning children's or young adult title. None of these progressions represent the five year experience of any single bookseller.

Table: 23

Economic Outcomes for Booksellers Following Book Awards

n=10

1 st year of handling	2 nd year of handling	3 rd year of handling	4 th year of handling	5 th year of handling
150% = 1 bookseller	10% = 1 bookseller	2% = 1 bookseller	0	0
100% = 1 bookseller	10% = 1 bookseller	0	0	0
20% = 1 bookseller	10% = 1 bookseller	0	0	0
Less than 1% = 1 bookseller	0	0	0	0

What is obvious is that almost all of the marginal increases in income have dwindled within two years of a winning title, for most booksellers. The shelf life of a shortlisted or winning book for booksellers may thus be relatively short. Considering that all awards tabled in this research are annual awards, it is likely that each year's award winning titles will quickly be supplanted in the market place, by the next year's.

Booksellers commented that separating the children's business from the general business of the organisation or calculating the marginal increase in income from sales of a single title or group of titles was difficult to assess unless there was a specific promotion such as an author signing event, focusing on the winning title. One bookseller felt that many award-winning titles were mediocre in quality, not worth promoting and exercised no appreciable impact. Several booksellers again supported the view that stocking the shelves with shortlisted titles (ie. the CBC shortlisted titles) was much more significant than responding to the announcement of winning titles. Institutions such as schools and public libraries often bought the entire short list and later, following the announcement of winning titles, there was no extension of demand. Two booksellers offered the opinion that there was up to a 300% increase in sales for shortlisted titles in the CBC award season but no change in sales following the announcement of a winning title. One phenomenon which has a positive impact on booksellers is that sometimes a winning title, with its promotion as a quality piece of literature, is selected as a suitable text for a class set in schools and this results in the purchase of 30 or more copies in one order.

This obviously has a positive impact on a bookseller’s marginal income. However, one bookseller explained that sales of a winning book to schools was not the windfall that might be expected because institutions expected a 15% discount and that this severely reduced the profit margin.

6.3.4. Non-Economic Outcomes From Awards: Section D

Section D was designed to explore possible impacts that were not pecuniary in nature. These impacts could be negative or positive. The introduction to this section alluded to elements such as reputation, status in the market and bargaining power. In summary, the results for this were as follows:

Table: 24

Non-Economic Outcomes for Booksellers Following Book Awards

n=10

Extremely Significant	Highly Significant	Significant	Some Impact	No Impact
1	2	2	4	1

Booksellers fight for a competitive share of the market, not only against each other but in competition with networked corporations such as K-Mart, Big W, Target and Coles. The bookseller responses frequently included promotional activities which they undertook to gain market edge – activities such as promotion of the latest title, the display of prize winning literature and their knowledge of the publishing world which they could translate into personalised reader’s advice for the customer. Many of the characteristics which entice customers into bookshops and encourage them to seek out awarded titles are in fact intangible, non-economic, differentiating marketing factors. Shortlist or winning award announcements provide a context for these promotions. Bourdieu and English both spoke of this as ‘social capital’. Booksellers use a variety of programs and events to develop social capital alongside decisions to grow commercial or economic capital, but

the evidence showed that the intangible value was not highly rated by this bookselling sample.

In the qualitative, open-ended comments section, one bookseller wrote that media interest in awarded titles might get people through the bookshop door to see all the other great titles on offer so he supported the awards process in the hope of wider gains. Some booksellers were not keen on stocking up on shortlisted or awarded titles but they felt that the expectation of their market, and especially school librarians, was that a reputable bookseller would recognise and promote shortlisted and winning titles and so they complied. One bookseller felt that their knowledge of awarded titles from a wide range of awarding bodies enhanced their reputation as a bookseller who has their finger on the pulse of contemporary quality literature. Furthermore, another bookseller's view was that customers who are uncertain about what to buy often ask for an age-appropriate book which has been a prize winner and in this way the local demand defined this bookseller's inventory policy. Thus, in various ways, social capital grows alongside economic capital. Some parent responses, from the consuming sector, indicated that their buying behaviour was sometimes guided by advice from bookselling staff regarding awarded titles or by facsimile medals on book covers and so, again, booksellers had awarded titles as one of the guides to their inventory.

6.3.5. Perceived Economic and Non-Economic Impacts From Awards: Sections E and F

The last two sections of the questionnaire focused attention on the perceptions by booksellers of the awards that were most prominent in the field of Australian children's literature. Awards that were common knowledge, along with those mentioned in literary periodicals and trade journals, were listed to assess the familiarity level experienced by booksellers. The first table shows the strength of the significance of a range of children's book awards in terms of economic benefit, and the second shows the benefit in the non-economic terms of reputation, status in the marketplace and bargaining power.

Table: 25**Perceived Economic Significance of Awards for Booksellers**

n=10

	Extremely Significant	Very Significant	Significant	Somewhat Significant	Not Significant
Hans Christian Andersen Award (International award)	0	0	2	4	3
Phoenix (International)	0	0	0	0	8
Mythopoeic Award (International)	0	0	0	1	7
Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award (International)	0	0	1	3	5
CBCA Awards (Australian)	4	3	2	1	0
YARA Award (Australian)	0	0	2	1	4
Nan Chauncy Award (Australian)	0	0	1	2	6
Aurealis Award (Australian)	0	0	0	4	5
Ena Noel Award (Australian)	0	0	1	2	5
Children's Choice Awards (Aust.)	1	1	2	2	3
Ethel Turner Award (Australian)	0	0	0	3	6
Patricia Wrightson Award (Aust.)	0	0	0	3	6
Crichton Award (Australian)	0	1	3	4	1
Premier's Awards in each State (Australian award)	0	1	4	3	1
NZ Book Awards (NZ)	0	0	1	3	4
Newbery Medal (USA)	0	3	0	4	2
Caldecott Medal (USA)	0	3	1	2	2
Other US awards (USA)	0	0	0	1	7
Canadian Library Association Children's and YA Awards (Canada)	0	0	1	1	6
Other Canadian Awards (Canada)	0	0	0	0	8
Carnegie Award (UK)	0	4	1	2	2
Kate Greenaway Medal (UK)	0	4	1	2	2
Other British Awards (UK)	0	1	0	0	7

Table : 26**Perceived Non-Economic Significance of Awards for Booksellers**

n=10

	Extremely Significant	Very Significant	Significant	Somewhat Significant	Not Significant
Hans Christian Andersen Award (International)	0	1	1	3	4
Phoenix Award (International)	0	0	0	0	8
Mythopoeic Award (International)	0	0	0	1	7
Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award (International)	0	1	0	2	6
CBCA Awards (Australian)	5	1	1	2	1
Yara (Australian)	2	0	1	0	4
Nan Chauncy Award (Australian)	1	0	0	2	6
Aurelis Award (Australian)	0	1	0	3	4
Ena Noel Award (Australian)	0	0	3	1	5
Children's Choice Awards (Aust.)	3	1	1	2	3
Ethel Turner Award (Australian)	1	0	0	3	5
Patricia Wrightson Award (Aust.)	1	0	0	3	5
Crichton Award (Australian)	1	1	2	3	2
Premier's Awards in each State (Australian)	0	2	3	2	2
NZ Children's & YA awards (NZ)	0	0	1	3	4
Newbery Medal (USA)	1	1	1	3	3
Caldecott medal (USA)	1	1	2	0	4
Other US Awards (USA)	0	0	0	1	7
Canadian Library Assoc Children's & YA Awards (Can.)	0	1	1	0	6
Other Canadian Awards (Can.)	0	0	1	0	7
Carnegie (UK)	1	1	2	1	4
Kate Greenaway (UK)	1	1	2	1	4
Other UK Awards (UK)	1	0	0	0	7

The listed awards might be expected to exact some influence on key players such as booksellers. Although this research focused principally on Australian awards and was limited to awards for Australian literature, overseas awards for Australian literature were also included to determine if these had any impact on Australian bookseller behavior. The substantial and prestigious international awards presented to Sonya Hartnett, Libby Gleeson, Robert Ingpen and others might be expected to have an impact on demand and supply. Consequently, international and Australian awards were assessed for a degree of influence. From the responses eight overseas awarded titles were perceived to offer some economic returns while ten overseas awarded titles were perceived to offer non-economic

impacts. The degree of significance expressed for overseas awards in terms of non-economic elements may be an expression of some cultural value placed on overseas awards which is not necessarily translated into inventory decision making by booksellers. Qualitative evidence gave little support for stocking overseas awarded titles unless they were demanded.

For bookseller's inventory decisions regarding children's literary awards, the conclusion is that awards do not exert a very strong influence. Overall, on a five point Likert Scale, most responses fell into the middle field. The only 'extremely significant' tally occurred for CBC awarded titles. In qualitative evidence from responses there is not a great deal of support by booksellers for the view that money could be made by handling shortlisted or winning titles except for CBC shortlisted titles. These awards are probably the best known in Australian communities with some national media coverage and the celebration of Book Week. The second cluster of influential awards is the Newbery/Caldecott Medal winners (US awards). These are the oldest of the awards for children's literature and it could be hypothesised that 'good' bookshops would hold these titles. Similarly, the British awards, such as the Carnegie Award and the Kate Greenaway Medal, are prestigious and bigger booksellers may see opportunities for economic returns. These overseas awards are not part of the overall scope of this project but help to round out the picture of the 'award influence' on booksellers, who in turn respond to assessments of potential demand.

In terms of non-economic outcomes from handling children's titles which have won the same range of awards, the picture shows diversity. Booksellers may express interest in the range of awards both Australian and overseas and have knowledge about the winning titles. However, this may not translate into action such as inventory acquisitions. CBC awards rank consistently higher in awareness.

Booksellers will individually perceive potential returns as a dichotomy: initially, there will be an economic appraisal which affects commercial sustainability. Alongside this will be decisions which develop the social capital within a community, which in fact is a

recursive influence that is likely to affect demand in the long run. Thus, what was an unquantifiable, intangible action in the short run might quite possibly result in economic gain in the long run resulting in entrepreneurial profit. Qualitative evidence from booksellers supports this. The prospect is the justification for some of the non-economic promotions which booksellers conduct. The combined stances of economic and non-economic action affect a bookseller's income, their positioning in the market, their reputation for staying abreast of quality contemporary literature, their inventory decisions and their enthusiasm for promoting awarded titles.

6.4 Conclusion

Booksellers constantly make economic decisions to fulfil the business requirements of a viable organisation but the profit motive underpins all. There may be room to indulge in personal passion or promotional activities which have an uncertain direct cost-benefit return but in the end, over a long run, sound financial returns are necessary. The evidence indicates that in this regard, booksellers are understandably conservative. They assess the potential of the local market and while some may undertake proactive activities, many allow demand to dictate supply decisions.

The announcement of a shortlisted or a winning children's book award in Australia is not a call to action for booksellers on the whole. The impact of the winning title announcement is often negligible. Booksellers may be interested to note the winning announcement, read media and journal reviews of winning titles, and they may mount a small display in the business premises, but economic reality flattens the level of activity.

In an environment of mutual dependence, the three cohorts within the producers' group comprise the seller's market. Booksellers play an important role linking publishers and the consumer market in a sequence that begins with the author and the illustrator and is facilitated by the publisher. In common with the other members of this producer group, booksellers are involved in entrepreneurial risk management as they make decisions which affect their profit-making and some of those decisions are related to awarded

literature. The only awarded titles which booksellers face with some degree of certainty in the Australian market are the CBC shortlisted titles and even these are not embraced by all booksellers. As they face the consumer cohorts, market forces are both dynamic and unpredictable.

Chapter 7

The Responses of Public Librarians

*The vast majority of awards and lists reflect the standards and tastes of adults; they should be viewed as resources rather than prescriptions for children's reading*¹¹.

7.1 Introduction

The responses of public librarians reflect the thoughts and actions of professional consumers whose mission is to address the literary needs of children and young adults in their communities. It was hypothesised that they were a discrete cohort, demonstrating a working knowledge of their communities or market, a professional interest, insight and familiarity with children's literature and an appreciation of awards for exemplary literature for children and young adults. Their responses indicated a serious commitment to their role as gatekeepers as they made decisions to deliver the best in literature to their youth market.

In Australia public librarians are employed by local government authorities. Generally, within the public library section, one member of staff is designated responsible for children's and youth services. This person may be a qualified librarian or it may not; the position may be part-time or full-time. In a time of increasing public financial accountability, the economic rationalist approach has sometimes meant that the position of a youth service librarian has been removed in favour of more flexible staffing arrangements and thus the children's specialisation has suffered. This may impact on how public librarians view awarded titles.

¹¹ Stoodt, Amspaugh and Hunt 1996:65

The market for the youth services librarian is diverse, not only due to the individual differences of the child and teen readership but also because children interact with a range of other gatekeepers. Public librarians have the opportunity to promote awarded literature by displaying the literature, interacting with the youth clientele, discussing this literature with other gatekeepers, featuring awarded literature in holiday programs and the like. These responses to the questionnaire offer a view of the public library and the librarian within the award consuming environment.

However, there is a macro-context involved as well. The community at large is economically, socially and often culturally and educationally diverse and some of the children and young adults will not interact with the library. It was noted in some responses that many of the rate-paying community are not registered with the public library and many registered borrowers may never interact with library staff, preferring to browse and borrow anonymously. Since the public library serves the whole community, including non-users, the sphere of influence of the public librarian is somewhat indeterminate. Public librarian respondents indicated that they used awarded titles as a focus for their programs, developing activities and displays which they hoped would be attractive to all the youth community.

7.2 Defining the Cohort

The staff member who is responsible for the public library service to the youth of the community was asked to respond on behalf of each public library and they were designated 'the librarian', acting as an intermediary gatekeeper between the book industry and the youth of their community. Geographic reach extended to both urban and regional areas of New South Wales. The perceptions in responses represent a wide spectrum of experience and professional practice and several respondents indicated that the questions asked in the survey reflected questions that they had been asking themselves for some time.

While there is no uniformly defined role for children's librarians in Australia, responses show that there are several elements in common over the range of libraries. These include knowledge of child development and cognitive development, an understanding of the range of reading abilities, child interests and motivations and a fundamental mission to match the range of narratives and genres to the relevant individuals in the youth community. This cohort was proud of its responsibility to make professional judgments concerning titles to acquire, use, display and promote, all of which involved personal assessment of awarded titles, insightful knowledge of the potential readership and the perceived nature of the community served by the library. This will have practical implications for awarded literature.

While the survey was inclusive of a wide range of children's and young adult book awards in Australia, responses overwhelmingly referred to CBC awards. Furthermore, most respondents adopted the CBC shortlisted titles as CBC winning titles. Almost all public librarians indicated that they used the shortlisted titles in the April-August period for activities involving collection development, promotions, programs and displays and many respondents also indicated that these activities are intended to do more than merely promote awarded titles. They promote the public library itself within the community and showcase all the literature available. Librarians regard this period as an opportunity for the community to develop familiarity with the library and the staff as they conduct programs which are fun and raise the profile of children's and young adult literature in general. One respondent encapsulated the strategy of many: 'The competitions, storytimes, etc [in Book Week]... really add to the culture of the library. What matters most is seeing kids enjoy the activities and wanting to come back. We want kids to have a positive view of the library.'

7.3 Responses

Prior to the main body of the questionnaire, participants were asked to complete an introductory enquiry regarding their recollections of winning titles from the previous five years. This introductory exercise was primarily a context-setting one to define the focus

of the study. All the respondents except one recorded only the results of CBC awards, although there are many other awarding bodies which operate within the Australian children's literary environment. The result of this exercise and later responses demonstrate the primacy of the CBC shortlisted and winning titles.

There was a merging of shortlisted and winning titles and even of honour books and frequently, there were inaccuracies of dates and author or title combinations. Several respondents did not fill in any entries at all in this table. This may have been due to lack of knowledge, lack of interest in this detail or lack of time to consult a source. Table 27 shows the recollections of acclaimed titles for 2003-2007. These results are presented as follows:

Table: 27

Recollections of Awarded Titles by Public Librarians

n=21

Year	No. of Titles Recalled (winners, honour books, short listed)	Author of Acclaimed Titles	Illustrator of Acclaimed Titles	Name of Winning Award
2007	36 titles	25	5	18 CBC awards 1 other award
2006	29 titles	22	4	17 CBC awards
2005	21 titles	16	4	14 CBC awards
2004	22 titles	18	2	12 CBC awards
2003	20 titles	18	5	9 CBC awards

The table clearly shows that respondents regard the CBC awards as the dominant awarding body. Considering that the CBC shortlist each April consists of thirty titles and the winning list in August consists of five winners and up to ten honour books, the recollection list is not extensive. This poor level of recollection may be due to several factors: there may be too many titles involved to remember specific titles; acclaimed books may be unimpressive and not remembered; there may be so many worthwhile books in the market that acclaimed books are not outstanding in the field or it could mean that some respondents simply did not complete the section. The most recent two years of

awarded books were best remembered. The low figures for illustrator listing may indicate many elements at work which could include factors such as awarded novels not having an illustrator or awarded books which have an illustrator simply not being recalled in terms of the illustrator.

As shown by later responses, public librarians often purchase the entire CBC shortlist (ie. 30 titles) when it is announced in April. They use these titles extensively in educational and recreational programs in the period leading up to Children's Book Week in late August. To librarians the focus of their collection development and activities, displays and promotions is the shortlist and they regard the titles in the shortlist as the body of acclaimed titles. Most respondents discussed CBC shortlisted titles in responding to questions about winning titles. Most of the excitement and programming had run its course by Book Week at the end of August.

7.3.1 Overall Experience of an Award Announcement: Section A

Section A was the start of the body of the questionnaire and it aimed to determine the general impact of the announcement of awarded titles on public librarians in Australia. Questioning was designed to be quantitative to give a skeletal picture followed by an opportunity to add qualitative detail. These questions were designed to present a starting point before moving into a more specific level of questioning. Additionally, results would reveal a librarian's basic level of engagement with the award process. Table 27 collates the responses to the quantitative questioning in this section.

Table: 28**General Impact of Book Awards on Public Librarians**

n=21

Question	Y = Yes Highly Significant	N = No Not Significantt	S=Somewhat Significant
1.Has the announcement of a winning title been significant for you?	10	3	7
2.Has the announcement of a winning title prompted you to buy or read this title?	17	1	2
3. Do you have a passion for excellence, believing that awards highlight the best in the field ?	6	4	11
4. Do you promote awarded titles to the children in your care?	14	0	5
5. Do you follow announcements of book awards to keep in touch with contemporary publishing?	14	2	4
6. Do you examine winning titles to try to understand why they are acclaimed ?	12	2	6
7. Do you think that awarding literature adds to our cultural heritage ?	11	3	6
8. When a winning title is announced do you try to acquire the title to use with your children?	15	2	3

Clearly book awards are highly significant for librarians. Many of the respondents pointed out that Question 3 required dual responses which might not be mutually inclusive: many felt passionate about excellence but they were not so sure that awarded titles represented the best in the field. Possibly, due to this ambivalence, some respondents answered with 'somewhat significant'. Comments indicated that most librarians routinely purchase all the CBC shortlisted titles. However, some public librarians expressed reservations as to whether the library had thus acquired the 'best' in children's literature. Respondents also pointed out that while the CBC shortlist exemplifies literary merit there is always the situation where some very worthy titles are not formally acclaimed with an award. The responses to Question 4 agreed with later responses which indicated that a number of librarians were critical of some awarded titles because they assessed the value of these works by the usefulness for programs and popularity with their young patrons. Others were critical of awarded titles but still used them because of their usefulness for programs due to support in the form of merchandise and activities produced by the CBC and commercial enterprises which are separate from

the CBC awarding body. Other librarians accepted the CBC shortlist as representing one judging panel's list of exemplary youth literature and despite personal criticisms of the awarded titles, devised original programs for the shortlist period and the annual Book Week celebrations (Fisher 1998:99).

Some librarians commented that they bought all the shortlist (and some libraries buy multiple copies) because they see it as an objective assessment of quality Australian literature and as such should be promoted and supported. A typical comment was that public libraries generally purchase the entire shortlist to support good Australian literature and provide support for the Australian writing community. Even when they do not agree with the awarded titles, respondents commented that it stimulates professional discussion about the new material. One respondent who purchased multiple copies of the CBC shortlisted titles for a multi-branched library network circulated information about the titles to all their library staff and so indirectly inserviced library staff even though they did not often meet face-to-face. These staff members would then be well aware of the shortlisted titles preceding the Book Week announcement of a winning title and better able to use them in their local programs. At another Public Library there was a small competition for staff members from all sections to guess the winning titles from the CBC shortlist and they read many of the titles in the April-August period. The underlying rationale behind these informal professional development activities is that a better informed librarian is a better performing one in terms of presenting quality literature to the youth community.

The comment section following the table revealed that the reason for purchasing the CBC shortlisted titles for a library's collection often had less to do with the librarian's assessment of quality or potential popularity and more to do with a pragmatic decision to make use of the titles for programming along with the librarian's perception of community expectations that the titles will appear in the library's collection. The CBC shortlist is advertised in CBC posters which the librarian may display, often highlighted in school libraries and sometimes reviewed in the media and some community members would expect the public library to hold and promote these titles since they are seen as

nationally recognised titles. However, later evidence will show that many parents do not have a high regard for the shortlist or any awarded titles and thus would not care whether the library held and used the titles or not.

Some librarian respondents expressed irritation that they acquired and housed awarded books on the shelves and these titles were not borrowed or suitable for programs in the library, supporting the view that the priority in collection development should be popular titles which children are sure to read. An operational problem was cited, when librarians pointed out that library storytimes require books that engage as good ‘read-alouds’ and that the winning books are often very serious, conceptual in content and set at a reading level above the reading age of their community’s children. This alludes to an assessment of worthwhileness based on usefulness for programs.

This section of the questionnaire was simple in its approach but for many respondents it triggered some wider discussion. One respondent was moved to some reflective thinking on issues surrounding the process of book awards, asking: why does a particular book win? Who are the people making the decisions? What criteria are used to determine a winner?

7.3.2 Strength of Impacts of Awards: Section B

Section B asked respondents to think more deeply to assess the degree of impact on them following the announcement of a winning title or titles. Almost all of the respondent’s thinking applied to the CBC shortlist rather than CBC winning titles and this was accepted as valid for the research project. The collation of the responses is set out in Table 29.

Table: 29**Strength of Impacts of Awards on Public Librarians**

n=21

Questions	Extremely Important	Very Important	Important	Slightly Important	Unimportant
1. When you hear of an award how significant is it for you?	4	9	4	3	0
2. When you hear of an award how motivated are you to read this book?	8	6	4	2	0
3. Following the winning announcement, how long is there an impact?	5+ yrs. 6	4 yrs. 0	3 yrs. 1	2 yrs. 4	1 yr or less 7
4. When the awarded title is announced do you.....?	Buy the title 18	Plan to buy it in the future 0	Look for reviews 0	Ask others for their opinion 0	Ignore it 0
5. Is it important to have children's & YA book awards?	Extremely Important 6	Very Important 6	Important 7	Slightly Important 1	Unimportant 1
6. What do you think of awarded book titles?	Outstanding Books 2	Very high quality literature 10	Good books 6	Mediocre books 1	Books of poor quality 0
7. How do you feel about the process & media attention – is this important?	Extremely Important 9	Very Important 7	Important 2	Slightly Important 1	Unimportant 1

In summary, the evidence shows that over half the respondents rate the significance of the event as extremely or highly significant and not one respondent thought it was unimportant. In responding to a question of motivation, 86% replied that they were motivated to acquire and read the awarded books; almost all the respondents attempted to acquire the books for their collections, budgetary constraints permitting. On reflecting on the importance of literary awards and the attendant media promotion with in-house activities, 81% responded that such events were extremely or highly important.

Opinions about the longevity of awarded books showed some polarisation – half the respondents felt that awarded books had a life of two years or less but nearly one third of respondents felt that awarded books had a life of five years or more. How librarians quantified longevity was not examined but comments suggest that longevity was based on continuity of borrowing by the community or the continuing power to engage when used in library programs. In terms of the longevity of award winning titles, one librarian commented that ‘Looking at a display of winning titles at the recent CBC Conference [Melbourne 2008] I was struck by how many of these are still in print ... the awards do have an impact which extends over years’. It may not necessarily be the awards alone which have resulted in these titles being demanded over the long run: the title may inherently be popular and thus be still in print but the exposure through gaining an award may have played a part.

Although the awards are designed to highlight excellence, a majority of librarians made a relatively cautious assessment that winning titles only indicate ‘very high’ quality books. Of course the personal definition of an ‘excellent’ book informs each response and the questioning did not explore the librarian’s criteria for measuring quality. The assessment of quality may indirectly be an expression of other views, including for example, that awarded titles are not always suitable for promotional activities or awarded titles are not always popular with young readers. In addition, some librarians expressed difficulty in answering in a general way because for every generalisation they felt there were notable exceptions.

Many librarians felt very critical that media attention, in particular reporting in the press, gave the announcement of the CBC shortlist and awards only limited coverage. They felt that the event deserved much greater exposure to raise the profile of children’s and young adult literature. Most felt that this should be a responsibility of the CBC. Shortlisted and winning titles may be promoted by their publishers in signings, author visits and events such as conferences and festivals but librarians felt that this had little impact on the community.

Responses indicated that popularity for young people in junior fiction and older readers' titles was possibly based more on word of mouth than the announcement of an award: several respondents commented that children or teens talk amongst themselves about the 'cool' books they have found, and that in reality awards for books impress adults more than children. Indeed, some respondents went so far as to say that if an awarded book was seen to have parental approval, it may be counter-productive.

Many librarians commented that their personal judgment played a huge role in how they recommended and exposed an awarded novel or picture book. Most librarians asserted that they knew their communities and their borrowing patterns and could discern potentially successful titles. Librarians, as well, generally had responsibility for collection development, displays, promotions and presentations. Thus, the opinions of librarians concerning awarded books have a strong impact on the outreach activities and promotions in the library. Despite cynicism by some, most respondents indicated that the book awards offer a fresh look at children's literature and opportunities for enthusiastic promotion of innovative, contemporary children's books.

Section B of the questionnaire revealed some critical comments which reflected the professional debate between the ideals of the librarian and the reality of the marketplace. Some librarians felt that the CBC awards had diminished in effectiveness because of the expanded number of shortlisted titles in the shortlist (ie. 30 titles) though others revealed that they intended to buy the whole shortlist but often booksellers did not stock them all, which was irritating. This corresponds with some of the comments made by booksellers themselves.

Some critical comment by librarians was aimed at publishers, reflecting a belief that publishers, committed to the profit motive, may lean towards publishing the kind of book which has a chance of getting on the short list. Respondents felt that this might prevent a truly objective assessment of worthy manuscripts by publishers and work against a wide acceptance of all awarded titles by booksellers.

Other respondents felt that authors or illustrators who had won awards in the past would find it easier to get published and thus would win awards in the future based on their reputation. In the case of nonfiction, they also felt that subjects which had been successfully awarded in the past would be rehashed in a formulaic way with shortlisting in mind. English (2005a:148) felt that bias, political correctness, publisher's influence, debatable literary quality and the like in the process of awards judging, was partially overcome by having a larger selection panel rather than a smaller one with diversity of judges' qualifications rather than a domination of sectarian interests.

One librarian commented that children liked their favourite authors to win prizes (as exemplified by children's choice awards) rather than have prizes given to outstanding works which are 'considered by a bunch of adults' (supported by Bunbury 1995:221). A librarian who supports children's choice awards will experience an impact in the time leading up to the winning announcement of the most popular title but very little impact following the announcement. It is worth noting that the librarian gatekeeper may exert some influence on the voting for a favourite children's choice title through energetic promotion of particular titles and the process of collection development which will necessarily involve some professional selections of titles and authors for the library.

The final critical cluster of comments focused on the suitability of the shortlisted or winning titles for particular communities: one librarian felt that while the standard of material selected for CBC shortlisting and book awards was high and 'it just doesn't match the reading age or taste in our community'. This claim of irrelevancy is a serious one for awards if they are marketed as one of the measures of quality in contemporary Australian literature and if one of the criteria is engagement. The comments also correlate closely with the responses of many of the parents who were unimpressed with awards for literature, expressing the view that relevant, engaging literature for their children was their prime consideration and that awards didn't matter.

Some librarian responses indicated that the CBC criteria were too limited, calling for books which not only demonstrated literary quality but also demonstrated engaging

qualities. Many commented that they did not understand why some books were chosen for awards, even after they had read them. This especially applied to the young adult winning titles, some of which were ‘difficult to persevere with’. This response represents the gulf between award criteria and the judges decisions on one side and the professional practitioners’ view on the other. Lack of meaningful communication by the CBC and other awarding bodies to involved consumers is a key variable in this range of responses.

7.3.3 Promotional Environment of Awards: Section C

By adopting the CBC shortlist, the merchandise, the promotional events, the literary calendar and the CBC’s ability to draw authors and illustrators to launches and conferences, public librarians have implicitly acknowledged the prominent position of the CBC in the assessment of literature. While this brings advantages for the public librarians, a number of them expressed a degree of ambivalence, even resentment, about aspects of the process. Librarians were asked six questions about the promotion surrounding the award process. While all respondents seemed to reply with the CBC shortlisting and award process in mind, the questions were intended to encompass the experience of librarians with any children’s book awards they encountered in the workplace. A tally of the answers is as follows:

Table: 30

**Promotional Environment of Children's Book Awards for
Public Librarians**

n=21

Questions	Y Yes	N No	S Somewhat
1. Is the cluster of celebratory events centred on book awards important in getting the message out about acclaimed literature?	17	0	3
2. Do you look for awarded titles in the selection of books to buy or use?	13	2	5
3. Does the depiction of a medal or similar on a book cover influence what you buy or use?	8	4	8
4. Is there a positive relationship between an awarded book and the longevity of demand for the book?	3	8	9
5. Does an awarded book make a book a new 'classic' which everyone should read?	0	11	9
6. Do you promote titles which have been awarded?	8	2	10

Key issues were raised by these questions. The first two questions lie at the heart of the librarians' responses to the promotion of winning children's titles. All respondents thought that the celebratory events surrounding book awards were important and in their workplace librarians acted by adding awarded books to their library's collections and actively promoting awarded books in their programs and activities. A strong majority of respondents were influenced by the facsimile medals or emblazoned statements on an awarded book's cover seeing these as tangible evidence of quality.

The question of longevity, however, was not clearly supported. It was obvious from later comments that librarians could think of examples of awarded titles which were enthusiastically read for many years and other titles which were not. This correlates with later responses where respondents indicated that the inherent qualities of the title result in popularity of the title rather than the incidence of an award.

Related to this question, respondents were asked for an opinion regarding whether an acclaimed book could be regarded as a classic (which would imply longevity). Most librarians expressed caution on this question. Some awarded books only ever have an original printing but other titles remain in high demand for many years. There was some confusion about the term classic as some respondents pointed out that some of the books which they regard as classics from the past are difficult to read and not enjoyed by most children or teens today. This was not the meaning which was intended and it was misinterpreted by some respondents: the term was intended to be used in a more contemporary sense of something of exemplary and possibly enduring value. Surprisingly, given the element of doubt about the term, nearly half the librarians indicated that awarded titles went some way toward a book being a new classic which everyone should read. This seems at odds with other answers which criticised the choices of judges and expressed lack of agreement regarding the engagement value of awarded titles, especially young adult awarded titles. There is some tension between the concepts of a classic, the popularity of a piece of literature and the resultant absorption into the body of cultural capital.

The comments for Section C reflect some of the primary concerns of public library management. Collection development policies and budget allocations are often based on circulation statistics and so it may be expedient for librarians to purchase books which are potentially popular with children and young adults. This priority has inherent dangers, not the least of which may be the avoidance of challenging literature which extends and reshapes the literary world of children and young adults. Some award winning books may be in this category. Many librarians wrote about the importance of popularity as one of the essentials in their collection development and one went so far as to say that because awards did not always reflect popular tastes, they were essentially meaningless. There was evidence in responses, however, that many librarians support free access to all kinds of literature and information and expressed the view that if popularity should be the guiding principle in collection development, then access to awarded titles will be restricted. Most librarians accepted the paradigm of wide-ranging access, asserting that public libraries should offer the classics, the popular, the challenging and the

contemporary in their collections to serve all parts of the community. These respondents agreed that this inclusive rationale included an acceptance and promotion of awarded titles.

Some librarians felt concerned that community interest in awarded titles was minimal and that promotion of these titles relied heavily on personalised reader-advising and energetic profiling through library programs. However, conversely, others commented that they always purchased the entire CBC shortlist because the community expected to find those books there. It is possible that both these views are valid as some adults will expect the titles to be available in the library and some will not be interested. Several librarians commented that awarded literature impresses adults more than children and that children just want a good story. However, they also indicated that parents have a strong influential role in what children read: they point out displays including shortlisted book displays, are aware of award publicity, search out winning titles, suggest what their children might like to borrow, read aloud to them, discuss material, enthuse about new books and bring their children to the library for storytimes and programs which feature awarded books.

The task of promotion of awarded literature was generally important to the responding librarians. Excluding consideration of a title becoming a 'classic,' all other responses were not strongly negative. From comments, many of the 'somewhat' responses represented a qualified and slightly positive stance. An example is where some respondents commented that a 'yes' or 'no' answer for Question 6 depended on the nature and promotional qualities of particular awarded books.

7.3.4 Recognition of Awards in Australia: Section D

Responses for Section D of the questionnaire revealed the level of public librarian knowledge about a range of awards for children's and young adult literature in Australia. Although almost every librarian focused on the CBC shortlisting and award process throughout the questionnaire, there are many other awards. In Table 31, the first four awards are international awards, followed by ten Australian awards and the rest originate

in New Zealand, America, Canada and the UK. Public libraries would not acquire all of these but in professional journals all of these awards are publicised. The respondents were asked to peruse the list of awards and indicate the strength of their recognition. This questioning aimed at providing a collective perspective of awards which carry interest and influence in Australia. The results are as follows:

Table: 31

Recognition of Literary Awards by Public Librarians

n=21

AWARDS	Extremely Familiar	Very Familiar	Familiar	Have Heard of This Award	Never Heard of This Award
Hans Christian Andersen Medal (International)	1	7	10	1	0
Phoenix Award (International)	0	1	2	0	17
Mythopoeic Award (International)	0	0	1	1	18
Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award (International)	2	2	8	3	4
Children's Book Council of Australia Awards (CBC – AUS)	18	2	0	0	0
YARA Award (online – AUST.)	2	3	4	3	8
Nan Chauncy Award (AUST.)	7	3	5	3	2
Aurealis Award (AUST.)	4	3	6	2	5
Ena Noel Award (AUST.)	2	4	2	3	9
Children's Choice Awards (Popular choice award in each State of AUST.)	13	3	3	0	1
Ethel Turner Prize (AUS)	8	2	7	1	2
Patricia Wrightson Prize (AUST.)	6	3	6	1	3
Crichton Award for New Illustrators (AUST.)	10	2	7	1	0
Premier's Awards (awarded in each State of AUST.)	9	5	4	0	1
New Zealand Book Awards (NZ)	2	3	12	1	2
Newbery Medal (USA)	7	5	7	0	1
Caldecott Medal (for Illustrators – USA)	7	4	8	0	1
Other USA Awards (USA)	1	1	5	2	9
Canadian Library Association's Books of the Year (CAN)	0	1	8	5	6
Other Canadian Awards (CAN)	0	0	1	4	11
Carnegie Award (UK)	5	8	6	0	1
Kate Greenaway Medal (UK)	5	6	9	0	0
Other British awards (UK)	0	1	5	2	9

From a field of 21 respondents, 95% indicated that they were 'extremely' or 'very familiar' with the CBC awards while the next strongest response relates to children's choice awards with a score of 76% over the same range of responses. The third most familiar award is the Premier's Award group with a score of nearly 67%. These results give an insight into the dominant awards in the professional environment of the sample of public librarians. It is interesting that the four most familiar overseas awards, the Carnegie Award, the Newbery Medal, the Caldecott Medal and the Kate Greenaway Medal are close in responses and evenly split in origin between the UK and the USA. Qualitative comments showed that collection development and promotion decisions of librarians sometimes involved these awards. Clearly, based on responses in this table, most librarians know about most of the awards at some level. These results show some similarity in pattern with the responses of teachers and teacher librarians but no similarity with the responses of parents. The publicity regarding awards is often limited to professional journals and parent access to this information is limited but even given this, parents indicated that they were not generally interested in children's book awards.

The questionnaire then contained five qualitative questions which related to the overall view of awards in Australia. The first question touched on issues of nationhood, asking public librarians if they thought it was important to know about overseas awards or whether Australian titles were most suitable for Australian children and YAs. There was a strong body of opinion that Australian literature had priority in both collection development and promotion through reader-advising and the development of programs. These respondents embraced the notion that Australian award winning titles are simply more suited to Australian children. One librarian was of the opinion that 'Australian titles are such a high standard that often there is little need to look further...'. Another felt very firmly that overseas award winning books were unnecessary: 'Our [Australian] award winning books are so related to kids' lives. They want to be able to identify with the stories and it's hard enough to get them to read with all the other distractions' and a further professional commented that '... [overseas books] are often too preachy and

grown-up to appeal to the majority of our children'. No examples of such books were offered.

However, some mentioned the subtle gains available through reading overseas books in the understanding of life and cultures in other places and that these books offered styles and perspectives which present a rich cross-section of literature to the collection. One respondent typified the thoughts of several others by commenting that:

Excellence in children's and young adult literature knows no borders of country or culture. Certainly the presentation of Australia's landscape, language and way of life in books is familiar but let's expose our children to a wide variety of experiences through literature.

Another said that 'It is good to read and promote Australian children's literature but also important that children have the opportunity to read authors from a different background to our own'. Thus this question brought a mixed response: while Australian awarded titles were most highly valued, overseas awarded titles had quite strong support and many respondents indicated that overseas awarded books should be part of the exposure of literature to children. For more than half the sample, collection development will include their assessment of awarded literature from both Australia and overseas.

The second question asked librarians if overseas book awards influenced the books that they presented to children through reader advising, display, storytimes, holiday programs, school visits and other programs. Some respondents made a point of presenting prominent overseas awarded titles but most choose to exercise personal professional judgment, selecting overseas awarded titles which they feel are appropriate to the audience, fit a theme, have an engaging writing style, develop an interesting plot and are suitable to work with. Most librarians were concerned that their promotion of literature in their libraries embodied quality literature linked with relevance to, and engagement of, their particular community/audience and so choices for presentations might or might not include overseas awarded books.

Some librarians, responded that they rarely present overseas awarded books to the young people in their libraries as some overseas books do not travel well to Australian audiences, but no examples were given. Another view was that overseas publishing styles make books unattractive to Australian children regardless of content. These comments have not been tied to the responses on the table above, so it is not possible to discern how familiar the respondents are with overseas awards. Use of awarded overseas titles may depend on the familiarity with overseas awarded books, personal assessment of the librarian, the kinds of programs conducted in the library and perceptions of the constituent community.

The third question asked which overseas country of origin, librarians favoured in their acquisitions and presentation of overseas literature. Some commented that they liked good stories from any country and especially good picture books but the tallies show that the favoured overseas source for award winning titles is the UK (12 responses), followed by America (8), New Zealand (4) and Canada (1). The reason for the UK preference may relate to our national roots, the promotion of UK imprints in Australia with shared copyright and other rights, librarian respect for the style of publishing in the UK, publicity in professional journals or any other number of factors.

Question 4 asked public librarians which Australian awarded literature they were most interested in, when making decisions about presenting literature to children in programs involving reading aloud, book talks, displays and book clubs. The tallies revealed that CBC award winners were favoured for presentations in all their forms (18 responses) followed by Children's Choice awarded titles (11) and Premier's Awards (2). Several librarians said that although they were very familiar with other awards and routinely purchased them for their collections, these other awarded books were not the favoured titles used in promotions and presentations. For librarians, the potential for programming is an important variable as well as the possibility for encouraging reading in young people. Thus the librarian seeks quality literature which may be signposted by an award but also engages the youth community.

The final question in this bracket asked librarians whether they felt there was a difference between an awarded title and a title which engaged children. Some of the responses asserted that awarded titles often also engaged children. Some public librarians replied that 'Generally the titles on the [CBC] shortlist are very appealing to children and often picture books have already been used before the winning announcement because of their appeal'. Most respondents stated that engagement was important and a winning title would not necessarily engage even though the book may be deemed excellent. Almost all the librarians indicated strongly that they are the final arbiters of what is promoted in their libraries. They evaluate all books whether they are winners or not and whether they are Australian or overseas titles. They also reserve the right to add to the collection or develop programs and displays, books which may or may not be award winning books. In addition, they assert that not all awarded books worked well in children's group programs and that a library's community programming is a group activity.

Reader-advising as an individual promotion offered an opportunity for promoting a different kind of book, including some awarded books. Most felt that sometimes literary merit and reader engagement overlapped but sometimes not. Others pointed out that CBC shortlisted books often also make the children's choice list and so this was an indication of at least some overlap. Some librarians felt that the lack of engagement with awarded books could be attributed to the fact that CBC awards (and many others) are decided upon by adults rather than children and thus may embody an adult perspective. One librarian pointed out that awarded books are often a more demanding read than other 'popular' books and that this sometimes means that they are not highly circulated books no matter what staff do in terms of individual promotion and display. They volunteered that a popular book is often not innovative or different and that awarded books are frequently new, innovative, startling and challenging. Librarians found it exciting when there was coincidence of these qualities where an awarded book was also appealing and popular.

One public librarian expressed rhetorical questions which offered a different perspective from other responses:

Why does one book go in and out on a regular basis while another languishes on the shelves (even when they might have both won awards)? Is it more about where, as Librarians, we put them (i.e. catalogue them)? When a non-fiction book is a winner we put it in the non-fiction section and it is often ignored but if it is put in the fiction section its profile goes up and it is more frequently discovered and read by kids/teens browsing. If a book has merit (award winner or not) and is visible and accessible in the collection, is this the reason an item is borrowed more often?

This indicates that there may be another variable in the raft of influences on child/YA engagement: it is possible that access and location in a library may be an important factor affecting the circulation of items. If award winning titles were placed in very visible, accessible positions, then they too may be borrowed as frequently as popular items. Accessibility, which includes classification, may actually influence promotion of award winning titles.

7.4 Conclusion

Several key elements arose out of the responses of this cohort. For all the consuming cohorts, including public librarians, respondents classified the CBC shortlisted titles as the winning titles. This was accepted for this research project since in the eyes of the respondents CBC shortlisted titles are the winning titles.

This cohort of youth services librarians produced reflective, public library based perspectives which were unique. In their responsibility for collection development there was a strong feeling of Australian nationhood in their acquisition of awarded titles but nearly half the respondents also felt strongly that international awarded titles should be part of their library's collection. Analysis of the degree of nationalism in collection development decisions could be the subject of future research. This research merely asked for an opinion of the professional librarian regarding awarded Australian literature as distinct from overseas awarded literature. For many librarians the more important debate regarded the circulation value of popular titles in the collection as opposed to awarded titles. For all the dominance of the CBC titles, librarians (and others) strongly criticised several aspects of these awards, including the issue of an adult judging process. Aside from this, librarians also reported that often they had to set aside their personal

tastes to satisfy community expectations and to develop a balanced collection. In the end, decision making for collections development and library programs, displays and reader-advising is a matter of professional judgment, made within the limits of the available budget.

It is possible that the management trend toward generalist public librarians might result in an increased dependency on awards for the grading of literary quality and a reliance on the promotional accoutrements which accompany the CBC shortlist. Conversely, it could result in a limited appreciation of the children's literary awarding process. On the whole, for librarians, the children's literary award field is heavily dominated by the CBC shortlist and to a lesser extent the CBC winners list. Responses indicated that the CBC process and its calendar is a matter of convenience for librarians and Children's Book Week has become something of an annual literary convention.

Because public librarians make significant decisions in the matter of literature presented to the children of a community, they are in a powerful gatekeeping position. Awarded literature is especially affected by this. Librarians filter or expand the scope of awarded literature collections, promote the awarded titles or not and actively or passively interact with young borrowers in the discussions of awarded literature.

Although it was not a target of this research, it was obvious from responses that the public librarians have very little communication with teacher librarians who are often serving the same community of young people and working towards the same outcomes in terms of encouraging reading and dealing with the same list of children's and young adult awarded books each year (Fisher 2003:61, Bundy 2003:37). Some networking together may facilitate debate and greater awareness of awarded titles.

Related experience was additionally surveyed from teachers and teacher librarians, who also act as gatekeepers for the children's and young adult community. While many factors are in common in terms of impact, the specialised, educational nature of their role resulted in different perspectives and outcomes.

Chapter 8

The Responses of Teachers & Teacher Librarians

In my professional life, the [CBC] short lists are of more significance than the winners. We usually buy all suitable shortlisted books for reading and discussion... Children's Choice awards reflect children's tastes but are limited by what is popular and known¹².

8.1 Introduction

In interacting with award winning books, the actions of teachers and teacher librarians are informed by twin objectives related to educative or literacy purposes and voluntary or recreational purposes. The desired outcomes are competent young readers who are engaged with literature, capable of analysing literature and enjoying quality literature in their reading. Many teachers and teacher librarians use awarded literature as a benchmark for selection of quality titles and apply their professional skills to encourage and enthuse children in the reading process. Contemporary pedagogical philosophy integrates the different specialisations of the teacher librarian and the classroom teacher and while literacy development is a basic teaching task, the growth of literary appreciation, transformation to literary discernment and development of independent engaged readership is shared by both.

Commonly the teacher librarian's initial response to awarded literature involves decisions about adding the title to their library collection. Many indicated that they read the awarded literature before making this decision. If the awarded titles are added to the collection, it allows discovery of the title by students, promotion of the titles through display, reader-advising of students, the highlighting of the literature in library lessons, the supplying of awarded books to classrooms, the recommending of these acclaimed titles to classroom teachers and embedding these awarded titles into programmed units of

¹² Teacher Librarian response, 2007

study or student research. Often the operations involved in these strategies embraces collaborative planning and cooperative teaching.

Teachers and teacher librarians have a gatekeeping role, acting as key agents in the exposure of awarded titles to students. In common with other cohorts, their experience of awards is predominantly with CBC shortlisted books and CBC awarded titles and while they might not agree with the judges' criteria or the selected awarded titles they are aware of them, purchase them to varying degrees and use them. They are pragmatic and find the promotions and the accoutrements useful in their promotion of reading in their schools.

Questionnaires were circulated to a wide range of schools to overcome any bias through surveying particular schools but in the responses there were no discernible differences attributable to different school paradigms or beliefs. The survey involved teachers and teacher librarians from urban and regional locations and approaches included primary schools and secondary schools. The mix also included state schools, independent and religious schools. Responses were entirely voluntary but dependent on their Principal's permission.

8.2 Defining the Cohort

Responses show that the teacher and teacher librarian role of gatekeeping involves practical, philosophical, pedagogical and personal influences in the reading life of children, even if these professionals do not operate under the same parameters in every school. The requirements of teaching colleagues, management practices, the choices for classroom texts, the library culture and school attitudes toward reading will influence the literary environment in a school and thus the way in which both teachers and teacher librarians act in a school. Responses show that the fundamentals of literature exposure, the presentation of stimulating and engaging titles and the search for quality literature applies to all. There may be schools which exclude some titles because of unacceptable content but the practices with regard to awarded literature did not indicate any major

differences within the cohort. Teachers and teacher librarians are required to implement syllabi, choose literature for class texts and library collections as well as applying a raft of skills to embrace literature for educative and recreational purposes. Awarded literature is part of this literary environment, coming as it does with official accolades.

The gatekeeping role is commonly recognised for teachers and teacher librarians, focussing on both children and teenagers. Young children are heavily dependent on adults to read to them, make literature available in classroom or library collections, facilitate borrowing of literature, discuss and share aspects of literature as well as for many other literary and literacy activities. For teenagers in secondary school, teachers and teacher librarians determine classroom reading, literary texts and library collections, promote literature in a variety of ways, advertise and display awarded literature, discuss literary choices and also encourage exploration of contemporary titles which may include awarded titles. Though peer exchange of opinion and recommendations of titles are powerful forces, school adult gatekeeping develops its own cultural environment and the influence can be stimulating and persuasive. This may be particularly relevant in voting for 'favourites' by children in children's choice award processes – the student may be heavily influenced by the titles made available, presented and praised by any of their gatekeepers.

8.3 Responses

Most teachers and teacher librarians are aware of two major awards for children's literature in Australia. They are the CBC awards with their shortlist announcement in April and promotion of Book Week in August and state-based children's choice awards. Many respondents actively promote one or both of these in their schools.

To a lesser extent respondents were aware of other awards such as the Premier's Award, the Hans Christian Andersen Award and the Newbery Medal title but generally these were not very actively promoted. If knowledge of an awarded titles progressed to action,

it usually involved acquisition for the library collection, display for a time with a relevant sign indicating the special status of the book and occasionally some reading aloud.

In the primary school context, the classroom teacher has a class for the majority of the time and the teacher librarian interacts with these children, usually for one lesson per week. In some school libraries, the librarian may also be deployed to teach subject-specific lessons to release other teachers from face-to-face teaching. In secondary schools most teacher librarians do not take regular classes and students spend time in the library on a more irregular basis: some students use the library voluntarily, some have private study time and there is some library time through a cooperative arrangement with the classroom teacher on a needs basis with a subject specific focus for research. Secondary teachers and teacher librarians indicated that the opportunities for promotion of literature were often limited to CBC posters and a display of shortlisted titles and it is much harder for them to find ways of effectively promoting awarded literature. If the shortlisted or awarded titles coincided with the curriculum requirements some booktalking and analysis of acclaimed titles was possible. Primary teachers and teacher librarians reported more active promotion of CBC shortlisted titles and special activities in Book Week. In the responses from primary and secondary teachers and teacher librarians there were no discernible differences in their personal interest in awarded titles. The differences were in the translation from interest to action.

Most teachers and teacher librarians reported a range of strategies for informing themselves and gathering resources related to awarded books. Many have personal book collections and acquire winning titles. Others use the local public library to borrow winning titles while some reported subscribing to a number of professional journals so they read reviews and articles which featured the winning titles. Many teachers and teacher librarians belong to professional, collegial organisations such as The Primary Teachers Association, English Teachers Association, Australian School Libraries Association and teacher librarians' networks, which initiate discussion of shortlists and winning titles from Australia or overseas. Finally, many teachers and teacher librarians responded that they were part of online blogs, listservs, professional associations and

other cyber-networks. The current awareness of award winning titles is possibly greater than ever before.

Prior to the main body of the questionnaire and to establish a contextual focus, respondents were asked if they were familiar with awarded books in the given period. The table below reflects the responses. In the recording of this, no cognisance was taken for mismatched years or whether in fact a book was a winner, an honour title or a shortlisted book. The only responses excluded were those which cited a title that had never been shortlisted or awarded. What was sought was a notion of the commonly known awards.

Table: 32

Recollections of Awarded Titles by Teachers and Teacher Librarians

n=26

	Titles	Author	Illustrator	Which Award do you Remember?
2007	34	29	7	16 CBC awards, 1 Miles Franklin Award, 1 Premier's Award, 1 Ethel Turner Prize
2006	20	25	5	12 CBC awards, 1 Premier's Award, 1 Nibbles Award(UK), 1 Koala Award (Children's Choice)
2005	25	22	4	13 CBC awards, 1 Premier's Award
2004	14	13	3	7 CBC awards, 1 YARA Award
2003	12	10	5	3 CBC awards, 1 Koala (NSW Children's. Choice), 1 Aurealis Award

It is an oddity that respondents remembered more winning titles for 2005 than for 2006. The reasons for this may include an imperfect memory, a particularly significant list in 2005, mismatching dates with winning titles or any number of other variables. However, the figures do reveal that winning titles are known and remembered in a substantial way. Over the past five years, 26 respondents remembered 105 winning titles: it is possible that respondents consulted an external source to check on specific winning titles but even this action reveals a focus on a particular literary award and thus adds meaning to the

overall intent of the exercise. Whether that knowledge was acted upon is explored later in the questionnaire.

The author and illustrator details were surprisingly comprehensive, but then the cohort represented a group whose knowledge of titles/authors/illustrators is part of their 'tools of trade'. Responses show that professional activity will involve selections to support the curriculum, selections for the library's collections and decisions regarding titles for recreational reading: some of these will be awarded titles.

Unfortunately, some of the children's literary awards are poorly publicised, no matter how worthy, prestigious or financially endowed they may be. The CBC awards are by far the best known. A variety of merchandise and manuals of activities, review posters, teacher's notes and lesson plans have been produced by the CBC and separate commercial organisations, focussing on the CBC shortlist. These are advertised soon after the announcement of the CBC shortlist in April and ahead of the winning announcement in the CBC's Book Week in late August. Responses indicate that many teachers and teacher librarians employ these and their own original activities to present the shortlist to their students in the April-August period, culminating in a climax during Children's Book Week. Most respondents saw Book Week as embracing special activities that include author or illustrator visits, interactive displays, 'Guess the Winning Titles', colouring competitions, fun activities, book-character dress-up parades, 'decorate a door' competitions and other promotions. Most teachers and teacher librarians expressed appreciation regarding this national, well established base for generating excitement about quality literature in their schools.

The qualitative sections in all parts of this questionnaire were more fully completed by the teacher/teacher librarian cohort than for any other cohort. These professionals offered comment, opinion, analysis, examples and discussion throughout all parts. Teachers and teacher librarians seemed to feel comfortable, stimulated and involved about most of the questions and used the open-ended sections to express that.

8.3.1 Overall Experience of an Award Announcement: Section A

The body of the questionnaire began with Section A which asked for basic responses following the announcement of award winning titles. These general questions set a context for more detailed questions later in the questionnaire. It also enabled a subtle triangulation of expressed opinion because issues were revisited in more detail throughout the questionnaire. The results are tabulated in the following table.

Table: 33

General Impact of Book Awards on Teachers and Teacher Librarians

n=26

Questions	Y: Highly Significant	N: Not Significant	S: Somewhat Significant
1. Has the announcement of an award winning title been significant for you?	14	4	8
2. Has the announcement of an award winning title prompted you to search out the title (buy or use) ?	19	2	5
3. Do you have a passion for excellence and that awards/prizes highlight the best?	9	3	14
4. Do you promote award/prize winning books to the children in your care?	18	2	6
5. Do you follow announcements of awards/prizes feeling that this keeps you in touch with contemporary publishing ?	18	3	5
6. Do you examine winning titles to try to understand why they are acclaimed?	13	6	7
7. Do you think that highlighting awarded literature adds to our cultural heritage ?	13	1	12
8. On reading publicity of an awarded title, do you try to get this title to use/display in your work environment?	19	2	5

Since the teachers and teacher librarians who voluntarily answered this survey were possibly already interested in book awards (90% of these respondents indicated that they would like a summary findings report at the end of the study), it is not surprising that the majority of responses to the first question rated the announcement of a winning title as highly significant. Evidence showed that respondents were thinking of a correlation between awards and quality literature and given that status, this literature was worth

acquiring for use in class programming and adding to their library's collection, promoting and displaying. They felt part of a collegial literary group which contributed to the larger cultural heritage.

Many schools purchase the entire CBC shortlist to expose students to the range and these are displayed in the library. In common with other cohorts, respondents referred to the CBC shortlist as the winning titles. Typical of these responses was the comment that 'We purchase all the shortlisted titles and classes create displays based on these books' and 'In my professional life, the shortlists are of more significance than the winners. We usually buy all the suitable shortlisted books for reading and discussion and use winners for comparison with our own favourites'. To respondents the shortlisted titles were the winners.

Budgetary constraints were mentioned frequently in this bracket of responses: the shortlist provides a focus but choices for purchase (whether for library copies or classroom use) still had to be ranked by relevance and usefulness as perceived by those with limited budgetary allowances. Discussion with colleagues was mentioned as a good way to decide whether purchasing a winning title was worth the scarce budget resources. Despite recommendations, many respondents reported that budgetary constraints required judicious management.

In the comments section some teachers and teacher librarians commented that the awarding process was irrelevant to them and did not play a role in their choice of literature, nor did they highlight quality literature or play any part in the promotion of good books to read. They assessed literature by personal and expedient benchmarks and thus followed other criteria. As well, qualitative responses from these and others indicated that the cohort may generally hesitate to make swift judgment of quality without consideration, examining reviews and having some informed collegial discussion before proceeding to decision making. This may have contributed to the 'somewhat significant' responses for many of the questions. Responses indicated that recommendations for buying and using literature come from many sources such as

personal recommendation from other professionals, book awards (and shortlists), bookshop recommendations, journals and conference/network exposure. Aside from this, professionals reported that they considered shortlisted young adult titles with caution: the reasons for this caution were not offered in this section. However, responses in later sections indicated that especially in older reader awards, some acclaimed titles had demonstrated a lack of teenage engagement, irrelevant narrative context, a challenging standard of literary quality that did not attract their student community and themes which were not suited to a school's ethos. Young adult novels are often challenging and sometimes controversial. Most teacher and teacher librarian responses stated in some part of the questionnaire, that tailoring collections for a student community is important and that there were many occasions where there was a disparity between awarded winning titles and teenage engagement. Awarded literature is not paramount and it has to stand alongside the reading imperative of education and the assessment of the educational gatekeepers who are sensitive to the judgments of the YA readers.

While there was overall agreement between primary and secondary professional literary engagement the practical ways in which each sub-cohort operated meant that there was a wide divergence of opinions and practice within these different contexts. Secondary teachers and teacher librarians who identified themselves as that sub-cohort, expressed a priority for curriculum support in resourcing their school and this resulted in a close liaison with the English faculty for fiction acquisitions. This means that in terms of awarded literature, there was another reason for a cautious professional response toward an award announcement as some collaboration needed to occur before a decision on acquisition could be made. Other secondary school staff felt that awards like the CBC awards had little relevance in their professional arena. Fiction books were acquired simply because they had been well reviewed or recommended without any reference to shortlists or awards and it was suggested that this was a better way to go.

Some respondents who work in a junior school context, commented that the impact for awards was greater for younger children because they have fewer opportunities to choose books for themselves. Presenting the shortlist and later the winning titles became a

focused, intensive, microcosmic view of the literary world for a time through the lens of the school gatekeepers. Therefore, presenting a shortlisted or winning title to young children may act as a seal of approval for that title, attracting student attention and respect. Later responses also indicated that the fun of competitions, decorating the library and dressing up to celebrate Book Week does more for encouraging borrowing and discussion about the shortlist, than any number of serious lessons examining the awarded books.

However, several primary teachers also expressed caution regarding acceptance of the shortlisted picture books without personal assessment. Titles in the picture book genre were traditionally suitable for young children but this is no longer true. The nature of the CBC picture book category has clearly moved to encompass the contemporary genre of illustrated books for mature, older readers with the result that many are now unsuitable for younger readers. This means teachers and teacher librarians selecting reading material for young readers have to assess each picture book in the shortlist to assess its suitability.

A high proportion of respondents commented on the dilemma where awarded books are acclaimed but are not the 'best' choice of literature for their particular school community. Responses indicated that a book may be a winner as judged by adults who have expertise in the field, but another adult's perception, enthusiasm and expertise may not align with the view of the judges. The definition of 'best' is only in terms of the criteria which are embodied by the particular judges at a moment of time.

Although there were critical comments about judges, referring to the fact that judges are adults and often removed from the 'coalface' and criticism of the judging process, often winning titles do stand the test of time and English tends to dismiss this attitude toward judges when he writes 'The important cultural fact, the one that is recorded in the cultural memory, is that a certain person won a certain prize; scarcely anyone ever knows or cares what went on in the judges' chambers ...' (2005a:147).

8.3.2 Strength of Impacts of Awards: Section B

Considering that many respondents felt quite constrained by primary or secondary curriculum needs or by budgetary limits, it might be expected that the strength of the impact would be ranked at the conservative end of the scale. However, results show a majority of positive responses over the first three columns of the table which register a degree of importance. Respondents were asked to assess, along a five-point Likert scale, how they felt about seven questions. The responses are recorded in Table 34:

Table: 34

Strength of Impacts of Awards on Teachers and Teacher Librarians

n=26

Questions	Extremely Important	Very Important.	Important	Slightly Important.	Unimportant
1. After hearing of an award, how significant is it for you?	3	8	7	8	0
2. After hearing of an award, how motivated are you to get the book?	6	9	4	7	0
3. After the announcement, how long is there an impact?	5+ yrs 8	4 yrs 2	3 yrs 3	2 yrs 9	1 yr or less 4
4. After an announcement do you	Buy the title 9	Plan to buy later 5	Look at reviews 8	Discuss with others 4	Ignore it 1
5. Is it important for children's literature to have awards?	12	6	7	1	0
6. What is your opinion of the book titles which have been winning titles?	Outstanding 4	Very high Quality 12	Good books 8	Mediocre books 1	Poor Quality 0
7. Opinion of the process and media attention – is it important for the children's literary environment?	8	8	8	2	0

Responses from the cohort of teachers and teacher librarians show that 70% rated the news of a book award as important or stronger and 73% ranked motivation to obtain the awarded book as important or better. For many teachers and teacher librarians, obtaining an awarded book even if only for personal assessment was part of their role in determining appropriate literature for their student community. Some respondents mentioned budgetary constraints and so the cautious ranking for Questions 1 and 2 could

have more to do with limited budgets than real preference. However, it could also reflect a conservative attitude to the announcement, waiting for follow-on assessments from colleagues or journal reviews. Question 2 was alluding to the possible desire to obtain a book as opposed to the financial capacity to acquire the title. If the respondent did not have the means to purchase the title they might not claim strong motivation because it was simply out of reach.

Question 3 addressed the question of longevity of awarded titles and responses show that approximately one third of respondents felt that the impact of a winning title lasted for five plus years while another third felt that longevity lasted for two years. An estimate of longevity of five years is surprising considering the fleeting, single print run of many children's titles; however as a popular awarded title could still be in use for five years, this may be the basis for that estimate. Longevity of two years is probably a more realistic overall assessment for most awarded books when aligned with other cohort responses. Limited budgets may also mean that purchased awarded titles have to be used for several years as they may not be supplanted by new titles very readily. The disparity in longevity may also simply reflect the fact that some awarded books are more popular than others.

Question 4 gauged action which might follow an award announcement and a polarised picture developed where nearly half the respondents demonstrated affirmative action and the other half assumed a conservative stance. This latter action may reflect caution after the announcement, waiting for the professional reviews which soon follow in the recognised professional journals including *Literature Base*, *Reading Time*, *Magpies*, *Scan*, *Viewpoint*, networked professional discussion and the media coverage. For many this reflective time will then be related to budgetary decision making.

Striking at the very foundation of this enquiry, Question 5 asked respondents to assess the importance of having book awards at all. In responses, nearly half of the respondents rated their answer at the highest level. Although some respondents may be critical of certain aspects of the award process and others did not immediately react to the

announcement of a book award, they feel that it is important to have such awards. Despite the constraints in their workplace such as budgets, curricula demands, size of the school population and judgments of relevancy, book awards were still seen as an important part of the overall children's literary environment.

The responses to Question 6 revealed respondents' opinions of books which have won book awards. There are some reservations about ranking the winning titles as 'outstanding quality' but the majority of respondents assessed award winning titles to be 'very high quality' literature and 'good books'. In summary, the sample revealed positive feelings of respect for the winning, awarded children's book titles.

In expressing their view in Question 7 regarding the book award process and the media attention which might attend it, responses were equally divided between extremely important, very important and important. This spread of responses evenness is at odds with the qualitative data since even when they did not purchase the awarded literature, most thought that the publicity generated by the awards was a good thing for children's literature, inviting attention and respect for this branch of literature. Most teachers and teacher librarians welcomed the publicity and media attention and used it to their advantage. This result may relate to a desire to acquire some awarded titles which appear in publicity and merchandise and the reality of budgetary constraints or for some it may be an attitudinal divide which separates personal proactivity from the larger, nation-wide literary environment.

In summary, teachers and teacher librarians regard awards as important because they acknowledge excellence in writing and illustration and emphasise high quality literature for children. Teachers and teacher librarians reported that they enjoy the attention given to the children's literature field, the debates, controversies and discussion of awards within the context of a dynamic literary environment. This stimulation was professionally satisfying. In another perspective, some respondents related to the creators' world. One commented that '...awards are important to authors and illustrators as it is a means by which they are known'. Another commented that:

The greater the hype surrounding a book the more attention is drawn and this is important for authors and other readers and the promotion of reading and books ...[it] is of great benefit ... [and] any publicity helps encourage children and young adults to read. Also, supporting authors and illustrators encourages them to keep producing books.

This thinking about the creators of awarded literature indicates an understanding of the symbiotic nature of all the elements from creation of awarded literature to the reading of it within the consuming community.

Some practitioners lamented that far too little attention was given in the media to this field except at awards time and even then awarded children's books were often only cursorily reviewed, leaving analysis and criticism to the specialist journals for appropriate space and attention. A number commented that other awards, especially illustrators' awards, were often overlooked in the media and deserved similar attention to narrative works. As well, in common with public librarians when commenting on the judging process, teachers and teacher librarians complained about what they perceived as a lack of transparency accompanying the awards announcement.

Many of the respondents rhetorically debated the nature of quality when it came to shortlists and winning titles, implying that the judging process would have a different definition of quality than their own. There is some merit in this view: while most awards embrace 'quality literature' and the criteria for judging are not secret, they are also not commonly known. Given better knowledge of the criteria of various awards, the disparity between judges' choices and the consuming public's choices might not be so broad. But as well, the comments of teachers and teacher librarians frequently expressed the opinion that prize winning titles bear little correlation to the likes and interests of children and young adults, because they are judged by adults. This of course does not apply to children's choice awards. In fact, engagement of the child-reader is one criterion of every adult-judged award process but it is one among several and so final outcomes might not be readily understood. One respondent suggested that political correctness of awarded titles seemed to override outstanding merit. Again, if the criteria were more transparently publicised then a deeper understanding of the process may have assuaged some of the criticism. Evidence shows that the critics may use the shortlisted titles in

their working environment but at the same time they may not feel a sense of engagement with the awarding process. Pragmatic expediency may underpin their support and use of awarded CBC titles.

8.3.3 Promotional Environment of Awards: Section C

The promotional environment adopted by teachers and teacher librarians has a great deal to do with award acceptance, respect and post-award opinion. With reference to the CBC shortlist, respondents indicated that they used a package of promotional elements in their classrooms and school libraries in the period April-August leading up to heightened fun and excitement in Book Week, for instance a theme for the season, invitations to authors or illustrators, special events, activities and associated publications containing reviews and lesson ideas. Peripheral commercial organisations produce lesson plans, ideas and activity manuals and posters while the CBC itself produces posters, balloons and t-shirts, banners, book marks and other similar items. Other major awards were not recognised as having such an intense or lengthy promotional environment and peripheral merchandising is not available. Children's Choice awards have a lead-up period to vote for a favourite title but because this is a smaller, state-based and less commercial process there is a lower level of support and publicity with interest confined to the involved schools and public libraries.

The responses to questions about the promotion of award winning titles are presented in Table 35:

Table: 35

**The Promotional Environment
of Children’s Book Awards for Teachers and Teacher Librarians**

n=26

Questions	Y: Yes	N: No	S:Somewhat, Maybe, Sometimes
1. Do you feel that the cluster of celebratory events is important in highlighting highly acclaimed literature?	20	3	3
2. Do you actively look for children’s and YA titles in your selection of books to buy or use?	17	4	5
3. Do special indications on the cover influence your choices?	13	3	10
4. Is there a positive relationship between award winning titles and a book children will continue to borrow for years?	10	5	11
5. Does a winning title make a book a new “classic” which everyone should read?	1	14	11
6. Do you point out to your children the award winning titles?	17	2	7

Teachers and teacher librarians affirmed their support for the promotional environment of awards. Many used the calendar of the CBC shortlisting and Book Week awards for their own purposes and used the publicity, merchandise and the literary themes as vehicles for encouragement and motivation for reading within their schools. This support is reflected in the similar results for Question 2 which asked if the promotion encouraged active searching out of titles.

Question 3, however, revealed some ambivalent responses. Take, for example, the high ranking of ‘somewhat’ for the responses relating to cover indications, such as facsimile medals. This could mean that the advertising and facsimile awards on covers had no special meaning for them or that these prominent indicators had proved unreliable indicators in the past. Teachers and teacher librarians may wait for reviews, collegial discussion and other means to judge the value of awarded titles and so the cover indications were irrelevant. As well, budgetary constraints may play a role in evaluation of potential development material.

In response to the Question 4, concerning the relationship between a winning title and the longevity of readership for the title, most practitioners could point to titles in the past which had not appealed to children and young adults and thus had a short shelf life. Because the criteria for judging CBC awards includes diverse elements and only one of these is reader engagement, it is always possible that the winning title of any year will not be a strongly popular choice and thus will not be read past the short term, if at all. The responses from teachers and teacher librarians may then not be cynical, but realistic. Children's Choice awards may have a slightly longer shelf life because they are a popularity vote but even these may have had their season by the time the votes are taken and the results known.

Questions 4 and 5 are very similar and it was hypothesized that responses would also be similar but this was not so. Question 4 asked the respondent if they thought an awarded title could be a long-lasting favourite while Question 5 asked if an awarded title could be thought of as a new 'classic' which everyone should read. While a majority of respondents to the first of these two questions offered positive views of 'yes' or 'somewhat', the majority of respondents answering the second of these two questions offered responses of either 'no' or 'somewhat'. The responses to the second question in this instance may hinge on the definition of the word 'classic'. Teachers and teacher librarians are steeped in literary vocabulary and it is possible that classifying a book as a 'classic' was too strong an accolade for a newly published title which had just won an award which had not yet stood the test of time. As well, it is also possible that the didactic imperative of the wording in the second question ('...which everyone should read'), was too strong for teacher and teacher librarian respondents who are constantly looking for engaging texts to suit and encourage children of all abilities and interests. Thus, it is accepted that the terminology, in this case, may have obscured the results.

The comments added depth to the montage. Most teachers and teacher librarians were happy to make use of the CBC process and publicity as a foundation for their activities to have fun with literature for a season in their schools. One respondent wrote that 'Sometimes you may disagree with the judge's choice of the winning book...[but]...

having Book Week awards helps teachers, parents and children to engage in conversations about quality books and bring awareness to people'. By acquiring the entire short list of thirty books, respondents are tacitly supporting the CBC judging process and promotion and pragmatically using it in their workplaces. Although promotion is generally focused on annual shortlisted or winning titles, some respondents commented that in reality, what is important is valuing quality reading. Individual gatekeepers have personal preferences or criticisms but many support the overall awards process regardless, because of the clear and public valuing of quality children's literature.

The chief complaint regarding the process of adult-judging of children's and YA books was that the awarded books often were not books that children enjoyed and it could be thought that children's choice awards would satisfy this criticism. However, as one respondent expressed it: 'Children's Choice awards respect children's taste but are limited by what is popular ie., what is known'. Children's choice awards are frequently conducted as an enjoyable activity for students, validating their opinions of literature, but as educational professionals most feel that alongside this there must be exposure to the challenging, the contemporary, the new and the radical.

Responses indicated that in terms of awarded books there was a dichotomy: award-winning literature with adult judging on the one hand and popular awarded titles which were the result of children's choice voting. However, there is no requirement to take a stand on any one of these: for many professional educators, a mix these variables ensures relevant coverage in terms of literature and the school community.

8.3.4 Recognition of Awards in Australia: Section D

Section D asked teachers and teacher librarians to express a degree of familiarity over a range of commonly known awards, both international and Australian in origin. The purpose of this was to establish how well informed the cohort was about the award environment. All the awards are discussed in the professional literature and all of them could play a part in the literature choices which teachers and teacher librarians make for

presenting literature to their students. Teachers and teacher librarians were asked to rate their awareness of a range of awards, using the 5-point Likert scale and the results are tabulated below. Following this, five related qualitative questions were asked.

Table: 36

Recognition of Literary Awards by Teachers and Teacher Librarians

n=26

Literary Awards	Extremely Familiar	Very Familiar	Have heard of it	Might have heard of it	Never heard of it
Hans Christian Anderson Medal (International)	3	6	11	6	0
Phoenix Award (International)	1	2	0	2	21
Mythopoeic Award (International)	1	0	1	1	23
Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award (International)	2	3	9	4	8
Children’s Book Council of Australia Awards	23	3	0	0	0
YARA Award Aust. Online)	3	4	7	2	10
Nan Chauncy Award (Aust.)	1	4	8	5	8
Aurealis Award (Aust.)	1	3	5	4	18
Ena Noel Award for Children’s Literature (Aust.)	0	1	3	2	19
Children’s Choice Awards (each State)	9	8	7	2	1
Ethel Turner Prize for Young People’s Literature (Aust.)	2	5	5	7	7
Patricia Wrightson Prize for Children’s Literature (Aust.)	2	6	4	4	9
Crichton Award for New Illustrators (Aust.)	5	1	9	2	9
Various Premier’s Awards in each State (Aust.)	9	7	5	3	2
New Zealand Children’s and Young Adult Book Awards	2	0	3	8	12
Newbery Medal (USA)	5	6	9	2	4
Caldecott Medal (for Illustrators – USA)	4	6	9	3	4
Other USA awards	2	0	1	4	18
Canadian Library Association’s ‘Children’s Book of the Year’ & ‘Young Adult Book of the Year’.	2	1	2	3	17
Other Canadian awards.	2	0	2	0	20
Carnegie Award (United Kingdom).	4	9	9	2	1
Kate Greenaway Medal (UK).	3	7	5	3	8
Other British awards.	1	2	1	4	18

Only three awards rank highly with 'extreme familiarity': CBC awards, Children's Choice Awards and the Premier's Awards. These are all Australian awards. Some of this is surprising. Professional networks and literary journals routinely acknowledge the winners of the Newbery, Caldecott and Carnegie medals or prizes and it could be thought that this cohort would be well aware of these winners. However, simply knowing the latest winner of one of these might not be thought of as 'extremely familiar'. If an amalgamated result of 'extremely familiar' and 'very familiar' is seen to represent a fairly high degree of familiarity the list expands to include the Hans Christian Anderson Medal, CBC awards, Children's Choice Awards, Premier's Awards, the Newbery Medal, The Caldecott Medal, the Carnegie Award and the Kate Greenaway Medal. This is more encompassing of both Australian and overseas awards.

To complete Section D, open-ended, qualitative questions were asked of teachers and teacher librarians to gain further insights into their thinking about awarded literature. The first question asked respondents if it was important to know about overseas awards or whether Australian awards are most suitable for Australian children. Generally responses indicated that it is important to be aware of overseas awards for book selections for classes or libraries and winning titles are noted for wish lists but there is a preference for Australian authorship. Teachers and teacher librarians attempted to balance the content, curriculum needs, national origin, financial limits, student appeal and literary quality of their literature. Some compromises might have to be observed.

In support of acquiring overseas awarded books, some spoke strongly of Australia being a global society and expressed the view that acquisition of overseas awarded books 'widens their [i.e. students'] perspective culturally, socially, emotionally, etc ...'. As well, 'we need to be aware of cultural differences and similarities' and 'It is important to know about overseas awards so that we can compare and evaluate the standard of Australian books and not become insular'. Another strong opinion was that 'It would be a dis-service to only expose children and young adults to only Australian awarded literature'. One respondent claimed to regularly purchase the Carnegie, Caldecott, Kate Greenaway and Newbery awarded book titles simply because they have won awards,

bringing as they do such a high level of credibility and international reputation. Some respondents pointed out that overseas awards highlight books which practitioners may not be aware of and many respondents pointed out that some overseas authors who won awards have become firm favourites with Australian children; for example Roald Dahl, Anthony Horowitz and JK Rowling). One expression was that to have deprived children of them would have been educationally negligent. Some felt that global social justice issues were better explained in overseas-based literature where context, suffering and hardships were authentically portrayed such as works by Canadian writer, Deborah Ellis who writes stories about Afghani children. Another view offered by a number of respondents was that they chose overseas awarded books because they were not as familiar with good overseas authors, compared with Australian authors and they wanted to have a quality and balanced selection of literature for the library. Some respondents commented that the ideal was a mixed collection of quality overseas titles and Australian based titles. An extension of this came from another respondent: 'Experience has shown some of these titles to be significant and popular additions to the library and have introduced library staff, teachers and students to exciting new authors and illustrators.' A typical response to the question about using overseas awards as a guide to selection was that 'Any book that receives an award ...comes recommended as a quality text.' Many commented that if a book is good and relevant to students then it did not matter where it came from.

Nevertheless, nearly one third of the respondents stood firmly in the camp of Australian acquisitions, citing the Australian cultural context as more suitable for Australian students. Sometimes this was because budgets were very limited and Australian titles were the first priority. Others felt that Australian literature offered high quality and was situated in the Australian cultural language-context. An extension of this opinion was that students had an overabundance of American influence in their lives through the media and that an emphasis on Australian literature helped maintain an Australian identity.

The second question asked if overseas awarded books influenced the choice of books which teachers and teacher librarians actively presented to children in classrooms and library times. Approximately one third of respondents sought out quality overseas titles, one third of respondents simply stated that they chose books of a high quality and another third felt that Australian context was a priority. In comparison to the first question the figure for overseas titles seems slightly inflated but the books which were valued as high quality could contain any combination of overseas and Australian titles and so no firm conclusions can be drawn. Underpinning decision making, is a concern for high quality literature which engages the child-reader.

One group of respondents was very specific in their selections. This group had such strong budgetary constraints that they had prioritised the purchasing of Australian literature and that was all that was possible (except if it happened to be 'Harry Potter'). Some respondents felt that the CBC awarded titles and some of the CBC notable list, were all they could cope with financially.

A third question attempted to discern any national specificity about demand for awarded overseas books. Respondents often cited two or more overseas awards as matters of interest: 75% of responses cited interest in UK awarded titles, 50% of responses cited interest in USA awarded books and 15% of responses said that they were interested in any overseas awards they became aware of. The reasons for a strong interest in British awarded titles are complex. Some of the major Australian publishers have network links with Britain and so the reviews and feature articles in Australian professional literature may feature UK awarded books. Furthermore, there may be a feeling that Australian children would have historically more in common with a British publication than one from another overseas source. As noted previously there is also some negativity about exposing Australian children to more American influence than already exists. There may also be access issues which make British books often more easily obtained than American books.

The fourth question asked which Australian awards the respondents were most interested in. Overwhelmingly, the CBC awards were cited as the best known awards though there seemed some reluctance in stating this interest.... 'It [CBC] is best known because of the infrastructure surrounding it ...' and 'CBC awards are so in your face they are hard to ignore'. The fact remains that most teachers and teacher librarians find it convenient to accept the promotional value of this awarding organisation and use it in their schools. Several respondents expressed an increasing interest in the Children's Choice Award for their State mentioning such values as the validation of the opinions of the child-reader. A few talked of following the Crichton Award (for illustrators).

The fifth question was designed to allow for the expression of some deep professional commitment. The question asked if, in the presentation of literature to children or young adults, the respondent felt that there was a difference between choosing a winning title and choosing a title which would engage children. Ideally, the two characteristics merge but there are examples where they did not. From the sample nearly 54% responded with 'yes' indicating that many did not see a coincidence of awarded literature and engagement. This same view had been expressed many times before in response to other questions. Although 46% responded with 'no', what ensued was actually debate, reflection and professional opinion rather than a polarised view. Commonly, teaching professionals said that choosing an engaging title would probably win over choosing an awarded book since literacy and a love of reading are basic professional benchmarks. The problem arises from awarded books which were not especially popular. The teachers and teacher librarians might admire its style, format, characterisation, theme and other literary qualities which are essential ingredients of merit, but also argued that child appeal could not be dismissed. Some respondents commented that they had presented a winning title to students, thinking that it would not be successful but, surprisingly, it was. This highlights the fact that making book decisions based on a teacher or teacher librarian's personal review may limit the scope of literature presented to students, for while some may criticise adult-judged awards, adult educators also make judgments. In this group, other practitioners commented that they may have to 'sell' the awarded title a little more

but that this might not be a bad thing, extending the reader and possibly also teachers and teacher librarians into new directions and new authors.

Most respondents felt that students needed to be shown books which have won awards and should be assisted with some critical evaluation to determine why it was awarded, discussing the subtleties of language and content, imagery, phrasing, symbolism, metaphors and expression. Others felt that it was very important that children and young adults be exposed to the widest possible choices in good literature, whatever the source, recognising that there were some examples of very good literature which did not win awards.

8.4 Conclusion:

The respondents in this teacher and teacher librarian cohort demonstrated a deep commitment for the subject of this research and the responses showed thoughtful analysis which arose out of their professional experience in dealing with a range of winning titles within the school context. The need to provide literature for reading pleasure as well as for literacy or curriculum support makes the decision process quite complex. Assessing acclaimed titles for collection development and factoring in limited funding may be major tasks and important choices have to be made to serve all the masters. Sometimes it was obvious from responses that the respondents felt constrained by the limitations such as budgets, staff requirements and school expectations and that their personal assessment may not actually be able to be translated into an active, professional participatory response. Other respondents criticised the criteria and the judging process of awards, but nevertheless used the CBC awards and the awards period to promote reading in their schools.

This enquiry was specifically focused on the reception and promotion of awarded titles by teachers and teacher librarians. While there is little research reported which supports this enquiry there is a large body of literature that analyses and discusses the presentation of literature to school students through collection development, encouragement of

reading as well as the promotion of challenging high quality reading materials in classrooms and school libraries. This cohort indicated a raft of variables in answering almost every question, highlighting the individual perspectives they bring to their work. The responsibility of presenting the best in literature to their community is a serious one and most accepted that being aware, informed, skilled and visionary, is essential (Fisher 2003:75).

Teachers and teacher librarians are significant influences in the literary life of a child and a young adult, but they do not work in isolation. Another major influence which affects responses to awarded literature arises from parental attitudes and actions. Outcomes from questioning the parent cohort will be reported in the following chapter.

Chapter 9

The Responses of Parents

Libraries often have a display of award winning books which is a good way of passing on this information. Once I see the actual award winning book then I make up my own mind as to whether I borrow it for my children or not¹³.

9.1 Introduction

This cohort was, predictably, the least homogeneous of all the cohorts. Apart from being parents the respondents had no other unifying qualities which influenced their opinions and the diversity of responses reflects this. Predictably, too, this cohort was the least professionally informed of all the cohorts regarding book awards. Although it is assumed that parents who voluntarily participated in this survey were interested in children's literature, it soon became obvious that this did not equate with an interest in awards and prizes for children's literature. Responses throughout the questionnaire indicate a high degree of independent and personal assessment of the literature parents present to their children, regardless of the accolades which may be earned by some literary titles. Parental expertise involves intimate knowledge of their child-reader and this informs their actions in influencing the reading choices of their children.

Parents are significant gatekeepers of children's and young adult's reading, influencing the kinds of books they are exposed to, often directly choosing the titles which will be read in childhood and indirectly influencing choices even in early teenagers. However, as results showed, there was a demarcation between the literature which parents thought their children would enjoy and an appreciation of literature which had been awarded as quality literature. The questionnaire asked for an assessment, opinion, reflection and knowledge of awarded literature and parents, as major influences in the reading life of

¹³ Parent response in questionnaire

children and young adults, were clearly positioned to contribute responses about this. Parents indicated a range of interventions which demonstrated their influence in the reading life of their children predicated on their belief that the encouragement of reading was important. The way parents exert influence may change with the ages and stages of their children beginning with enthusiasm for literature, reading aloud and developing to discussion, subtle suggestions, exploring reviews (especially online reviews) and literary gifts for teenagers. However, despite this age and developmental range in the readers, the survey did not reveal any specific differences in responses between the parents of young children and the parents of teenagers.

For pre-school children, reading involves books which parents buy or borrow and books which are received as gifts. Generally, these books are read aloud. A surrogate parental role in this context may also be performed by a childcare facilitator or a pre-school teacher. The former will be incorporated in this research as a 'parent' and the latter as a 'teacher or teacher librarian'. Later, when children develop to the point of independent reading, many parents will still wield considerable influence over their children's reading material. Responses from this survey indicate that parents guide choices at the public library, the bookshop or through gift-giving through to early teenage years of their children. Even the reading activity of independent readers may still be filtered by a range of gatekeepers, one of whom is the parent. The source of reading may be limited to the collection provided at home and libraries with a sprinkling of purchased books, gifts and books read through peer exchange. The collection of the school library, including awarded titles, is determined by the teacher librarian in the school (another gatekeeper – see Chapter 8). So too the collection of the public library is developed by the public librarian (also a gatekeeper – see Chapter 7). Even in using the public library most children cannot freely use this facility without some parental input. Parents rank alongside the other gatekeepers to strongly influence the child or teen reader in terms of literature in general and awarded literature in particular.

A major feature of parents' responses was the diversity of opinion. Most parents did not elaborate in the qualitative sections of the questionnaire and so detail, justifications and

explanations were often not forthcoming. Thus, evidence is mainly through results of the quantitative sections of the survey. What was clear was that parents were committed to exposing their children to a wide variety of literature and that the significant imperative for them was the engagement of the child-reader. This was an unequivocal priority for most. Responses reflect this sample's independent thinking and this may work positively or negatively in access to awarded books.

9.2 Defining the Cohort

Parents only had to identify themselves as current parents of children or young adults to be eligible to respond. The response rate was very poor and anecdotal evidence offered some reasons for this: parents said that they were too busy, the questionnaire was too long, they were not sufficiently interested in book awards to respond, or they were unaware of book awards and did not want to demonstrate a lack of knowledge. The initial strategy was to use snowball sampling where the teacher librarian of each school passed on a hard copy questionnaire to three parents who were likely respondents. Following the poor response rate a second strategy was developed to elicit more responses: it was felt that staff members of the local university who were also parents might have some understanding of the need for research and be prepared to participate. As well, given the means for digital contact through an intranet with this community, it was decided to offer a digital questionnaire rather than a paper-copy one and so the same questionnaire was delivered as an online questionnaire to this cohort. Diversity in sampling was still important and to minimise bias it was essential that respondents came from all levels of the university: lecturing and academic staff, managers, secretarial staff, workshop staff, maintenance staff, gardeners, labourers, receptionists, student services personnel and others. This was more successful and contributed to an acceptable cohort number.

Overall, responses indicated a range of prior knowledge of awarded literature, ranging from responses which said 'no idea' through to responses claiming a high level of literary knowledge. In the former group were many who simply ignored the award environment

and felt that it was irrelevant to their children's reading. Most of this group took the view that it was infinitely more important to find literature which children and young adults enjoyed. All respondents facilitated and encouraged reading in their families but many did not consciously include awarded books in their reading and most did not consider them important for their child. In this cohort 22% were parents who facilitated and encouraged reading of awarded titles in their families; they sought awarded books for children either from a library or from bookshops, read these books to their children or facilitated and encouraged the independent reading of them. The questionnaire was constructed to be as neutral as possible in its perspective regarding which awarded titles were presented to children or teenagers to avoid any perceived bias or judgement.

9.3 Responses

The questionnaire was designed to range from generalised, contextualising questions at the beginning through to increasingly specific questions further into the exercise. The preliminary context questions were designed to discover how informed parents were about the book awards of the last five years while the sections asked for opinions about personal, specific impacts of awards. The preliminary table asked parents to compile details of awarded titles they remembered. The essence of the question was to gauge whether parents were aware of winning titles and which awards predominated in their recollection. Mismatching was not considered significant for the purpose of this context. Some parents did not know any winning titles. Many parents simply ignored this table. The spread of answers is as follows:

Table: 37

Recollection of Awarded Titles by Parents

n=37

	Title	Author	Illustrator	Award/Prize
2007	4	4	1	3 CBC
2006	4	4	1	3 CBC
2005	3	3		1 o/seas, 2 CBC
2004	3	3	1	1 o/seas, 2 CBC
2003	3	3		3 CBC

This kind of introduction to the questionnaire may have been intimidating, for anecdotal evidence revealed that some parents did not complete the questionnaire because they decided that they had nothing to offer. The results compiled revealed that some parents are aware of the winning children’s titles in the Australian literary environment. On the whole, most parents did not have detailed knowledge of awarded titles for Australian children’s or young adult literature. Thus, this parent-cohort differed significantly from the other two cohorts in the consumer group. While parents have intimate knowledge of their children they mostly do not have detailed knowledge of children’s and young adult book awards. The other cohorts in this group, have some knowledge of children’s and young adult book awards since they professionally interact with the Australian children’s literary environment and they have a generalised knowledge of ages and stages of children collectively but do not necessarily have an intimate knowledge of the child-readers with whom they interact. These opposite perspectives delivered very different outcomes when the same questions were asked.

9.3.1 Overall Experience of an Award Announcement: Section A

Section A asked for a parent’s response to a range of questions relating to the announcement of a children’s or young adult book award. Parents were asked to rank

their general opinion about the winning titles along a simple 3-point scale from a highly significant impact through to no impact at all.

Table: 38

General Impact of Book Awards on Parents

n = 37

QUESTION	Y highly significant	N no significance	S somewhat significant
1. Has the announcement of an award winning title for children's literature been significant for you?	7	23	6
2. Has the announcement of a winning title prompted you to search out this title?	13	19	5
3. Do you have a passion for children's/YA literature and believe that awarded titles present the 'best'?	7	16	12
4. Do you have influence on what your children read?	33	1	3
5. Do you think that awareness of winning children's titles keep you abreast of contemporary publishing?	5	22	10
6. Do you examine children's/YA awarded titles to understand why they are awarded ?	15	20	1
7. Do you think that highlighting winning children's book titles enrich our cultural heritage ?	24	4	8
8. Do you obtain winning titles through your local library or other free locations?	13	15	7

A picture emerged which indicated that in this sample, the majority of parents were not significantly aware of children's or young adult book awards in Australia, did not see book awards as important, nor did they necessarily regard awarded titles as the best available in children's literature. Question 1 attempted to gauge the level of interest in the children's book award announcement. The majority of parents indicated a complete lack of interest and less than one third were even minimally interested. This correlated with answers to the preliminary section of the questionnaire which had explored parents' knowledge of book awards over a period of the previous five years. It was then expected that Question 2 would also reflect negative responses when it asked about motivation in searching out awarded titles. However, for reasons which remained unexplained, over one third of respondents felt strongly motivated to search out the awarded title. This does not correlate with other responses in the survey. Perhaps after hearing or reading about

awards or their student-child seeing an awarded book in the school library, these parents were motivated to search them out.

In common with other consumer questionnaires, Question 3 asked for dual opinions which might not have been compatible and thus not easily answered: this may explain the high rate for 'somewhat'.

Responses to Question 4 showed high figures for parental influence regarding their children's reading. In the sampling, there was no distinction regarding the ages of children nor the degree of parental influence in the choice of reading matter. This may be the subject of more detailed age-related research in the future. An exploration of the relationship of these two variables was beyond the scope of this research. While it might be expected that parents of small children would have substantial influence over their child's reading choices, it might also be assumed that there would be a lessening of the strength of influence for older junior and teenage children's reading preferences. However, even for teenagers, parents have substantial input into access to reading material, bookshop purchases and gifts and thus the influence may still be strong. Some parents expressed enthusiasm and involvement with teenage reading, a shared interest in following an author's works, encouragement to search out online reviews and discussion of literature in general and thus for some teenagers there is an influential literary environment involving parents and possibly awarded books.

Keeping abreast of contemporary publishing and being aware of book awards was not expressed as a high priority by parents in answering Question 5. Nearly 60% responded with an unequivocal 'no' to questions about their interest in winning titles as exemplars of contemporary literature. Neither was most of the cohort interested in understanding why awarded books are so acclaimed. This set the tone for many of the later responses from parents.

Interestingly, in their responses to Question 7, these same parents felt that highlighting winning titles significantly added to our cultural heritage, with 86% of the cohort

expressing a response of ‘highly significant’ or ‘some significance’. This may indicate that there are two levels of parental analysis in terms of awarded literature: there is a personal interaction with awarded literature and, as well, an objective assessment of the role that awarded literature may play in the cultural heritage of the nation. This ambivalence is further supported by later responses. Parents feel that their personal, independent assessment of literature for their children is most appropriate and a responsibility which they willingly undertake. Their evaluation may not encompass awarded literature. Despite this, they value children’s and YA awarded literature in a detached, philosophical and symbolic way as cultural capital.

Question 8 was asked in order to see if lack of any financial expense was an inducement to read the awarded title. The responses were evenly balanced between positive action and no action. Positive action may involve informed seeking of titles or may simply be curiosity to see what an awarded title is like. No action may indicate a lack of interest in awarded titles as parents make their own choices, a rejection of awards as a measure of value, a lack of knowledge about awarded titles or other circumstances not revealed by the respondents. There was no clear direction indicating reasons for action or lack of action regarding awarded titles, even if access was free.

Some parents commented that they read the awarded titles aloud to their children and others were in the practice of noting down the titles as they appeared in the media and then they were borrowed from the public library. Others said that when they were looking to buy a children’s book that they would look at the prizewinning titles, often using the visual evidence in the bookshop of the facsimile medallion sticker on the cover. Some commented that, as well as media exposure to alert them to the awarded title, libraries and bookshops often displayed award winning titles and that this was a good way to inform the parents. The parents answering in this way represented less than half the sample.

In the action of buying or borrowing an awarded title a common approach was expressed specifically by one respondent: ‘Once I see the actual awarded book I then make up my

own mind as to whether I borrow it for my children or not'. Parents uniformly expressed independence in their assessment of youth literature. A large proportion of parents saw a chasm between awarded books and best books and one expressed it as follows:

I feel I have a passion for children's literature but I don't think that awards and prizes necessarily highlight the best in the field. Some of the award winning books I've read have been pretty ordinary while some which have not received an award have been fantastic. (parent respondent)

For parents, there was no feeling of obligation to read awarded titles and no overriding respect or admiration due to the status of an award. Parents stated in responses that they are confident in their ability to choose quality literature for their children and this ranked alongside their belief in a priority mission to engage their child in reading. Many indicated that they tended to follow their children's choices which were based on authors whose work their children had read and enjoyed. Coincidentally some of these books might also be awarded books, for example *Possum Magic* by Mem Fox. Evidence from the author's survey supports this from a producer's perspective when authors commented that having a winning or shortlisted title brought an increased interest in their backlists. Despite an award offering an objective assessment of quality, the singular point made by parents was that engagement was paramount. Many parents were critical about awarded literature being lauded as exceptional literature when the real issue was enjoyment by the child. It was a repeated parent comment that occasionally an awarded title became a lasting favourite but many awarded titles are simply forgotten. This indicates that some awarded books will simply be more popular than other awarded books. Awards themselves do not ensure popularity or longevity but the inherent nature of the book may bring these outcomes.

In the comments for this section of the questionnaire, one parent described at some length the various literary stages that children experience (eg., rhymes, verse stories, fairies) and they felt that reading selections which built on the child's current stage encouraged a high degree of engagement. While not negating a role for awarded literature, this view actually aligned with the general view by parents that the child's engagement was the overriding priority.

Comments were not necessarily relevant to the quantitative questions in the section which preceded them, but they offered valuable insights into the award environment as parents saw it. There were critical references to CBC awards being judged by expert adults. This organisation's annual award process has a formal panel of elected adult judges, prescribed processes and criteria. Even if the same criteria were known and used by parents, their choices of shortlisted and winning titles would possibly be different. The alternative to this is the children's choice award but it has limitations as well. Critics' criticisms indicate that such awards are simply a reiteration of what is already known and popular, that they acclaim titles which lack challenging elements and that the results are predictable. Probably no judging process will have universal acceptance.

In thinking about the broader cultural domain, one parent offered the opinion that:

Prizes support authors and this is a good thing because it is very difficult to earn a living from a creative endeavour. Prizes for books may be viewed as similar to art prizes ... they encourage the author/illustrator to continue to explore and to experiment and find new ways, just as in art... (parent respondent)

This justification was beyond the scope of the question but it reveals that parents can have a wider perspective than simply personal consumption of literature.

The qualitative responses throughout the parent survey revealed evidence of a dichotomy in responses. Parents express criticism of an established award process because they are personally confident in their approach to literature for their children while also asserting that awarded children's literature is part of the development of cultural capital. This duality implies that this sample of parents feel personally disconnected from the process of the recognition of exceptional children's literature while objectively respecting the award outcomes as part of cultural capital. While some indicate support for authors and illustrators through the awards process, they did not want to be personally involved in this.

9.3.2 Strength of Impacts of Awards: Section B

The degree of interest or apathy about children’s book awards is important in gauging the importance of book awards from a parental perspective. Section B sought a rating on a five-point Likert scale to gauge the strength of feeling about children’s book awards. The table of responses is as follows:

Table: 39

Strength of Impacts of Awards on Parents

n=37

Questions	Extremely Important	Very Important	Important	Slightly Important	Not Important
1. When you hear of an award, is it significant?	0	2	13	13	9
2. Is it important for you to read a winning children’s title?	1	2	10	11	12
3. Does the cost of a winning title affect whether you will buy it?	3	6	9	10	9
4. How long do you feel that there is an impact from a winning title?	5+ yrs 15	4 yrs	3 yrs 2	2 yr 5	1 yr or less 11
5. When an award is announced do you	Try to buy 0	Ask at the Library 7	Look for reviews 8	Ask others about title 10	Ignore it 10
6. What is your opinion of the process of awarding prizes? Are prizes important?	9	15	6	3	2
7. What is your general opinion of books which win prizes or awards ?	Outstanding Books 3	Very high quality 16	Good books 7	Mediocre books 2	Poor quality books 1

The table offers a picture of the importance which parents invest in the children’s book award process. Disregarding the question of longevity of impacts attending a winning award, most parents did not generally rate any of the issues as ‘extremely important’. For questions which asked about the significance of awards, the motivation to read awarded titles, the effect of costs on buying the title, and the participatory response to an award announcement, nearly half the respondents could only answer with ‘slightly important’ or ‘unimportant’. There is some ambivalence here in terms of motivation when compared to responses recorded for Table 38, Question 2. A rating of ‘very important’ was reserved

for opinions about the philosophical question of the importance of prizes for children's literature and an assessment of the books which won awards or prizes. Only in the larger cultural questions about whether prizes were important and whether books were outstanding or not, did more than half the sample give responses of 'extremely important' or 'very important'. Overall, the responses offer diverse and not altogether cohesive results. As the comments will later show, there were some unexpected views and some polarization of opinions.

The foundation of the research lay with the first question which asked for an assessment of the significance of book awards for parents. More than two thirds of respondents thought that they were 'important' or 'slightly important'. Considering that a majority of parents choose to not interact with awarded books, this figure is surprisingly high. For almost all the parent survey, a large proportion of unimpressed parents is the norm. The reason for the unexpected quantitative result may be due to a parental perception that the CBC award process is quite a separate entity from the celebration of Book Week which is a CBC construct and begins with an announcement of the CBC winning titles. In analysing the qualitative responses which were related to this question, many parents felt negatively about CBC awards but positively about the fun of activities and events they associated with Book Week for their children. Most parents were aware of the community and school events celebrating Book Week including dress-as-a-book-character parades, dramatisation of stories, competitions, displays, guest authors or illustrators and the like. Parents enjoyed and appreciated the attention given to children's literature at this time while simultaneously disagreeing with the process of judging winning titles by the CBC. One third felt that it was of no importance to acquire and read a shortlisted or winning title and cost did not seem to be variable. There was a lack of interest in reading a winning title even if the reading was free.

The responses to Question 4, concerning the longevity of award winning titles brought anomalous results. Considering that many parents did not actually know many awards it was surprising that responses expressed estimates of the life of an awarded book that ranged from more than five years to one year or less. There were dominant clusters at

both ends of the scale. It is hypothesised that parents who valued book awards thought that awarded books would last while others who did not rate awards highly thought that they were a passing phenomenon but this deduction may actually be too simplistic. One respondent felt that awarded books should be made to last in terms of being available for reading in the future, commenting that ‘... when I am in a library or a bookshop I use the evidence of awards on the cover ... to help decide on books to borrow or purchase. This could happen up to 10 or 20 years later’. However, nearly 30% did not expect any longevity from a book award and for these respondents, the awards were a fleeting event and as the next question indicated, few of the respondents was moved to buy the title.

To ascertain a cultural perspective, the cohort was directed to consider a wider perspective in the final two questions in this bracket. A majority of respondents made it clear that they thought that children’s book awards were ‘extremely important/very important’. Responses also showed that half the parents thought that prizewinning books were ‘outstanding/very high quality’. This again illustrates a dichotomous position adopted by many respondents: the personal micro-response to book awarded literature is a function of a belief in the pre-eminence of the child-reader’s engagement while the literary macro-response was based on a range of values such as a concept of culture and support for the creators of literature. In comparing parent responses and other consumer responses this element has some common ground although the parent response to this separation is much stronger. Many of the literary professionals surveyed did not agree with the choices for the CBC awards in particular and strongly asserted that their expertise supported an individual evaluation of quality children’s and young adult literature. However, pragmatically, they support the awards process because of the other benefits it bestows such as some media coverage, posters and merchandise, supplementary activity publications and the nationwide celebration of Book Week. Because parents are not literary professionals they can easily adopt a more personal participatory response and ignore awarded titles if they choose.

There was parent acknowledgment of the haphazard nature of their acquisition of information about award winning titles. There are very accessible ways of finding out

about awards but most respondents are not motivated to undertake this task, relying on a facsimile medal on a cover, library displays or a review in the media. However, as commented by Appleton, media coverage of awards sometimes does not clarify the features of awarded books and so this leaves the media reader unimpressed and uninformed (2009:33). Sometimes events at a library or at school, highlight an awarded title. One parent said that they used to look up awards but the pace of life meant that they did not look closely anymore. This adds to other parent responses regarding their lack of proactivity in experiencing awarded titles.

Paradoxically, parents see cultural value in prize winning books. In responses, 81% of parents thought prizes were 'important/very important/extremely important' and 70% regarded awarded books as 'good/very high quality/outstanding' though there were some reservations expressed in the qualitative comments. Parents again strongly expressed the view that the priority should be the engagement of the child regardless of other attributes of the literature and reading an awarded book is a matter of chance. Many parents again pointed out that an awarded title is not necessarily a guarantee of what they regard as quality literature. This underlines a majority parent belief in the veracity of independent parental judgment regarding reading for their children. However, others responded with a more reflective stance, writing that 'most titles announced as shortlisted or winners generally have something special about them' thus expressing a degree of respect for an awarded title. When related to other responses in the table, this respect may or may not translate into overt action.

9.3.3 Promotional Environment of Awards: Section C

Section C of the questionnaire related to the promotional activity in Australia which accompanies the publicity of some awarded children's books. The CBC announces its shortlist in April and then follows a period of promotional activity conducted by the CBC, publishers and other stakeholders. Peripheral merchandising, posters, activity books, teaching aids and such like have developed, some by CBC and some by independent agencies. Children's Book Week at the end of this period, was the creation

of the CBC and it still remains the most prominent event on the children’s literary calendar. Parents refer to Book Week promotions citing decorated libraries and classrooms, dress-as-a-book-character parades, guess-the-winning-title competitions, draw-a-new-book-cover contests, poster displays and other activities which highlight the CBC process. No other awarding body embodies this level of promotion.

Parents were asked if the promotional activity which accompanies book awards, adds anything to the environment of children’s literature in Australia. The results are as follows:

Table: 40

The Promotional Environment of Children’s Book Awards for Parents

N=37

Questions	Yes	No	Somewhat
1. Do you feel that celebratory events are an important part of getting the message out about acclaimed literature?	8	2	2
2. Do you look for winning titles to buy or borrow?	5	4	4
3. Some winning titles have medallions/stars on the cover to attract buyers/borrowers – does this influence you?	7	1	5
4. Is there a correlation between award winning books and books which will be borrowed for years?	2	4	6
5. Do you think that an awarded book makes that book a new ‘classic’ which everyone should read?		6	6
6. Do you point out awarded books to your children?	4	5	4

Despite their strong personal declaration that book awards are not particularly important, parents were, overall, more supportive of the promotional events accompanying the awarding process. There is thus a separation of awards and the promotional environment, the latter being seen within a larger literary context. Although the responding parents are keen to highlight children’s literature, enjoy the fact that it features in the media and support some of the promotions and events in the community or at school, they do not want to specifically seek out the winning titles for their children. The Book Week events are fun for their children but are somewhat disassociated from the winning titles, in the eyes of the parents. The results show that over 20% of parents think it is important to

have celebrations and promotions of children's literature. It should be noted that many parents did not respond to these questions at all.

Part of the promotion of winning titles may involve metallic facsimiles of medals on the covers of shortlisted or awarded books or a noticeable statement of the status of the title; nearly 20% of parents indicated that they were influenced by such indications although nearly 14% only answered with 'somewhat'. This latter response is only a slightly positive affirmation and so an indication of minimal influence. To some degree, 34% of these parents were influenced by the trappings of the award process and this may have resulted in these parents pointing out the awarded titles to their children, thus endowing the titles with a positive, approved value.

Questions 4 and 5 sought to determine if parents judged the winning books to have longevity and whether such books could be regarded as 'new classics'. Question 4 in Section C was designed to triangulate with Question 4 in Section B. The proportional results are the same with 66% of answers rating some degree of longevity for awarded titles but there were only 12 responses from the sample in Section C compared to 33 responses in Section B and this makes valid triangulation difficult. Nevertheless, parents in this sample feel that awarded books will have some longevity. Question 5 contained the dual elements which all consumers found hard to answer. Parents were not supportive of awarded books moving into the realm of classics. The majority of responses for these two questions was 'somewhat' but the next strongest response was negative. Thus the overall interpretation is that parents tended to reject the notions. Some qualitative responses were critical of the use of the term 'classic' and this may have influenced responses. In common with other consumers, answers to Question 5 may have hinged on personal interpretations of the term.

Parents as gatekeepers influence the choice of reading material for children and young adults and they were asked if they pointed out awarded literature to their children. Even if parents did not proactively seek out details of awarded titles, prize winning books may feature on posters and the books may be on display or carry facsimile medals to indicate

their special status. The evenness of the response pattern is something of an anomaly since the majority of parents had expressed a lack of positive connection with awards or winning titles. In common with patterns throughout this parent survey, the results may illustrate a separation of the personal parental response from the objective literary-cultural response. Even in voting for favourite titles in a children’s choice award, parents may have a strong influence simply by encouraging (or discouraging) particular titles, endowing them with approval (or disapproval) or pointing out selected titles.

9.3.4 Recognition of Awards in Australia: Section D

In the last section of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to indicate their knowledge of the range of children’s book awards which are promoted in Australia. Some of these are very low impact awards but others are highly visible. Some originate overseas but are announced in Australia and attract Australian readership. Some are not well publicised and offer no prizemoney (eg. children’s choice awards) while others offered substantial prize money (eg. Astrid Lindgren Award and Premier’s Awards). By asking respondents to rank their familiarity with these awards, the knowledge base of parents completes the contextual framework.

Table: 41

Recognition of Literary Awards by Parents

N=37

Awards	Extremely familiar with this award	Very familiar with this award	Have heard of this award	Might have heard of this award	Never heard of this award
Hans Christian Andersen Medal	1	4	8	13	12
Phoenix Award		2	1	8	24
Mythopoeic Award	2		2	6	26
Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award		2	2	11	20
Children’s Book Council of Australia	10	11	6	5	5
YARA Award		2	1	6	24
Continued over ...					

Nan Chauncy Award		2	2	7	23
Aurealis Award	2		5	4	24
Ena Noel Award	2	2	2	4	25
Children's Choice Awards	4	6	3	3	21
Ethel Turner Prize		1	8	11	16
Patricia Wrightson Prize	1		6	8	19
Crichton Award		3	3	4	25
Premier's Awards (each State)	1	7	6	10	11
NZ Children's & YA Awards		3	3	6	21
Newbery Medal		5	9	7	15
Caldecott Medal		2	8	8	17
Other USA Awards			6	5	24
Canadian Library Association's Awards		4	3	5	23
Other Canadian Awards		4	2	5	24
Carnegie Award		7	8	8	12
Kate Greenaway Medal		3	7	6	20
Other British Awards			3	7	25

It is clear is that the majority of parent respondents had not heard of most of the book awards listed. The first two columns asked for some degree of knowledge beyond simply knowing that specific awards existed and if the results for these two columns are aggregated then the only award with a majority response for familiarity, is the range of CBC awards. Familiarity, to a much lesser extent was expressed for the Children's Choice awards (10 responses) and the Premier's Awards (8). The lack of knowledge may be due to several factors. Parents may have never heard of some of the listed awards, may have felt that the awards were irrelevant to them and so made no attempt at familiarity or although they may have heard of the awards, they could not say that were actually familiar with them. Most parents of school-age children will hear of the CBC awards through school events but some may only fleetingly absorb the significance of the winning accolades. The first four awards listed are international awards, one of which was won by an Australian author in 2009; the next ten awards are Australian while the following nine awards originate in overseas countries. While it is not surprising that the best known awards are Australian, it is surprising that none of the other awards are even

close in familiarity. The personal response of ‘never heard of this award’ was the most strongly demonstrated collective response: 64% of awards had never been heard of by the majority of parent respondents.

This figure for ‘never heard of this award’ is surprisingly high and further highlights the distance between the readers and/or their gatekeepers and the awarding bureaucracies. This was also indicated by other consumer cohorts who wrote in terms of lack of transparency in the awarding process and lack of communication between awarding bodies and consumers. Responses demonstrate a chasm between appreciating awarded literature as part of the literary culture and appreciating awarded literature in terms of personal engagement. While parents indicated a lack of knowledge of many awards, all respondents expressed interest in children’s literature. Throughout the questionnaire, parents emphasised that child engagement is the pre-eminent value. Reading for pleasure was the desirable outcome.

9.4 Conclusion

This research did not analyse a representative sample of parents but it presents a wide range of parent responses to produce insights into the diversity of opinions held by parents. Many of the results seem illogical and the relationships between concepts inconsistent, while others were predictable. In demonstrating the diversity of opinion, responses were often polarised between levels of high significance and no significance at all.

It may be asked if there is in fact a certain resistance to awards which almost amounts to a suspicion of the awarding process. For some parents this suspicion may underpin their attitude toward awarded books as exemplary literature. Though criteria are accessible, many parents were not sufficiently interested to search this out. Many expressed the opinion that these details should be widely publicised in the media. It is also possible that parents, in admitting to a lack of knowledge about awards, may adopt a certain defensiveness concerning awards and take an alternative assertive stance, demonstrating

a different priority in selecting literature for their children. It may also represent a level of confidence about knowing their children and knowing what their children will like, whereas they may not know about awarded literature and what it represents. A majority of parents are happy to adopt the pleasures of the promotions but not happy to accept the rationale of awards for children's literature thought they originate from the same source. They write that book awards are unimportant and irrelevant to their needs but they are important as elements of cultural capital.

While parents influence the reading of their children, which may or may not include awarded titles, children may independently express demands for specific reading matter and given the desire of parents to encourage enjoyable reading, many parents will comply. Children thus represent a counter-influence on these gatekeepers. Contemporary culture demands much from parents who endeavour to be 'good' parents and while they are seen as the principal influences in the voluntary reading of children for much of childhood, there are other influences on young readers which may or may not result in exposure to awarded titles. These external influences include classroom required reading, teacher recommendations, teacher librarians' exposure of titles in the school library, public library environments, popular titles read by the peer group and simply books which are readily accessible to the child. Thus, the direct link between a child and awarded titles is affected by a range of gatekeepers and other external factors.

Over the three consumer cohorts, the parent cohort demonstrated the lowest level of appreciation of children's book awards, consistently expressing an overriding priority of child-reader engagement. Some parents express respect for awarded books, agreeing that they contribute to the cultural fabric of society and enjoying the promotional activities related to the CBC awards but this often did not translate into any personal action. Most parent respondents were very confident of their own approach towards literature for their children and for many this did not include awarded literature. For many, exploration of this special category of literature was unimportant. There were many responses throughout the survey which were given as 'somewhat' and this can illustrate both a personal uncertainty about the question and an apathy towards awarded literature. Many

felt that 'good literature' was often not awarded and thus many worthwhile titles could be overlooked if awarded literature was the guiding criteria to reading selections. Therefore many parents felt that other criteria were just as valid in a child's reading spectrum and these included recommendations of peers and other gatekeepers, interesting covers, favourite authors, chance and serendipitous choices.

In summary, the survey showed that for the majority of parents, awards for children's literature are irrelevant on a personal level. They do not signify anything to many parents which would generate a personal response. Awards do not indicate the 'best' in children's literature and parents feel that there is much good literature available which is not awarded. However, many are prepared to accede that awarded literature is part of the literary culture in our social environment and therefore should be respected.

Chapter 10

A Synthesis of Results

10.1. Introduction

The value of this research is an understanding of the ramifications of a significant literary phenomenon in Australian. Surveying the six cohorts of producers and consumers revealed a range of common and specific concerns as well as significant differences. To some degree results confirmed the value placed on cultural capital by Bourdieu and English; to some degree they challenged it. This chapter will examine the common and distinctive concerns as revealed by the cohorts. Analysis of results revealed majority findings as well as issues, anomalies, diversities of response and unexpected contrasts, all of which are important elements in presenting the overall reality.

10.2 Population Perspectives

This research project sought to survey a wide base of affected populations, taking into account their unique experiences, their perspectives and their motivations. Producer cohorts expressed commitment to ideals of both quality and professional satisfaction, but necessarily operated according to the profit motive. Consumers were similarly interested in quality but also played strong gatekeeping roles whether they were librarians, educators or parents and this affected their responses. These roles affected their focus, as reported in earlier chapters.

Some key outcomes did emerge across cohorts. Each questionnaire opened by asking respondents to list any titles they remembered. Only publishers and some librarians supplied lists with several entries, suggesting that they may have had information more readily to hand than other cohorts. Some parents found this task intimidating and what

had been intended as a simple context setting exercise to ease respondents into the task ahead, in fact, reminded them of what they did not know.

Another striking point in common was respondents' recognition of only a narrow range of prizes. Nearly all cohorts confined their comments to the Children Book Council of Australia (CBC) awards. Striking too, was their equation of the CBC shortlisted titles with actual winners. This overall tendency indicates an important finding: that being shortlisted for this award can be at least as valuable as winning, especially where greater consumer recognition is concerned. Evidence shows that in the Australian children's literary calendar, excitement is generated by the announcement of the CBC shortlist and there is very little suspense or drama associated with the winning award announcement months later. So, while prestige may accompany a title which is proclaimed a 'Book of the Year', the book sales market and the demand for the author has already been very active for months. This is an eccentric feature when compared with other awards in Australia and overseas.

While a majority of cohorts had positive reactions to an award (or shortlisting) announcement, two cohorts reported indifference following the announcement of the awarding panel's judgement. Some booksellers and many parents expressed little interest in the CBC awarded books, though for different reasons. Many booksellers indicated that they have only minimal interest in awarded titles and some only make award based inventory decisions if there is a direct market request for the awarded title. The reason for this conservatism rests on the entrepreneur's judgment of the market and a reluctance to be left with unsold titles. Orders for shortlisted titles can be placed with local booksellers and they will be serviced but some consumers expressed dissatisfaction with this delay. However, from another market perspective, some booksellers reported that professionals in libraries and schools expected a 'good' bookshop to have the shortlisted titles and so they complied.

In terms of promotional activity of awarded books, including shortlisted books, there was also a general conservative bookseller stance. While a few reported intense activity to

promote these awarded titles, most relied on passive display. For many booksellers, the CBC awards or any other children's or YA awards, did not elicit a strong proactive response.

Parents displayed a similarly resistant attitude. A majority of parents are not attuned to book awards, do not confer a high status on them and are indifferent to acclaimed titles generally. Most parent respondents indicated that they are passionate about children's literature but do not feel that awarded titles represent the best in children's literature. They prefer to rely on their own judgment which in turn is based on their assessment of the children's interests and the potential for reader-engagement. Paradoxically, they were supportive of promotions of quality literature, including awarded literature and happily participated in shortlist events and Children's Book Week activities but these were disassociated from the actual awarding process and generally did not require recognition or personal interaction with the awarded titles.

Whilst most other cohorts participated in, or at least accepted, the book awards process, the resistance of booksellers and parents to the judgement of awarding bodies revealed their specific outlook.

10.3 Awards as a Measure of Quality and the Relationship to Cultural Capital

The idea of quality elicited a wide variety of responses. As indicated above, for parents, the overriding criterion in literary selection is their perception of the child's interests and the child's engagement. Some public librarians, teachers and teacher librarians were also critical of the judges' decision, asserting that their own professional knowledge of literature enabled them to judge quality themselves. However, conversely, this professional group tend to support the award system, citing community expectations as well as pragmatic, operational reasons. Thus the idea that awards represent an accurate measure of value is not equally accepted or supported. Nevertheless, four cohorts (authors, publishers, public librarians and teachers/teacher librarians) agreed that awards offer a very public recognition of literature and as such, greatly influence a range of

applications, such as studying and education, as well as broader incorporation into the fabric of culture.

While librarians and educators might accept the award process and integrate awarded titles into the activities inherent in their gatekeeping role, responding parents did not feel moved to any personal acknowledgment of quality or participatory action in interacting with the acclaimed title. They participated in the activities based on the shortlist in libraries and schools, supported book week promotions and asserted that awards should exist and that they were important for the growth of cultural capital, but they disassociated the fun and the promotional activities from support for the awarding processes and the awarded titles which underpin the promotion.

An alternative view of the demarcation in attitude by consumers toward the value or quality of awards is that between the personal and the professional. Parents took the personal view that their priority is child-reader engagement and they preferred to choose popular literature over awarded titles. In contrast, although some librarians, teachers and teacher librarians recognise this divide and claim that awarded titles do not fit their community of readers, the majority of professionals add awarded literature to their library collections and use awarded titles in various promotions. Some pragmatically use the awards, the merchandise and their accoutrements in their programs, putting aside their personal reservations while others expressed respect for the institutional literary judgments and dealt with the pronouncements accordingly. Some professionals in the consuming group expressed the opinion that awards impress adults more than children and this may account, to some degree, for the responses of the professionals in the consumer group. As well, librarians, teachers and teacher librarians have a mix of responsibilities that go beyond mere satisfaction of child-reader interests and their actions derive from their role as literary gatekeepers and educators. These professional consumers are generally seen to support the award system while parents were considerably more critical of awarded literature.

Sponsors of awards generally recognise these elements and incorporate them in their promotions and philosophies. Publishers and authors acknowledge the importance of a prestigious book award on the personal, economic and symbolic level. Awarding bodies and institutions compose criteria frameworks for their awards which support these elements and propose that the works which receive their award exemplify outstanding works. This does not apply to awards based on a popularity vote.

To some degree the 'quality' division can be defined as one between ideas about 'popular' culture versus 'high culture', as Bourdieu recognised. Awards make a claim to identify quality or high culture, while individual assessment and selection may contribute to 'popular' choice. He felt that acclaimed literature became part of culture especially when it was embedded in a structure. Such structures can be identified as the awarding body's structure in this research context. He saw the structure as mediating between subjectivity and objectivity for cultural emergence (Bourdieu 1989:43). In their responses challenging or acknowledging the value of awards, consumers and producers oscillated between these poles of subjectivity and objectivity.

Most producers and consumers, however, agreed with English's pragmatic definition of the role of awards through three key elements: the social, the institutional and the cultural. Socially the prize functions as a structure around which events and festivities are organised. Institutionally the prize brings authority to its pronouncements with an assertion that the judges' decisions reflect quality literature and thus cultural value. In terms of the cultural, because awards for literature embody elements which are nontemporal, noneconomic and involve prestige and acclaim, they become defined with a highly desirable form of value which becomes part of the cultural mix. English calls this an economy of prestige (2005a:50). He views the intangible but powerful elements as part of the market, contributing to collective value production which is itself cultural practice. Cultural value cannot emerge without respect that certain individuals (or their works) are granted by others (English 2005a:26).

10.4 The Commodification of Awarded Titles in Responses

Prizes and awards are intended to draw attention to outstanding, sometimes experimental literature. Through marketing promotions, publicity and appearances, an understanding and exposure of this literature may develop to the extent that commodification of the work may take place. The aim is to gain market leverage and to establish the title as a 'branded' item. Responses from producer and consumer cohorts confirm that awards are effective in this aspect, but only in the short term. For the most part, long term sales were not generated by children's and YA awards.

This response confirms what English observes about American book awards when he says: 'Contrary to conventional wisdom, the likelihood of a major American book award going to a bestseller has diminished over the past half century' (2005a:330). English shows that an acclaimed book and 'bestsellerdom' are simply two separate entities which evolve from two related but separate clusters of variables. The same principle probably applies in Australia but the scale is significantly different: awarded books certainly generate higher sales figures in the USA than in Australia, reflecting a larger market and a more elaborate marketing process. While the CBC or other Australian institutions award a title and publishers then use whatever opportunity available to 'brand' the item to make it a recognizable and marketable product, evidence indicates that this will only tend to apply in the short term and recognisability over the longer term will depend on the book's own merits in the market. The award alerts a market that an objective body has judged the title to be excellent and the status and prestige may allow the title to acquire symbolic value. The commodification with its economic base, may develop in this process but it may not. As many responses indicated, awarded titles may disappear from recollection and the market within two years. While it is known that some US booksellers have a Newbery Section or a Caldecott Section in their retail outlets, thus supporting the notion of the commodification of awarded titles, this does not appear to be significant over the whole children's book market.

10.5 Producers vs Consumers

In the Australian capitalist market, the literature producing sector faces an eccentric, independent, disparate market, as indicated to some degree by the three identified populations of consumers whose professional and personal perspectives influence their purchases of books. Producers and consumers have no direct connection as they make decisions appropriate to their respective roles. Publishers, operate with high stakes and priorities which are based on decisions about market potential. Authors are also one of the producers, but unlike the publisher and the bookseller, they are not always as strongly tied to the profit motive and not always working with market potential in mind. Nevertheless, their literary work is designed to be read and an author must convince a publisher to publish the work and so they too, enter the market with high stakes involved. The bookseller's responses show them to be a more reactive participant than a proactive one in the market. Decision making will, in the end, be based mostly on market potential and if awarded titles are judged to have a market in their community then they may be added to the inventory. Consumers on the other hand may, or may not, be responsive to the marketing approach regarding an awarded title. High stakes are not involved for consumers. Librarians and educators can choose to purchase and use the awarded literature or not, while parents are often not even aware of the marketing promotions and from responses they are not particularly interested in the products.

The producers in fact face three different markets with their literary product and each of these has a different paradigm. The public librarian, as a literary professional, has a personal view of awarded literature which may conflict with a professional view. As well, the ideals of the profession may not fit with the reality of the workplace where the nature of the market-community affects the kind of collection developed and the promotions and activities which are undertaken. Teachers and teacher librarians are also literary professionals but they have an educative focus and often very limited budgets and so decisions about awarded literature (and literature in general) will be informed by variables which involve a mix of engagement, quality, usefulness in the curriculum, cost and possibilities for promotion within their particular school community. Parents on the

other hand are not literary professionals though the respondents claimed to be avid supporters of reading. They have an individualised response to literature which on the whole excludes awarded literature as a specifically desirable product.

Informing, promoting and marketing effectively to each of the consumer cohorts arose as a pivotal element in community knowledge about the awards and especially about the criteria. Effective community education and promotion of awarded literature is lacking in the cultural landscape of Australia and for awarded titles to claim a secure place this needs to be addressed. For librarians and educators journals, professional meetings, conferences, e-mail advertising and review sources are available but the evidence of this research shows that even busy professionals do not access these sources very thoroughly and there are very few means for parents to be appraised of children's awarded literature. There may be posters and passive displays in libraries and possibly bookshops and some activity in schools at Book Week, but other general community coverage is negligible unless a parent is motivated enough to scan websites. This is further complicated by the fact that parents are not tied to each other in any formal way and so marketing initiatives by producers face a market with few clustered targets. The responses of publishers and authors indirectly confirm this: in urban areas they have events such as book signings and 'meet the author' talks, they sponsor authors to speak at conferences and similar events, but none mentioned any initiatives which inform the general community in any large scale way. Booksellers, within these communities are probably better positioned to do this, but they commonly did not commit to any strenuous promotional activity and undertook, at most, a display in a shopfront window and poster material.

The embedding of awarded literature into cultural capital thus depends on many unpredictable factors which arise from quite separate sources. Producers may have produced a worthy product but consumers will make independent decisions regarding the value of this product and the resolution of the degree of impact on culture will take some time to evolve.

10.6 Awards vs Award Promotion

All cohorts focused on the CBC awards and blended the shortlist and the winning list. Responses to questions on promotional activity tended to focus on the April-August period of the CBC shortlist with Book Week as the climax of this period. Associated with the award process are supporting commercial products, reviews, educational activities, merchandise and activities, some sponsored by the CBC and some independently produced.

In urban areas, the branches of the CBC may conduct fun-filled events with author appearances, book talks, conferences, events, dinners and critic panels. In urban and regional areas booksellers may host author appearances if they have publisher support, signings and possibly displays. Public libraries and schools will have a range of activities which might include active in-house programs, an author visit, competitions, decorations and posters, dress-as-a-character days and displays. Book Week is a prominent climactic seasonal highlight for children in most libraries and schools. Much of this activity will however, not be associated with the awarding process nor often even with the books on the shortlist or winners' list. Participants and professional consumers such as public librarians, teachers and teacher librarians are often happy to regard these events as a general celebration of literature for children, ignoring the fact that it is a CBC construct, supporting the CBC awarding process. Parents express support for Book Week as a worthwhile event while remaining indifferent to the awarding process and the awarded books.

The questionnaires drew attention to a range of awards which commend Australian children's and young adult literature. The CBC awards featured prominently in cohort responses; other awards such as state, national or international awards failed to make any significant impact. Most consumers are not aware of many of these and parents are not only unaware but disinterested. Librarians, teachers and teacher librarians would see these other award announcements in journals but for a variety of reasons, the announcements do not impact or result in affirmative action. As frequently commented

by publishers and authors, a Premier's Award and the new Prime Minister's Award offer very generous prizemoney and literary symbolic value at a professional level, but the CBC awards (including shortlisting) bring by far the greatest economic rewards in post-award on-going sales and greater recognition in the market.

Several respondents pointed out that the media have never really embraced book awards and this could partly explain the limited knowledge of the range of awards by consumers. Print media offer a brief overview of the CBC shortlist in April and a brief article on the CBC winners in August but other awards for children's and young adult literature are generally ignored. There are some literary reviews in the media from time to time, but these tend to focus on popular or controversial publications. For many consumers a source for informing their opinion is seriously lacking.

10.7 Adult Judged Awards vs Children's Choice Awards

Awards can be divided into two basic categories – adult-judged and children's choice awards. In the producer group, only authors discussed both kinds of awards although in the consumer group, each cohort had something to say about both categories. This distinction may reflect the profit motive of publishers and booksellers which will have a closer application to adult-judged books, the importance of additional values for authors and the lack of any profit motive for consumers.

Publishers' responses demonstrate the prominence of the adult-judged CBC awards: even other high profile awards were not as strongly supported. Despite this, any award was regarded as worth receiving and was used in publicity. Booksellers only reported on the CBC awards. However, authors discussed both the adult-judged CBC awards and children's choice awards. For authors the CBC shortlisting and awards brought significant economic and symbolic value but authors also indicated that they experienced heartfelt affirmation from their child-readership when being presented with a children's choice award.

Professional consumers were not critical of the judging structure of adult-judged awards although they often were critical of their winning title choices but parents were very critical of adult-judged awards *per se*. Parents showed a particular commitment to finding books which engaged their young child-readers: they were not interested in narrative structures, characterisation, experimental works, cutting edge literary forms or challenging themes. While professional consumers also wanted their young clients or students to be engaged, they felt an obligation to present awarded literature which may be challenging and different. It became their job to 'sell' this literature to their readers. Public librarians were more disposed towards awarded titles which could be used in programs and were useful for storytimes: some felt that popularity and customising for their community overrode other considerations, but their criticism was not directed at the adult-judging process but at the specific titles which were awarded through the CBC shortlist and the winners' list. For teachers and teacher librarians, decisions and purchasing were sometimes related to budgets, educative usefulness, content and context and utilitarian values.

While most parents supported the children's choice process, most professionals saw the pitfalls of this method for judging quality literature and felt that they could name the winning title even before it was announced, though some participated to validate the evaluative 'voice' of children and YAs in their communities. Professional consumers mostly felt an obligation to accept literature which was new and often difficult if it was judged to be exemplary by adult experts on a judging panel.

10.8 Awarded Literature vs Engaging Literature

While these two characteristics are not necessarily opposed, many consumer respondents wrote as if they were. The ideal is of course a coincidence of the award and engagement in the one title. Children's choice awards reflect most accurately the real engagement of the target audiences. Although all well known adult-judged awarding bodies include children's engagement as one of the criteria in their award charters, other criteria may trump engagement in the awarding of a title. In addition, judging bodies usually consist

of a panel of experts, all of whom have informed experiences and independent opinions and for award decisions, consensus has to be reached. The criteria of engagement will be part of the debate but not the only priority.

Parents often commented that the adults on the panel of a judging body wouldn't know what children like yet perceived no irony that they themselves constantly make decisions in choosing books for their children. The difference is a matter of degree and specificity: parents know their children well and other adults such as judges and gatekeepers know children in a collective sense. Adult judges cannot work to satisfy all child-readers and as a result they approach the task from a different perspective.

At the beginning of the process of awarding, adult judges make evaluations which carry weight. After the award announcement others continue to evaluate the work. Each reader – judge, librarian, teacher, teacher librarian, parent and finally the child or young adult, has a unique experience despite reading the same words. Though a decision is made regarding the prize winning title, it will not be read in the same way by different readers, and so there will be a multiplicity of subtle interpretations. In exposing the awarded literature to child-readers, gatekeepers made the observation that an awarded title that they had not admired is often appreciated by a young reader. Professional gatekeepers saw this as a salutary message regarding dogmatic evaluation by adult consumers in this role.

10.9 Award Communication vs Lack of Knowledge

In the case of children's choice awards, the judging process is openly transparent and known: children vote for their favourite titles and the title with the most votes is the winner. In the case of adult-judged awards, however, consumers indicated that they did not know, or understand, the criteria on which adult-judged awards are based. Indeed, even professionals indicated that they were not aware of the judging criteria. This may account for the criticism of adult-judged awards: an uninformed consumer will not perhaps recognise the value within a piece of literature and may make a negative,

superficial personal judgment which may have consequences in terms of later actions of buying or borrowing. Several librarians said that they had read an award winning title but could not see why it had been awarded. This lack of background knowledge would make the job of promotion of awarded literature to children in the form of reading aloud, booktalks and activities by librarians, teachers and teacher librarians, very difficult. While the CBC, for example, makes judging criteria and judging reports freely available, responses indicate that most consumers, even librarians and teachers, do not access these. Thus consumer resistance may embody a lack of informed knowledge.

This highlights a distance between the awarding bureaucracies and the three selected consumer gatekeepers. Uncritical acceptance by consumers of a judging panel's statement that an awarded book has excellent literary value, does not happen and while some respondents report that debate between consumers is enjoyable, interesting and often passionate, it will not be based on the criteria of the award. In the case of the CBC awards it seems that the final consuming arbiters of an award, the gatekeepers, are not well informed. It is possible that this is a task which could be undertaken by the CBC through the marketing of informational material. Currently the CBC and other significant awarding bodies in Australia, do not make their awarding process transparent. On a commercial level, it might also seem to be in producers' interests to inform their potential consumers of the criteria which placed their title on the shortlist or winner's list. Communication between the cohorts themselves and between cohorts and awarding institutions regarding criteria for awards, remains unaddressed at this time and yet this gives meaning to the judges' decisions.

10.10 Conclusion

The awards process has mixed impacts on the children's and young adult literary environment in Australia. Booksellers in the producer group and parents in the consumer group experience only minimal impact. Parents play a vital role in the exposure of literature to children and by extension, they could play an important role in the promotion of awarded titles to children. From evidence, the closest connection a majority of

parents have with an awarded book is when another consumer, usually a librarian, a teacher or a teacher librarian conducts a program focussed on an awarded book or they receive an invitation to participate in a Book Week program. Even then, the parent is not exposed to the awarding process or the criteria which underpin the announcement of this awarded book. Most parents do not associate Book Week or other programs with the CBC awarding process. For awarding bodies and publishers to rely on consumers to carry the awarded books baton to other consumers, may possibly not be a very efficient mode of communication about book awards. As well, aside from the CBC, most parents have almost no knowledge of any other awarding institutions – some know about children’s choice awards and a few mentioned the Premier’s Award. Without proactive measures by the awarding institutions this situation will not change. If the CBC wishes to be a force for serious evaluation of contemporary children’s literature, the key may lie with some different strategies in terms of transparency and public education. This also applies to other awarding bodies.

This research project reached into previously uncharted waters to examine the impacts on selected stakeholders following the announcement of a book award. The six cohort-stakeholders were determined by their function and an underlying motivation but within this categorisation, all cohorts demonstrated a wide range of views and experiences.

The research results provide insights beyond the award process. The process does not end with the award announcement but moves on to a new context which embodies producers’ hopes for healthy post-award sales and authors’ hopes for validation of their work in both economic and non-economic terms. Booksellers may decide on promotions or not. With minimal media or reviewing coverage librarians, educators and the parent community are exposed to the announcement and then abandoned to make their own evaluation, unassisted by background and reporting which could do much to justify the judges’ choice of winning titles. This information is available but not easily accessible. The lack of informed opinion is a serious variable in the market for awarded books and this might be an area which awarding institutions could act upon, given the will, to promote their product. The consumer-cohorts comprise the market and it is odd that they

are not better informed to make decisions which could be advantageous for all the producers. The award process in this way is a truncated one which may be the subject of further investigation beyond this study.

Chapter 11

Issues, Challenges and Future Directions for Children's Book Awards

11.1 Challenging Accepted Wisdom

The examination of the relative impacts of children's book awards on selected populations is, to some degree, a challenge to the accepted wisdom which has been the sustaining environment of the awards process. Over the years, assumptions have underpinned the business of awarding quality literature. Respondents express the belief that rewarding quality literature with awards and prizes is a 'good thing'. Many respondents took this to the next stage, viewing awarded titles with special respect which was translated into action. English (2005a) analysed the award system for adult books in the USA, while the research evidence demonstrated in this dissertation is grounded in children's literature in an Australian context. Although the parameters of national context, particular awards and affected cohorts all differed between this work and that of English, there was a broadening of the praxis to offer wider perspectives and insights. This last chapter offers a short discussion of the future of book awards in Australian contemporary literary culture, with particular reference to children's and young adult literature in Australia.

11.2 Children's Literary Awards in Australia and Their Future

From evidence collected, four of the six cohorts embraced children's book awards, although to varying degrees and for different reasons.

Publishers and authors within the producers' group had the experience of winning a children's book award and stood to fulfil their purpose of making a profit which contributed to the sustainability of their enterprises. Therefore, as long as the award

prestige enhanced their success in the market and as long as the economic returns exceeded the costs of production, then their participation in the awards process was likely to continue. Apart from personal gratification and pride, an award is a valued tool in their marketing environment. This particularly applies to publishers. However, authors were, on the whole, also very gratified to receive an award and most valued the generated income but they also expressed a high value for the prestige which led to a raft of extended experiences, some of which were economically quantifiable and some of which weren't. Booksellers were less involved.

There were significant differences however, registered in the consumers' cohorts. Public librarians offered the strongest overall support for book awards and the CBC book awards in particular. In the workplace of teachers and teacher librarians, budgets were a critical factor: as long as they could stretch to the purchase of the short listed or winning titles, teachers and teacher librarians were also very supportive of CBC, and to a lesser extent, other book awards, reserving the right to exercise professional judgment which might exclude book awards. It was the parent cohort which exercised the lowest level of response in terms of respect for, interest in and engagement with, a winning title. The parents were quite indifferent to the awards process, the prestige of awards and the idea that awards might be a guide to quality literature. They preferred to judge books for themselves, based on their personal assessment of what their children would enjoy. Thus, in evaluating the accuracy of the awards through the eyes of the consumers, evidence separates the professional consumers (public librarians/teachers/teacher librarians) from the views of the parent cohort. Many of the professional consumers had critical comments to make about the process and particularly the selected winning titles, especially with reference to the CBC awarded titles, but most also indicated they rode on the coat-tails of the publicity created by the awards process and used it to their advantage in their workplaces. They were, nevertheless, especially critical about whether awards actually offered a measurement of quality in literature. However, their discussion did not offer any alternatives except their personal judgment based on their perception of their child-reader communities.

And what of the future of the awards? The awards themselves, and especially the CBC awards, are currently entrenched in the children's literary environment and despite the criticisms, they will probably continue.

The CBC award process in particular has become an established part of the children's literary calendar and although the process is almost entirely run by volunteers, it is striving to move to another corporate level. The demands of the award process, the push to exercise both media and political muscle and the issues with which it can deal, are limited because of the demands on the volunteer executive. Time will tell whether moving to a professional level can be achieved.

A portfolio of criticisms of the CBC process was expressed in the responses, ranging from criticisms of the choices for short listed and winning titles, claims of bias, claims of decisions adhering to political correctness to criticisms that these awards have too many categories. With reference to this latter criticism, the announcement of the shortlist in April presents 30 books in 5 categories and this is seen by many as too many highlighted titles overall. However, there is no way of knowing if this will change. Since 30 titles are exposed to the buying market, producers stand to benefit through sales and they would be anxious to maintain this wide exposure. In this regard, some respondents expressed the view that this large number of CBC short listed titles plays to the interests of the publishers. It is only a short step to postulate that the CBC award process is actually a publishers' construct. However, affected cohorts, excluding parents, may complain and criticise, but at the same time they make use of the publicity, the culture of Children's Book Week, the merchandise and lesson-activity publications and the objective assessment of quality literature which the award environment offers. Parents accept the fun and attention given to Book Week or associated activities and see it as a general promotion of literature.

Premier's Awards are more professionally handled, managed as an offshoot of each State's Premier's Department and served by a committee comprised of a range of eminent professional writers, literary critics, academics and government arts

administrators. At the national level, the Prime Minister's Department has announced that their literary awards would be expanded to include a children's fiction and young adult fiction category in its awards program with prize money of \$100,000 each tax free (Wyndham 2010a, Prime Minister's Awards 2010). While this may be a bonus for children's literature in Australia, Wyndham feels that such largesse may have a very short life, as it is dependent upon political will (Wyndham 2010b) and in reference to the lesser prize money for the adult 'Miles Franklin Award' (currently \$42,000) she felt that money would have been better spent topping up already respected and established awards. Compared to the CBC prize money and that of the Premier's Awards, the Prime Minister's Award prize money is very generous. It will take a longitudinal comparative study to determine which of these awards yields the greater income in the long run when generated sales are factored in. It is likely that sales will not exceed \$100,000 even in the long run and so the Prime Minister's Award is very impressive and will be sought after, while it lasts. Children's choice awards are not an economic award; they are conducted by volunteers on a small scale and by their nature, they value objectivity without charges of bias or alignments, valuing the views of the child-reader.

What is likely to change is the nature of the literature which will be part of the award process. It was a monumental change, seven years ago, when judges awarded 'honour book' status to Gregory Rogers' *The Boy, The Bear, The Baron, The Bard*, a textless book, and there followed a debate centred on whether it was possible to have a literary award when there were no words. This kind of narrative form has moved to a whole new level of acceptance since then, reaching global levels of respect with Shaun Tan's *The Arrival* (2010). The literary market has since also embraced a whole new genre of graphic novels and those in the Manga format, picture books for teenagers and adults and a variety of novels which mix words with various forms of illustration. These formats will challenge the notion and definition of the literary novel.

However, the biggest challenge for awarding organisations will be the presentation of literary works which incorporate digital formats and involve a wide range of media (Education Review 2010). 'Electronic media are not simply changing the way we tell

stories: they are changing the very nature of story, of what we understand (or do not understand) to be narratives' (Hunt 2000:111). Further, '...literary texts are being affected by ICTs and ICT-based technologies of production are impacting on the character of literary texts themselves ...' (Locke and Andrews, 2004:142). Unsworth describes the field thus: 'There seems to be broad agreement that literacy can no longer be thought of as involving language alone and that images ... and also sound, movement and gesture in digital multimedia texts need to be considered along with language as fundamental meaning-making resources in constructing text' (2008b:3).

Leu *et al.* (2004:1591) drew attention to three main elements in this view of contemporary literacy: radical transformations of what we understand to be literary works because of technological change, a new field of literary potentials because of the technological environment and the dissemination of literary material in different ways because of new drivers in technological communication. Unsworth (2008b:5) suggests that assimilation and accommodation of these new formats and their modes of communication will be complementary and an iterative process, leading to an evolutionary reconceptualising of literacy and literature. Unsworth also points to the burgeoning of children's literature sites on the web which not only extend the reach of the literary work itself but offer extension of this through author profiles, games, book trailers, blogs and chat rooms and a variety of complementary activities which have a story context (2006:xi).

The recent settlement reached by Google with regard to copyright payments in the USA, will have a flow-on effect which is being regarded as a windfall for Australian producers by the Australian Society of Authors, Copyright Agency Limited and the Australian Publishers' Association (Knox, 2009:8). As it stands, the rules allow authors to give permission for the electronic scanning of books and articles for agreed copyright payments for each internet 'hit', similar to royalties (Timpane 2010:72) but it also opens the door to a whole new format for literary works which will allow contemporary graphic computer/video/electronic elements to be woven throughout the work. However, Fisher claims that the overseas rights laws are still very inefficient and no clear business model

is yet in place for e-books and in the negotiations, he sees less flexibility as publishers assess their potential for profitability (Fisher 2010). This could be revolutionary and the time will come when this kind of literature might be voted as a children's choice favourite and it will demand consideration for the major awards. The current criteria for the major awards are phrased and interpreted in terms of reviewing paper-based narratives and texts. The criteria for winning a major award in the future will need overhauling if awarding bureaucracies wish children's literary awarded titles to present a relevant evaluation of contemporary children's literature.

The competing electronic versions of book formats and the blurring of the boundaries of what actually constitutes a book, will be issues for the future. In many ways, some current versions are updated ones of the older 'Choose Your Own Adventure' mode with characters, narratives, events and phenomena, choices of paths and outcomes. These will almost certainly be cheap and will contain an alluring range of enhancements which will attract youth readership. In a further step Gee (2003:58) and Unsworth (2006:119) discuss the nature of 'video games' which have many of the characteristics of a good book with narrative, characters with certain physical and intellectual attributes, personalities, choices and decision making throughout the narrative and the establishing of a virtual identity within a virtual context: these have been called 'game narratives' and they involve the same elements inherent in the usual definitions of literature, across a complex range of genres (Unsworth 2006:135). Many of the electronic manifestations of the narrative have been designed as part of a package of multiple formats of books/movies/games and hypertextual activities. 'These hybrid inter-media forms of narrative experience, apply not only to emerging new literature but also to the representation of classic and traditional literature' (Unsworth 2006:135). They may also come to apply to awarded literature, past, present and future.

The cost of producing the traditional paper-based book, especially for hard cover picture books, is a major impediment in the face of competition from electronic texts. Currently, the technology to easily reproduce a high quality digital copy of picture books is not competitive but it is likely that this challenge will be met in the future. What is likely to

occur, however, is that there will be a whole new industry of digitally created picture works which have been designed for digital media from the beginning. Will these be viewed on equal terms with a hand created work for an award in the 'picture book' category? The Australian Council for the Arts urged the Australian publishing industry to move to e-publishing or face extinction (ABC 2010). Already there are compact online books through Amazon's Kindle, Kobe, the Sony PRS-700, eReader, Apple's iPad and EcoReader, not to mention availability of enhanced mobile phones and netbooks. These are lightweight digital readers that can store the texts of hundreds of books (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 2009:10, *Good Reading Magazine*, May 2009:21, Timpane 2010:72). They are easy to hold with a page turning facility, the capability to download newspapers and magazines, the capability to turn text into audio, an illuminated screen so that they can be read in the dark and a list of other attractive features. As well, there is development of print-on-demand technology for printing out only what is asked for, which obviously would offer huge cost savings for producers in terms of the costs of production as well as the transport, warehouse storage and remainder tangents to the book industry. Even popular magazines are discussing these developments as the exciting 'next thing' for literature (Czeh, 2009:3). All of these and other means will get cheaper, better and faster at delivering new forms of literature with video clips, graphic illustration, sound and music. There are challenges for awarding bodies in this market and issues around the revenue streams of all the contributors to multi-media literary works and digital rights management (Sturmfels 2010:5) for producers. Many consumers appear receptive already to this digital form of publishing.

Interestingly, British publishing innovator, Stephen Page, believes there will always be room for the printed word, declaring that 'The print book will continue to co-exist like bicycles and cars, for a very long time to come' (ABC 2010). Fisher (2010) does not believe that there will be a diminution of the paper-based book. There has been a 6% increase in value and volume of books per annum in 2008-2009, worth \$1291million in value and this is on top of a substantial increase in 2007-2008.

The real challenge in terms of book awards, will be how the established awarding bodies will cope with these new formats and new methods of delivering literature to consumers. The criteria they have always had will be inadequate for the various formats of literary text on the market. Mass entertainment, communication, imaginative narratives, musical and other audio accompaniments, virtual world potential and graphic video images are already integrated into new forms and for book awards, this generates a tension between notions of correctness, definitions of literature and the realities of linguistic and illustrative change which have evolved with the growth of communication technologies and digitally mediated networks (Merchant 2007:1, Bearne 2003:98, Burnett, Dickinson, Merchant & Meyers 2004:16). To be unaware of the realities is to deny the contribution they make towards cultural capital. The web has moved substantially from being a source of information to being a parallel world for many users. For book awards this is confrontational and how awarding bodies react to these challenges will determine whether awards have relevance or not in the future. The issue has ramifications in the wider world as well: libraries need to reflect on their place in this new reading environment (inCite 2010:9) but this is beyond the scope of this research.

The central question of this research examined the outcomes of the current book award process in contemporary Australia. One of the conclusions point to the fact that the parent cohort is marginalised in the process while other consuming cohorts are poorly informed. Some of this stems from lack of proactive interest in the criteria for awards or the will to search them out, but some is due to perceived inaccessibility of the information and the lack of flair and coverage in the promotion of the short listed and winning titles. Information which is important probably needs wide exposure in the print and visual media and this is distinctly lacking in Australia. Thus, a current issue for awarding bodies and producers may involve examination of their particular outreach and marketing strategies to address this gap. In addition, they may need to also consider the digital, electronic multi-modal delivery of literature to which the next generation of parents and children will be attuned.

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Glossary

The explanations of the terms below reflect their meaning in this research dissertation. All are common, accepted terms in their particular context, but they may differ from everyday usage.

Access The processes by which library staff make resources known and available to clients: eg. help desk and staff organization, appropriate classification of materials, displays, signage, brochures and reading lists, bibliographies, database provision, newsletters, library programs, reader's advising.

Backlist When a book is published, the number of copies released on to the market correlates with expected and potential demand. At the end of these sales, the title may not be re-published. However, if an author wins an award, there is often renewed interest in the author's previous titles and publishers review these and sometimes re-issue an older title. These previous titles are in the backlist.

Capital (including Social Capital, Cultural Capital) In the economic sense, capital encompasses non-human productive resources (eg., buildings, machinery, land) but the ethnographic interpretation applies to human intangible assets which are productive in a personal, social and cultural environment (e.g., reputation, literary acclaim, awarded literature, literary networks).

Circulation In libraries the circulation function involves lending materials and accepting the return of items. Many libraries keep statistics on circulation and make operational decisions based on these rates.

Classification In libraries materials are arranged in categories. Material for children will be given a classification which relates to its location within the overall library. Children's and young adult awarded books could be classified in the junior or young adult fiction area, the junior or young adult non-fiction area or occasionally in adult sections.

Cohort Because most research cannot survey every possible respondent, a group is selected which acts as a representative of the population which fits given criteria.

Collection Development This is the task of acquisition for a library. The books, journals, newspapers, audio-visual items, databases and the like are the 'collection' and collection development involves the decision making undertaken by librarians as they acquire items.

Commodification Successful awarded titles are sometimes so acclaimed that they are commonly recognized and acquire the benefits of a 'brand' and have market value as such. Such a 'brand' may be a CBC 'Book of the Year'.

Consumption and Consumers Consumption is the act of using a good or a service. Consumers are the individuals or organizations who engage in consumption.

Distribution This refers both to the act of dissemination of questionnaires and the pattern or spatial coverage of this dissemination.

Economic decisions These are decisions undertaken by an entrepreneur intended to generate an economic return. Underpinning the economic decision is the desire for profit.

Marginal Income This refers to the positive or negative deviations from a previous level of income. In most economic activity, positive marginal income is necessary for growth and sustainability.

Population This is the entire number of people who fit the criteria under consideration.

Production and Produce Production is the act of creating a good or a service. Producers are the individuals or the organizations who undertake production.

Reader's Advising This is a service in libraries where personal assistance is offered in selecting literature or finding information to suit tastes or needs.

Scaffolds These are constructs which set out the structure for a line of enquiry or a strategy for a research purpose.

Short Lists and Shortlisting For all book awards there is a judging process which results in narrowing down the entries for a final judgment. Some awarding bodies publicise a short list of the 'finalists' in the competition and this is released sometime before the winners' announcements.

APPENDICES

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

MEMORANDUM TO: Dr E Hale & Ms H Fisher
School of English, Communication & Theatre

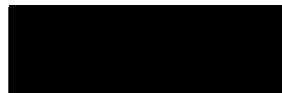
This is to advise you that the Human Research Ethics Committee has approved the following:

PROJECT TITLE: Winning a Children's Book Award: Who Benefits?
COMMENCEMENT DATE: 01/09/2007
COMMITTEE APPROVAL No.: HE07/143
APPROVAL VALID TO: 01/09/2008
COMMENTS: Nil. Conditions met in full.

The Human Research Ethics Committee may grant approval for up to a maximum of three years. For approval periods greater than 12 months, researchers are required to submit an application for renewal at each twelve-month period. All researchers are required to submit a Final Report at the completion of their project. The Progress/Final Report Form is available at the following web address: http://www.une.edu.au/research-services/ethics/hrec_pages/final.report.doc

The *NHMRC National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans* requires that researchers must report immediately to the Human Research Ethics Committee anything that might affect ethical acceptance of the protocol. This includes adverse reactions of participants, proposed changes in the protocol, and any other unforeseen events that might affect the continued ethical acceptability of the project.

In issuing this approval number, it is required that all data and consent forms are stored in a secure location for a minimum period of five years. These documents may be required for compliance audit processes during that time. If the location at which data and documentation are retained is changed within that five year period, the Research Ethics Officer should be advised of the new location.



Jo-Ann Sozou
Secretary

02/08/2007

PLANNING AND INNOVATION



Early Childhood and Primary Education
Secondary Education
Technical and Further Education
Vocational Education and Training
Higher Education
Adult and Community Education

Mrs Heather Fisher
10350 New England Highway Armidale NSW 2350
ARMIDALE NSW 2350
AUSTRALIA

Dear Mrs Fisher

SERAP Number **2007192**

I refer to your application to conduct a research project in NSW government schools entitled *Children's Book Awards: Who Benefits ?*. I am pleased to inform you that your application has been approved. You may now contact the Principals of the nominated schools to seek their participation.

This approval will remain valid until 1/9/2008.

No researchers or research assistants have fulfilled the Working with Children screening requirements to interact with or observe children for the purposes of this research.

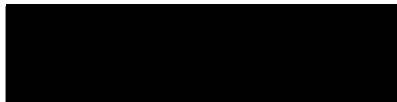
You should include a copy of this letter with the documents you send to schools.

I draw your attention to the following requirements for all researchers in NSW government schools:

- School Principals have the right to withdraw the school from the study at any time. The approval of the Principal for the specific method of gathering information for the school must also be sought.
- The privacy of the school and the students is to be protected.
- The participation of teachers and students must be voluntary and must be at the school's convenience.
- Any proposal to publish the outcomes of the study should be discussed with the Research Approvals Officer before publication proceeds.

When your study is completed please forward your report marked to General Manager, Planning and Innovation, Department of Education and Training, GPO Box 33, Sydney, NSW 2001.

Yours sincerely



Andrew Rolfe
A/General Manager, Planning and Innovation
8 February 08

Pilot Study

Focus Question: What are the outcomes resulting from awards and prizes for children's literature in Australia?

The **aim** of the pilot study was:

- To discover if postulated populations had an interest in book awards and if so, which populations and which awards.
- To ascertain if it was possible to have a common set of survey questions over all the affected populations.
- To discover if there was any specific jargon which would affect responses in a survey and if the vocabulary I would use was appropriate to the range of people involved.
- To discover if there were specific perspectives and interests that would affect participation in a survey. Relevancy had to be respected to encourage responses.
- To discover the networks, the relationships and the sequential processes that operate in the book world, the reading of books and the awarding of books .

The pilot study consisted of a series of interviews; some were face-to-face, some were phone interviews and some were through e-mail contact.

A list of possible constituents was compiled and this grew as a result of the discussions. The list included publishers from large and small operations, shop-front booksellers and customised service booksellers, sales assistants in book sections of large stores, authors, public librarians, university librarians, teacher librarians, teachers, children 7yrs and under, children 8-12 yrs and teenagers 13-18yrs, parents, grandparents and pre-school staff.

A list of questions was compiled, based on the focus question of the research and some subsidiary questions for context and an understanding of the processes at work. The questions which formed the structure of the interviews included:

- What awards are there for children's literature in Australia?
- How important are awards for you? To what degree are they important?
- How important are the awards for the wider Australian literature environment?
- How long does the kudos of an award last?
- Which Australian children's book awards are the most prestigious?
- Is the important thing the prize-money or is there more to an award?
- Can you recall some children's book titles which have been awarded? Why do you think they were awarded?
- Do you have any interest in overseas awarded titles? eg., Newbery Award
- Is there an impact when an Australian children's title receives an overseas award?

The interviews often expanded into wider discussion and some valuable insights resulted. The influence of the pilot study is discussed in the introduction and the methodology chapters.

Authors & Illustrators

N0. :

You have been the author/illustrator of a book for children or young adults which has been acclaimed as a winning title. This study aims to assess the impact of winning an award for authors and other key players. Your responses will be an invaluable contribution to this body of knowledge and will contribute to the debate and discussion which surrounds the process of Australian children's book awards.

On the whole your responses will be aggregated with those of other authors and certainly confidentiality will be strictly observed for questions regarding economic gains, but there may be comments which you make that I would like to quote in the final product.

If you are willing to be quoted and acknowledged please fill in your name below.

If you are willing to be quoted but would rather remain anonymous please indicate with an X : and leave the space below blank and confidentiality is assured.

If you are unwilling to be quoted or acknowledged please indicate with an X: and leave the space below blank and confidentiality is assured.

Name:

Please complete the following table as it applies to you. Australian and overseas awards should be included.

YEAR	PRIZE OR AWARD RECEIVED	TITLE OF WINNING BOOK	ILLUSTRATOR IF APPLICABLE	PUBLISHER
2007				
2006				
2005				
2004				
2003 2002				

Section B

This section asks you to rate your experience as a winner of an Australian children’s or young adult’s literature award. Please rate the impact on you personally on a scale of 1-5.

1 = extremely significant 2 = very significant 3 = significant
4 = somewhat significant 5 = no significance

1. When you won an Australian children’s book award how do you rate the significance for you personally ?

1 2 3 4 5

2. On winning a book award rate the degree of motivation you derived for future writings.

1 2 3 4 5

3. Rate the benefits (both financial and non-financial) of being an Australian children’s or YA winning book author/illustrator.

1 2 3 4 5

4. Rate the financial return to you as an author/illustrator of a winning Australian children’s or YA title – if there has been more than one, think of the biggest return.

1 2 3 4 5

5. When you have won an Australian children’s book award or prize, how long does the impact last (including both financial and non-financial impacts)?

1(5+yrs) 2(4yrs) 3(3yrs) 4(2yrs) 5(1yr or less – please specify the length of time)

Section B: Would you like to add a personal comment related to these questions?

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.....

Section C

Take as an example one of your most successful Australian award winning children’s or young adult titles. Please answer the following:

1. In terms of increased income, estimate the **percentage increase** which could be attributable to being the author/illustrator of an Australian award winning children’s title, within the following timeframes:

1 st Yr of the announcement%	2 nd yr after announcement%	3 rd yr after announcement%	4 th yr after announcement %	5 th after announcement%
-----------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------

Section C: Would you like to make a personal comment on this question ?

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Section D

Please circle the most appropriate answer for you.

In terms of intangible things like your reputation, status as an acclaimed author and bargaining power, rate the impact of winning an Australian children’s book award.

- 1 = extremely significant 2 = highly significant impact 3 = significant impact
 4 = some impact 5 = no impact

1 2 3 4 5

Section D: 1. What have been the kinds of non-financial impacts you have experienced ? Which of these have been positive ? Which have been negative impacts ? Would you like to offer a personal comment ?

.....

2. When you have become an award winner, have you voluntarily undertaken or been invited to undertake a greater number of promotional tasks ? What kinds of work did this involve ? How did you feel about this work ? What time commitment did this involve (hours per week) ? For how long were you committed in this way ?

.....

Section E

There are many Australian awards which have some impact on Australian authors/illustrators of children’s and young adult fiction. Please rate the **economic significance** you feel for each of the following awards, whether you have actually won one of these awards or not.

Please tick which ever box you feel applies to you.

1 = extremely significant economically 2 = very significant 3 = significant
4 = somewhat significant 5 = no significance economically

AWARD	1	2	3	4	5
Children’s Book Council of Australia awards					
YARA Award (national online award) (Australian)					
Nan Chauncy Award (Australian)					
Aurealis Awards for science fiction, fantasy & horror (Australian)					
Ena Noel Award for new Australian writer or illustrator (Australian)					
Children’s choice state awards such as KOALA, KROK, WAYRBA, YABBA, BILBY, COOL, CYBER, KANGA (Australian)					
Ethel Turner Prize for Young people’s Literature (Australian)					
Patricia Wrightson Prize for Children’s Literature (Australian)					
Premier’s Awards – awarded by the premier’s Department in each State					
The Crichton Award for New Illustrators (Australian)					

Section F

There are many Australian awards which have some impact on Australian authors/illustrators of children’s and young adult fiction. Please rate the potential impact on your **reputation, your status as an acclaimed author/illustrator and/or your bargaining power, etc** for the following awards, whether you have actually won these awards or not. Please tick the box you feel best applies to you for **non-financial** impacts.

1 = extremely significant 2 = very significant 3 = significant
4 = somewhat significant 5 = no significance.

AWARD	1	2	3	4	5
Children’s Book Council of Australia awards					
YARA Award (national online award)					
Nan Chauncy Award					
Aurealis Awards for science fiction, fantasy & horror					
Ena Noel Award for new Australian writer or illustrator					
Children’s choice state awards such as KOALA, KROK, WAYRBA, YABBA, BILBY, COOL, CYBER, KANGA					
Ethel Turner Prize for Young people’s Literature					
Patricia Wrightson Prize for Children’s Literature					
Premier’s Awards – awarded by the premier’s Department in each State					
The Crichton Award for New Illustrators (Australian)					

If you have won an overseas book award for children's or young adult literature please indicate the kind of book it was (e.g., early childhood picture book, young adult narrative, textless book, etc) and the impact the award had on you in the light of the questions asked for Australian awards.

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Thankyou for taking the time to respond to this survey. The sharing of your experience is appreciated and the results will be offered to professional publications and associations in a generalized, aggregated form. There is value in evaluating accepted processes of children's book awards and prizes and your answers will offer a contribution to this knowledge.

If you would like a summary of findings I am happy to offer this as a token of my appreciation for the time you have taken to respond. Please fill in the section below and send it back with this survey form and I will reply when all the results are available.

Thankyou,

Heather Fisher

.....

Please send me a summary of the findings of this research:

Name:

.....

Address:

.....
.....
.....

Publishing Organizations

No.

Your organization has published a book for children or young adults which has been acclaimed as a winning title in Australia. This study aims to understand the impact which winning an award has on your organization. Your responses to the following questions will significantly add to the body of knowledge and the general debate regarding children’s book awards in Australia.

Most answers will be aggregated and confidentiality will be maintained but it could be useful to be able to quote some of the comments you might care to make.

If you are willing to be quoted and acknowledged please indicate the name of your organization below.

If you are willing to be quoted but would rather remain anonymous please indicate with an X: and leave the title space below blank. Confidentiality is assured.

If you are unwilling to be quoted or acknowledged please indicate with an X: and leave the title space below blank. Confidentiality is assured.

Name of your organization:

Has your organization been associated with any **overseas** children’s or young adult book awards in the last five years ? Please indicate the award/year/title ?

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Please indicate the kinds of impacts and the strength of impacts that winning an **overseas** award has had on your organization.

eg., % increase in income through increased sales, reputation, bargaining power, etc

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The following questions apply to Australian book awards.

Please complete the following table where there is a section which applies to your organization:

	AWARD or PRIZE received: e.g., CBC Award, Koala Award, KROC, etc	TITLE of your winning publications	AUTHOR of your winning titles	ILLUSTRATORS of your winning titles
2007				
2006				
2005				
2004				
2003				

Section A

These questions serve to indicate a basic understanding of your experience in winning an Australian children’s or young adult literature award.

Please circle the answer to the following questions which best fits your organization :

Y = yes N = no S = some impact but not significant

1. Has winning a children’s book award been a significant event for your organization ?

Y N S

2. Has winning a children’s book award been a strong motivational force in your work culture ?

Y N S

3. Has winning a children's book award been seen as a reward for the passion of your children's editors ?

Y N S

4. Does winning a children's book award significantly increase economic returns ?

Y N S

5. Does winning a children's book award enhance your reputation and secure you a better position in the market?

Y N S

Section A: Would you like to add further comment relating to the above questions ?

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.....

Section B

These questions seek to understand the extent of your experience as an award winning organization. Please circle the answer which best fits your organization.

1 = extremely significant 2 = very significant 3 = significant 4 = slightly significant 5 = not significant for this organisation

1. When you won a children's book award **how** significant was it for your organization?

1 2 3 4 5

2. How significantly did winning a children's book award add to the motivation of the staff in your organization?

1 2 3 4 5

3. Do key members of your staff (eg., children's editors) receive benefits, either financial or non-financial, for their role in the production of a winning children's title?

1 2 3 4 5

4. Rate the economic return to your organization through winning a children's book award – if you have won several think of the biggest return over the last 5 years.

1 2 3 4 5

5. When you have won a children's book award or prize, how long does the financial impact last ?

1(5+ yrs) 2(4 yrs) 3(3 yrs) 4(2 yrs) 5(1 yr or less- please specify a length of time).....

Section B: Would you like to comment further, relative to these questions?

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.....

Section C

Take as an example one of your most successful award winning children's or young adult's titles. In terms of increased sales which generated increased income, estimate the **percentage increase in economic return** which could be attributable to the event of publishing this award winning title.

1 st yr after winning	2 nd yr after winning	3 rd yr after winning	4 th yr after winning	5 th yr after winning
.....%%%%%

Section C

Would you like to comment more fully on the question above?

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.....
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.....
.....

Section D

Please circle the most appropriate answer for your organization.

1 = extremely significant impact 2 = highly significant impact

3 = significant impact 4 = some impact 5 = no impact

In terms of the intangible things like your **reputation, status in the market and bargaining power**, what impact did winning a children’s book award have ?

1 2 3 4 5

Section D: Would you like to add a comment on this kind of impact ?

.....

Section E

There are many children’s and young adult awards which have some impact on the publishing organizations of Australia. Please rate the **economic significance** for each of the following for your organization, whether you have actually won one of these awards or not. Tick the appropriate box as follows:

1 = Extremely significant 2 = very significant 3 = significant 4 = minor impact

5 = no impact

AWARD	1	2	3	4	5
Children’s Book Council of Australia awards					
YARA Award (national online award)					
Nan Chauncy Award					
Aurealis Awards for science fiction, fantasy & horror					
Ena Noel Award for new Australian writer or illustrator					
Children’s choice state awards such as KOALA, KROK, WAYRBA, YABBA, BILBY, COOL, CYBER, KANGA					
Ethel Turner Prize for Young people’s Literature					
Patricia Wrightson Prize for Children’s Literature					
Premier’s Awards – awarded by the premier’s Department in each State					
The Crichton Award for New Illustrators					

Section F

There are many children’s and young adult awards which have some impact on the publishing organizations of Australia. Please rate the impact on your **reputation, status in the market and bargaining power** for each of the following for your organization, whether you have actually won one of these awards or not. Tick the appropriate box for the level of significance.

1 = Extremely significant 2 = very significant 3 = significant 4 = minor impact
5 = no impact

AWARD	1	2	3	4	5
Children’s Book Council of Australia awards					
YARA Award (national online award)					
Nan Chauncy Award					
Aurealis Awards for science fiction, fantasy & horror					
Ena Noel Award for new Australian writer or illustrator					
Children’s choice state awards such as KOALA, KROK, WAYRBA, YABBA, BILBY, COOL, CYBER, KANGA					
Ethel Turner Prize for Young people’s Literature					
Patricia Wrightson Prize for Children’s Literature					
Premier’s Awards – awarded by the premier’s Department in each State					
The Crichton Award for New Illustrators					

Thankyou for taking the time to respond to this survey. The sharing of your experience is appreciated and all the results will maintain confidentiality for your organization. If you would like a summary of findings I am happy to offer this as a token of my appreciation. Please fill in the section below and send it back with the survey form and I will reply when the results are analysed.

Heather Fisher

.....

Please send me a summary of the findings of this research

Name:

Address:

.....
.....
.....

Bookselling Organisations

No. :

Your organization has been involved in stocking children's books which have been awarded prizes or acclaimed as winners. This questionnaire aims to determine the impact on your organization of handling a winning a children's book award. Your particular contribution will add substantially to the body of knowledge and the debate about children's book awards.

While most information will be aggregated it would be useful for organizing the information and quoting specific comments to be able to identify your organization.

If you are willing to be quoted and acknowledged, please fill in your name below.

If you are willing to be quoted but would rather remain anonymous, please indicate with an X: and leave the space below blank and confidentiality will be assured.

If you are unwilling to be quoted or acknowledged please indicate with a X : and leave the space below blank and confidentiality will be assured.

Name:

Please read on, answering according to your experience.

Section A

The following questions aim to set a foundation with some simple questions regarding the impact of handling an award winning children's or young adult title, for your organization. Please circle the appropriate answer to the following questions.

Y = yes N = no S = some impact but not very significant

1. Has stocking and selling a winning children's or young adult title been a significant event for your organization ?

Y N S

2. Has promoting and selling a winning book title added motivational elements to your work culture ?

Y N S

3. Has your organization become informed and passionate about the lists of winning children's book titles ?

Y N S

4. Has stocking winning book titles significantly increased your economic returns ?

Y N S

5. Does stocking winning book titles have flow-on effects and position you more visibly in the market ? Do you attract a larger customer base ?

Y N S

Section A: Would you like to comment further on the above questions ?

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.....

Section B

These questions ask you to **rate** your experience through handling winning children's and young adult titles. Please circle one of the options for each question as you feel it relates to your organization.

1 = Extremely significant 2 = Very significant 3 = significant
4 = some significance 5 = no significance at all

1. When you have displayed a winning children's book title, generally speaking, how significant has it been for your organization ?

1 2 3 4 5

2. Does stocking an award winning children's book title add motivation to the staff of your organization ?

1 2 3 4 5

3. Do key members of your staff such as a specialist children's consultant, put in extra effort in the form of book or poster displays, customer advice, talks, author promotions, media reviews, etc... to enhance sales of winning children's book titles ?

1 = intense effort 2 = much effort 3 = some effort 4 = a little effort 5 = no effort

1 2 3 4 5

4. Rate the **economic return** to your organization through handling a winning children's book title. If there have been several different kinds of award winning or prize winning titles over the last 5 years, choose the biggest in this period.

1 = Extremely profitable returns 2 = very profitable returns 3 = some profitable returns
4 = a slight profitable return 5 = no difference in economic returns

1 2 3 4 5

5. When you have handled a winning children's or young adult book title **how long does the financial impact last?** Please circle:

- 1 (5+ yrs) 2(4yrs) 3(3yrs) 4(2yrs) 5(1yr or less – please specify the length of time).....

Section B: 1. What kinds of promotions or activities have you conducted to promote winning children's or young adult book titles in your organization ?

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2. Would you like to add further comment relating to the above questions?

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Section C

Take as an example one of the most successful award winning children's or young adult titles you have handled. In terms of increased sales which generated increased income, estimate the **percentage increase in economic return** which could be attributable to the event of stocking and promoting this award winning children's or young adult title. Place your answer along the scale where 1 = very high percentage to 5 = no percentage increase

- | | | | | |
|----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| 1 st yr of
handling
1.....% | 2 nd yr of
handling
2.....% | 3 rd yr of
handling
3.....% | 4 th yr of
handling
4.....% | 5 th yr of
handling
5.....% |
|----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|

Section C: Would you like to comment further on the above question ?

.....
.....
.....

Section D

Please circle the most appropriate answer for your organization.

In terms of the intangible impact of handling an award winning children's book title which would include things like your **reputation, status in the market and bargaining power**, what impact does stocking and promoting an award winning children's or young adult title have ?

1 = extremely significant impact 2 = highly significant impact 3 = significant impact
4 = some impact 5 = no impact

- 1 2 3 4 5

Section D: Would you like to comment on this question?

.....

.....

.....

.....

Section E

There are many awards which have some impact on the sales of books in Australia.

Please rate the **economic significance** for your organization of the following awards.

Please tick the boxes beside each award, rating their significance from

1 = extremely significant 2 = very significant 3 = significant 4 = some significance
5 = no significance.

AWARDS	1	2	3	4	5
Hans Christian Andersen Medal (international)					
Phoenix Award (international)					
Mythopoeic Award (international)					
Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award (international)					
Children's Book Council of Australia Awards					
YARA Award (Australian national online award)					
Nan Chauncy Award (Australian)					
Aurealis Award (Australian)					
Ena Noel Award for Children's Literature (Australian)					
Children's choice awards eg., KOALA, KROK, WAYRBA, YABBA, BILBY, COOL, CYBER, KANGA (Australian)					
Ethel Turner Prize for Young People's Literature (Australian)					
Patricia Wrightson Prize for Children's Literature (Australian)					
Crichton Award for New Illustrators (Australian)					
Various Premier's Awards in each state (State based Australian)					
New Zealand children's and young adult book awards (NZ)					
Newbery Medal (USA)					
Caldecott Medal (for illustrators – USA)					
Other US awards					
Canadian Library Association's Children's Book of the Year & Young Adult Book of the Year					
Other Canadian awards					
Carnegie Award (United Kingdom)					
Kate Greenaway Medal (UK)					
Other British awards					

Section F

There are many awards which may have some impact on your organization in terms of your **reputation, your status in the market and your bargaining power**. Please look at each award listed and tick a box which reflects your feeling about these non-financial impacts 1 = extremely significant impact, 2 = very significant impact 3 = some impact 4 = only slight impact 5 = no impact

AWARDS	1	2	3	4	5
Hans Christian Andersen Medal (international)					
Phoenix Award (international)					
Mythopoeic Award (international)					
Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award (international)					
Children’s Book Council of Australia Awards					
YARA Award (Australian national online award)					
Nan Chauncy Award (Australian)					
Aurealis Award (Australian)					
Ena Noel Award for Children’s Literature (Australian)					
Children’s choice awards eg., KOALA, KROK, WAYRBA, YABBA, BILBY, COOL, CYBER, KANGA (Australian)					
Ethel Turner Prize for Young People’s Literature (Australian)					
Patricia Wrightson Prize for Children’s Literature (Australian)					
Crichton Award for New Illustrators (Australian)					
Various Premier’s Awards in each state (State based Australian)					
New Zealand children’s and young adult book awards (NZ)					
Newbery Medal (USA)					
Caldecott Medal (for illustrators – USA)					
Other US awards					
Canadian Library Association’s Children’s Book of the Year & Young Adult Book of the Year					
Other Canadian awards					
Carnegie Award (United Kingdom)					
Kate Greenaway Medal (UK)					
Other British awards					

Thankyou for taking the time to respond to this survey. The sharing of your experience is appreciated. If you would like a summary of findings I am happy to offer this as a token of my appreciation. Please fill in the section below and send it back with the survey form and I will reply when the results are analysed.

Heather Fisher

.....

Please send me a summary of the findings of this research:

Name

Address:

Public Librarians, Teachers & Teacher Librarians No.

Please indicate whether you fall into the category of teacher (Early Childhood, Primary, Secondary), teacher librarian (Primary, Secondary) or a librarian (or library assistant) in the public library system. If you are willing to be quoted and acknowledged, please also add your name.

.....

As a teacher, teacher librarian or public librarian you have seen and heard about children's and young adult literature awards which highlight titles which are acclaimed for their excellence. Please complete the following table with any details you recall. If you don't know which year any award was made, just enter the details where they think they best fit.

YEAR	TITLE	AUTHOR	ILLUSTRATOR	AWARD or PRIZE AWARDED
2007				
2006				
2005				
2004				
2003				

8. When you hear of a winning title do you try to get this winning title to use with children or display in your work area ?

Y N S

Section A: Would you like to add further comments relating to the above questions ?

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Section B

These questions aim to assess the **degree of the impact** on you after the announcement of a winning children's or young adult title. Please rate the following questions according to how you feel.

1 = extremely important 2 = very important 3 = important 4 = slightly important
5 = unimportant

1. When you hear of a children's book award **how significant** is it for you ?

1 2 3 4 5

2. When you hear the announcement of a winning children's or young adult title, **how motivated** are you to obtain/read this book ?

1 2 3 4 5

3. After the announcement of a book award how **long** do you feel that there is an impact for this title with people like yourself ?

1 (5+ yrs) 2(4 yrs) 3(3 yrs) 4(2 yrs) 5(1 or less yr – please indicate a time period).....

4. When an award winning title is announced do you.....

1 = buy the title if possible, 2 = Add it to a wish list and plan to buy it in the future,
3 = look for reviews before acting, 4 = ask others if they've heard of it or
5 = ignore it?

1 2 3 4 5

5. What is your opinion of awarding prizes for children's and young adult literature ? Is it important for children's and/or young adult literature to have awards ?

1 = Extremely important 2 = Very important 3 = important
4 = somewhat important 5 = unimportant

1 2 3 4 5

6. What is your opinion generally of the **book titles** which are announced as winners of children's and young adult's awards or prizes ?

1 = outstanding quality books 2 = very high quality books 3 = good books
4 = mediocre books 5 = books of poor quality

1 2 3 4 5

7. What is your opinion of the **process and media attention** associated with the awarding of prizes for children's or young adult literature – is this important for children's and young adult's literature generally ?

1 = extremely important 2 = very important 3 = important 4 = somewhat important 5 = not important

1 2 3 4 5

Section B: Would you like to add any personal comments relating to this bracket of questions ?

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Section C

Please read the following questions about the promotional environment of children's and young adult books.

Answer as follows: Y = yes N = no S = somewhat/maybe/sometimes

1. Often accompanying the announcement of a children's and young adult winning book title is a cluster of celebratory events eg., Book Week competitions, author visits, media articles, special storytimes, illustrator's displays, etc.. Do you feel that this is an important part of getting the message out about highly acclaimed children's and young adult literature ?

Y N S

Section D

The children’s and young adult literary environment is influenced by many awards, some of which are Australian in origin and others which originate overseas. Please look at the list below and indicate the **strength of your recognition** by ticking the appropriate box – tick the boxes as follows:

- 1 = Extremely familiar with this award 2 = very familiar with this award
- 3 = have heard of this award 4 = might have heard of this award
- 5 = never heard of this award.

AWARDS	1	2	3	4	5
Hans Christian Andersen Medal (international)					
Phoenix Award (international)					
Mythopoeic Award (international)					
Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award (international)					
Children’s Book Council of Australia Awards					
YARA Award (Australian online award)					
Nan Chauncy Award (Australian)					
Aurealis Award (Australian)					
Ena Noel Award for Children’s Literature (Australian)					
Children’s choice awards eg., KOALA, KROK, WAYRBA, YABBA, BILBY, COOL, CYBER, KANGA (Australian)					
Ethel Turner Prize for Young People’s Literature (Australian)					
Patricia Wrightson Prize for Children’s Literature (Australian)					
Crichton Award for New Illustrators (Australian)					
Various Premier’s Awards in each state (Australian State awards)					
New Zealand children’s and young adult book awards (NZ)					
Newbery Medal (USA)					
Caldecott Medal (for illustrators – USA)					
Other US awards					
Canadian Library Association’s Children’s Book of the Year & Young Adult Book of the Year					
Other Canadian awards					
Carnegie Award (United Kingdom)					
Kate Greenaway Medal (UK)					
Other British awards					

1. Do you think it important to know about overseas awards for children’s and young adult literature or are Australian award winning titles most suitable for Australian children?

.....

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.....

.....

.....

2. Do overseas book awards for children and young adults influence you in the books you present to children ? why or why not?

.....
.....
.....
.....

3. If you do try to be aware of award winning titles which originate overseas, which country's awards do you feel have the most appeal for Australian children ?

.....
.....

4. Which Australian book awards are you most interested in when making decisions about presenting literature to children?

.....
.....

5. In presenting literature to children do you feel there is a difference between choosing a winning title and choosing a title which will engage children ?

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Thankyou for taking the time to respond to this survey. Your contribution will add to the body of knowledge about the veracity of children's and young adult book awards in Australia. Your opinions will be confidential and any results published will be presented as aggregates. As a token of my appreciation I am willing to send you a summary of the results when they are analysed. If you would like this, please complete the form below and include this when you return the questionnaire.

Heather Fisher

.....

Please send me a summary of the results of this research:

Name:

Address:

.....
.....
.....

Parents

No.

As a parent you have seen and heard about children’s and young adult literature awards which highlight titles which are acclaimed for their excellence. I would value your opinion about the impact of these award systems and invite you to complete the following questionnaire. If you are willing to be quoted and acknowledged please add your name:

Name:

Please complete the following table with any details you recall. If you don’t know which year any award was made, just enter the details where you think they best fit.

YEAR	TITLE	AUTHOR	ILLUSTRATOR	AWARD or PRIZE AWARDED
2007				
2006				
2005				
2004				
2003				

Section A: Would you like to add further comments relating to the above questions ?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Section B

Please **rate** the following questions according to how you feel.

1 = extremely important 2 = very important 3 = important 4 = slightly important
5 = unimportant

1. When you hear of a children's book award how significant is it for you ?

1 2 3 4 5

2. When you hear the announcement of a winning children's or young adult title, how important is it that you try to read this book ?

1 2 3 4 5

3. Does the cost of the winning title affect whether you are willing to buy the winning children's or young adult title ?

1 2 3 4 5

4. After the announcement of a book award how long do you feel that there is an impact for this title with people like yourself ?

1 (5+ yrs) 2(4 yrs) 3(3 yrs) 4(2 yrs) 5(1or less yr)

5. When an award winning title is announced do you.....

1 = try to buy the title, 2 = ask for it at the Library, 3 = look for reviews before acting, 4 = ask others if they've heard of it or 5 = ignore it?

1 2 3 4 5

6. What is your opinion of the process of awarding prizes for children's and young adult literature ? Is it important for this literature to have awards ?

1 2 3 4 5

7. What is your opinion generally of the book titles which are announced as winners of children's and young adult's awards or prizes ?

1 = outstanding quality books 2 = very high quality books 3 = good books
4 = mediocre books 5 = books of poor quality

1 2 3 4 5

Section B: Would you like to add any comments about this bracket of questions ?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Section C

Please read the following questions about the promotional environment of children's and young adult books.

Answer as follows: Y = yes N = no S = somewhat/maybe/sometimes

7. Often accompanying the announcement of a children's and young adult winning book title is a cluster of celebratory events eg., Book Week competitions, author visits, special storytimes, illustrator's displays, etc.. Do you feel that this is an important part of getting the message out about highly acclaimed youth literature ?

Y N S

8. Do you look for children's and young adult winning titles in your selection of books to buy or borrow ?

Y N S

9. Some winning titles have special indications on the cover eg., gold medal, special statement, etc.. Does this influence your choice of what to buy or borrow ?

Y N S

Please look at the list below and indicate the strength of your recognition by ticking the appropriate box – tick the boxes as follows:

1 = Extremely familiar with this award 2 = very familiar with this award 3 = have heard of this award 4 = might have heard of this award 5 = never heard of this award.

AWARDS	1	2	3	4	5
Hans Christian Andersen Medal (international)					
Phoenix Award (international)					
Mythopoeic Award (international)					
Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award (international)					
Children's Book Council of Australia Awards					
YARA Award (national online award)					
Nan Chauncy Award					
Aurealis Award					
Ena Noel Award for Children's Literature					
Children's choice awards eg., KOALA, KROK, WAYRBA, YABBA, BILBY, COOL, CYBER, KANGA					
Ethel Turner Prize for Young People's Literature					
Patricia Wrightson Prize for Children's Literature					
Crichton Award for New Illustrators					
Various Premier's Awards in each state					
New Zealand children's and young adult book awards					
Newbery Medal (USA)					
Caldecott Medal (for illustrators – USA)					
Other US awards					
Canadian Library Association's Children's Book of the Year & Young Adult Book of the Year					
Other Canadian awards					
Carnegie Award (United Kingdom)					
Kate Greenaway Medal (UK)					
Other British awards					

Thankyou for taking the time to respond to this survey. I sincerely appreciate the opportunity to read your opinions but I assure you that reporting will be ensure confidentiality. As a token of my appreciation I would like to offer you a summary sheet of my findings when the results are finally analysed. If you would like this, please fill out the form below and include it when you return this questionnaire.

Heather Fisher

.....
 Name:
 Address :

