

Miriam J. Johnson, 2022. *Books and Social Media: How the Digital Age is Shaping the Printed Word*. Routledge, London & New York, ISBN: 978-1-00318664-9 (e-bk).

For Centuries power has played a crucial role in politics, economies, geographies, histories and cultures. Social actors and social institutions within these disciplines form part of the power. One such social institution is the publishing industry as the mainstream approach for book publications. But how is the digital age changing the historical and traditional mainstream approach in relation to books and social media? In 1996, the first digital replica in the form of e-books became available online. Almost 26 years later, social media accounts reached 3.6 billion.

In this book, Johnson critically examines the paradigm shift in the discourse of how the printed word is changed by the digital world. Social actors move away from the prestige well-known publishers to the platforms on social media just to share their creative works. This is the focus of the author, the phenomena of online publications such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Wattpad, FanFiction.net, amongst others. Johnson's methodology to obtain information was to survey and interview authors and publishers. Although many research was done the author argue that not much research was done about how social media could be used by the publishing industry. Based on the interviewed participants over the age of 18 and respondents that were 5-10 publishers and 5-15 authors, surveys, interviews, Twitterfiction, and gathering comments from Wattpad, Johnson critically engages with the key question of how the traditional printed word is changed by the digital age. The material for analysis were grounded in a framework by using the above techniques. The author's theoretical context is within Foucault's archeology and McLuhan's rear view mirror phenomena because the history of it seeks to explain an expanded discourse of the book to a combination of publishing and social media. Throughout the book and its 9 chapters, the author gives insight into how digital communities define a book and the impact on the traditional publishing industry and the new generation of citizen authors.

The author explores the historical and contemporary nature of books, what a book was, is, and can be. For example, at the 2014 UNESCO Conference on digital books and future technologies, amongst many authors, one author explains how digital companies will form publishing companies but the author neglected to explain the power dynamics during the paradigm shift. Another author argued that the definition of a book is incorporating revolutionary changes in technology and because of its power, strategies are changing. Further arguments suggest that a book is communicative and potential not actual. For example, a book could be printed and never being read and end up being pulped. What then is a definition of a book? Although the author draws on many examples from UK, USA, China and Japan about the digital platforms for readers, she neglected to compare it with Sub-Saharan Africa and the lack thereof or slow phase of the evolution in digital books. For example, in the Asian market there is mobile storytelling and websites as portals for new original fiction. Within its theoretical frame the author contextualizes Foucault's notes that a book cannot be identical in a sense of relations despite the unity of the book. This means that the digital technologies have separated the book from the hard cover to the e-book. These shifting power relations as paperback have a causal effect of disrupting the publishing industry, gender inequality, and socio-economic paradigm. The above are not the only ways of defining books. Books are evolving within the broader social communities and how they relate to the power structures.

The book is written in readable style drawing on Foucault's theory to understand power and knowledge. Notwithstanding the sociology of reading, whereby reading fiction contributes to the search for meaning of life, disciplines such as anthropology brings us to Foucault's archaeology and genealogy and McLuhan's global village and rear-view mirror theory in which the authors so eloquently contextualize books. Johnson brings fresh insight into the theory of archeology and the method of genealogy. Interestingly, archaeologist's role is to analyze vision and statements within a historical context and thereafter examines the power and knowledge within society and its structures. A strong breakdown of McLuhan's global village as the electronically connected globe with mobile phones, laptops, tablets and smart devices is discussed.

Accordingly, the social actor and social institutions use social technologies for creating Wattpad, Facebook, Twitter, etc., and Twitter, Blogs, Facebook, Tumbler, Snapchat for marketing; Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, etc., for connecting and lastly Amazon, Abebooks, Facebook, Instagram, etc., as local market places. McLuhan

also added to the global village, for example, TikTok and Vero as the latest online applications facilitating conversations between writers, publishers and readers. Importantly, the rearview mirror, the chapters and books separated into genres, tend to keep actors attached to the traditional book format. Thus, the archeological framework of Foucault on books and social media allows for the genealogy of McLuhan's concept of the global village and rear-view mirror. Interestingly, Foucault's concept of knowledge within the discipline of archeology and the rise of the citizen author is explained by the author. Central to these are the discursive practices, objects, strategies, concepts and the book as the end product. Lastly, power and knowledge could be understood as the relationship between forces and these relationships leads to power.

Johnson identifies several factors which highlights the creative possibilities for the book within the global village. Packed with many examples for these creative possibilities, the book provides a breakdown of it. It includes data scraping and mining whereby reading habits could be analyzed, social media influencers most popular communication about books, readymade fiction sites for the readers to write reviews, computer generated fiction generated through codes and AI, personalized fiction that includes a reader's personal information, and lastly copyright and computer generated and personalized fiction whereby two owners own the content, the original author and the new publisher/editor. However, the combination of strategies to develop themes between industry, publishers, and the book as well as social media and the authors, also leads to power in relation to how the digital world and the printed word are changing.

The book asks how a citizen author is different from a self-published author. There are similar traits but one where they differ is the writing of citizen authors. For example, they write fiction on forums, apps and websites and forgo monetary market and embrace the cultural currency. Interestingly, this leads to new definitions of the book when they alter the social spaces to accommodate their interests of writing. The role of gender and its importance as citizen authors in the global village is a key factor amongst several factors indicating how online communities interact. Spaces such as fiction repositories and social media platforms are important. Various studies are nuanced in the book and one example explain that male and female often imitate the ideals of gender norms and standards of the offline world. This hypothesis is emphasized because if the reader, advisor and editor are gendered it has the impact of changing the direction of the work from traditional publishing industry to potential new readers. Furthermore, it could lead to a reduction in gender inequality.

This book is convincing through a critical appraisal of Foucault's theory of knowledge and power in relation to the discourse of the genre. What is the relationship between power and authority? The relationship defines a book, according to the author, and examples are terminology and themes, especially on Twitter. Furthermore, Johnson argues that the power relationship is getting better between genres of fan fiction and science fiction. One of the regrets of the book is that the relationship between copyright and fan fiction is unclear.

Then there is the question of the social actor such as authors and readers and the different social roles played on the social platforms. For example, Johnson highlights the role on Twitter, fiction repositories and genre writing in social communities and twitter fiction. Interestingly, the author argues that it is the cultural phenomena in the readers and publisher's role in what a book can be. This once again brings us to the Foucauldian theory of power between citizen authors, readers and publishers from the traditional phenomenon of publishing model, author, agent, publisher and reader to the new hierarchy of publishing, citizen author to reader, reader to citizen's author and citizen author to agent and publisher. Further, from agent to citizen author to publisher and lastly publisher to reader and citizen's author.

The discourse on the power relationships of the book is important. Johnson observes these relationships of gatekeepers of the industry, for example authors, agents, publishers, bookstores, readers and citizen's authors. He identifies the dual role of power and of the quality in producing a book and the reproduction of the industries and hierarchical contradictions. Further, the author suggests a Foucauldian approach to look at the gap in the expanding publishing environment and to what extent it separates the social actors in the discourse. The cultural capital of the social actors is mediated on these platforms in relation on what can and cannot be done. As discussed in previous parts of the book, the gender of a user is specified and these gendering of digital platforms highlights the capitalist undertone. Sensors are regrettable, for example, controversial topics such as abortion leads to power dynamics between the social actors and the sites. However, the author identifies the platforms as the new powerful player to decide what a book is apart from the main power of author, agent and publisher model.

This book is a significant piece of knowledge to the literature on the transformation and power relations of the book and digital age. It questions the capitalist role within the transformation. It critically brings together the paradigm shift dynamics between the traditional publishers and the citizen author. However, the author omitted the social role of the patriarch within the paradigm shift. Although the author highlights the role of gender and genre within the discourse, the book failed to contextualize the LGBTQI community in the digital age as part of the citizen's author. Indeed, there are various examples about Foucault's power and knowledge relations, yet, why the gap in explaining why abortion and LGBTQI are still considered controversial?

In conclusion, this excellent book with Johnson's well-written critical, well-researched and theoretical context work makes it an important contribution to the understanding of online communities. The social media is making the content social and publishers have access to the social space. The power relations between

citizen's authors and publishers changed from the traditional publications to the citizen author choosing their own communities. Gender and genre and subgenre phenomena play an important role and it increased in the social spaces because of the refusal of the traditional publish houses to publish these genres. Because the communities edit, critique and suggests plots, they fulfil the role of traditional publication houses. Nevertheless, there still has been a change in power dynamics between industry, writers and readers digital communities and impact on publishing industry and characteristics of new citizen authors.

Johnson wrote this book in a user-friendly style. For example, drawing from Foucault's theory to understand archeology and McLuhan's global village and rear-view mirror of knowledge and key concepts. Scholars from across different disciplines will benefit as well as students in understanding online spaces.

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