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A YEAR WITH LIZZIE:
HOW TRANSMEDIA STORYTELLING BROUGHT JANE AUSTEN INTO THE 21ST
CENTURY

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ABSTRACT

This paper will examine the Lizzie Bennet Diaries as an example of Transmedia Storytelling. It will present a few previous examples of Transmedia projects before providing a working definition of the term Transmedia Storytelling. Based on data from a survey and observation, the paper will examine how the Lizzie Bennet Diaries uses various media platforms, the creative team behind the series, the fan community, the blurred lines between fiction and reality, and some of the challenges inherent in the series before discussion what projects such as the Lizzie Bennet Diaries suggest about the future of media.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

To better understand what a transmedia narrative can look like, consider an example of a transmedia story on a massive scale. Harry Potter is more than just a series of books for children and young adults; it is a world. Fans can enter the franchise in many ways, and even though the last of the core seven novels was published years ago, there seem to always be new ways to get involved with the story. In addition to the main series which began with *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* and ended with *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, author J.K. Rowling also wrote three supplemental books. Fans could now read a few of the books characters in the Harry Potter series had read. By publishing two fictitious textbooks, *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* and *Quidditch Through the Ages*, Rowling gave her readers an opportunity to go deeper into the story and connect with the characters through sharing some of their experiences. In fact, *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* was written to be a copy of the title character's textbook, complete with notes supposedly scribbled into the margins by Harry and his best friends Hermione Granger and Ron Weasley. Readers can also gain additional insight into Harry's world through *The Tales of Beedle the Bard* which was the third and last of the supplemental books (to date). The book was a collection of children's stories. One story in particular "The Tale of the Three Brothers" figures quite significantly into the final novel of the series, so reading it may help fans more completely understand the original text. It was also mentioned as a classic book which almost all witches and wizards read to their children. Through reading the book of stories, fans could again step a bit further into the magical world Rowling wrote about and imagine what it would be like to grow up in her "wizarding world."

Rowling, however, does not solely expand her world through additional texts. The franchise also produced eight highly successful films. For each film there was a corresponding video game released by EA games. The movies provided fans with a visual representation to supplement their own imaginings of the novels, and the games allowed fans to virtually immerse themselves in the world Rowling had created.

The Harry Potter franchise stretched even further in 2010 when Universal Orlando Resort in Florida opened The Wizarding World of Harry Potter, a theme park where fans can travel through Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, the primary setting for the novels. The themed world also includes gift shops based on fictional stores and restaurants the characters visit. Fans can now actually physically enter Harry Potter's world. They can travel the halls of his school. They can buy a glass of butterbeer, Harry's favorite drink, or perhaps even a chocolate frog – the first magical candy Harry ever ate. Fans can immerse themselves in Harry's world. The theme park has been so successful that additional Wizarding Worlds of Harry Potter are currently under construction at Universal Studios Hollywood and Universal Studios Japan.

Furthermore, the studio in Leavesden where much of the filming of the movies was done has been preserved as a tourist attraction and was opened to the public in 2012. Fans can travel there to admire the sets, props, and costumes. Additionally, the Studio Tour provides interactive components, such as an attraction where visitors can don a set of the films' iconic wizard robes before hopping on a mounted broomstick in front of a green screen. The rider can then watch him or herself fly on a broomstick through several memorable scenes from the movies on a nearby monitor. Naturally, photographs of the flight simulation are available nearby for purchase. After the flight, one can enjoy a complementary glass of butterbeer (the recipe for which is carefully guarded – the Studio Tour in Leavesden and the Wizarding World in Florida are currently the only two places in the world where butterbeer is officially made) while walking along Privet Drive, the very street where Harry Potter spent his childhood.

As if all of the above were not enough, Rowling launched a virtual space for Harry Potter fans in 2011. Pottermore is more than just an online retelling of the books; it is interactive. From the map which appears upon logging into Pottermore (see Figure 1), players can travel to Diagon Alley to buy supplies, the dueling club to practice spells, or potions class to brew potions.



Figure 1: Screenshot of the Pottermore entrance screen

Users can travel through a virtual version of the story, collecting trinkets and experiencing Harry's adventures in a more interactive way. Most excitingly for some, Pottermore has a brief personality test which sorts users into four houses, just like the students in the books were sorted upon their arrival at Hogwarts. The members of these houses compete to earn points and win a House Cup. For other fans, the greatest aspect of Pottermore is the access it freely provides to additional information about places and characters. As a user travels through the story, he or she can uncover little notes Rowling has written about her thought process as she wrote the books. Additionally, Pottermore is the only place where one can buy Harry Potter eBooks.

Speaking of Harry Potter merchandise, well... there is a lot of it. Fans can purchase a wide variety of replicas of items in the movie, including necklaces worn by characters, particular characters' wands, House themed scarves, etc. There is also a large market for items inspired by the series, such as t-shirts, smartphone cases, mugs, action figures, and more. Much of the available merchandise is licensed through Warner Brothers; however, a search of "harry potter" on the popular e-commerce website Etsy returns over 40,000 items.

The merchandise available on Etsy is a good example of how many fans have taken the expansion of the wizarding world into their own hands. There are thousands of fan-fiction stories posted on the internet, ranging from the brief short stories to lengthy texts that could be novels in their own right. Inspired by the books and films, a group of fans even created their own genre of music, called Wrock or Wizard Rock. Some of the most popular Wrockers include Harry and the Potters, The Whomping Willows, and Draco and the Malfoys. The most famous musical expression of love for Harry was *A Very Potter Musical* which was a parody of the franchise written and produced by students at the University of Michigan in 2009. The success of the parody led to two sequels. Additionally, Darren Criss, one of the writers and the star of the production went on to be cast as a lead character on Fox's musical comedy/drama *Glee*.

Disappointed that the films skipped their favorite scenes, some fans have created additional scenes through gifs and screencaps. An example of this phenomenon is shown in the figure below.



Figure 2: A fanmade scene from *Harry Potter and the Order of the Pheonix* using screencaptures from the film and text from the book. (links to creators of all fanart in this paper can be found in Appendix B)

These fanmade scenes even extend beyond the scenes missing from the films. Some fans have taken the idea a step farther by creating moments that were only alluded to in the published materials. For instance, very little was written about The Marauders, a group of four friends one of whom grew up to be Harry Potter’s father. Despite that, fans have created their own stories for the four teenage troublemakers, using gifs of various young actors who appear similar to their imagined versions of the characters to create short scenes.

Another example of fan created content was *The Daily Prophet*, a school newspaper created by a home schooled fan of the series named Heather Lawver. She was thirteen: “Lawver has been its managing editor, hiring columnists who covered their own “beats” on a weekly basis – everything from the latest quidditch matches to muggle cuisine” (Jenkins, 2006, p. 178). Lawver was dedicated to the Harry Potter community that she became one of the loudest voices in what later became known as the “Potter Wars” – a disagreement between fans and Warner Brothers about fans legal right to create Harry Potter related websites. Although she never received a cease and desist letter herself, Lawver formed an organization called “Defense Against the Dark Arts” (named for a fictional class taken by Hogwarts students in the books) when she

heard that Warner Brothers was threatening legal action against various children and teenagers who had started Harry Potter websites. She was particularly upset because she felt the company was intentionally targeting adolescents because they would be less capable of mounting a successful legal defense. The movement raised by Lawver (then 16), especially once she teamed up with a 15 year old British girl named Claire Field's public campaign, was formidable. A former reporter for *Wired* magazine explains, "Faced with a public relations disaster, the company had no choice but to call the whole thing a 'miscommunication' and back down" (Rose, 2011, p. 96).

Another, more pleasant instance of the fandom pulling together in a formal way was by creating The Harry Potter Alliance. The HPA is a nonprofit organization which works to bring attention to social issues and even effect change.

Many Harry Potter fan groups join together yearly at LeakyCon, an annual convention hosted by a Harry Potter fansite. The programming can contain any number of activities: academics who have studied Harry Potter give lectures, actors from the films meet with fans, and panels discuss various aspects of the series. The location of the conference varies; however, often it is located in Orlando Florida to be near the Wizarding World of Harry Potter.

Harry Potter's world is infinite. There are dozens of points of entry. A parent might choose to read *The Tales of Beedle the Bard* to a small child even if that child is not old enough yet to read the actual Harry Potter series. A student interested in costuming, animatronics, or film production might decide to visit the Studio Tour in Leavesdon without ever reading the books. The transmedia components of Harry Potter make it so much more than a series of books, or even a film franchise. Harry Potter is a red and gold scarf, the taste of a sweet drink made from butterscotch, cream soda and mystery, or the triumphant sound of the brilliant John William's soundtrack. The magical world Rowling created has become, in its own way, real.

Transmedia storytelling is not an easy term to define. As *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries*' Transmedia Producer explains, "we have a joke: put two transmedia creators in a room and pretty soon you'll have three definitions of transmedia" (Gray, 2013). Transmedia expert Andrea Phillips agrees, stating in her *A Creator's Guide to Transmedia Storytelling* that "For all of the excitement surrounding the word and its crackling aura of innovation, it's flat-out impossible to nail down a single definition that everyone can happily agree on" (2012, p. 13). However, for the purposes of this paper, the Harry Potter franchise helps illustrate a simple definition of transmedia. Here transmedia storytelling will be defined as the intentional use of multiple mediums to expand a single narrative into a complex web of character and fan interactions to ultimately create a nonlinear and immersive story world. For the Harry Potter franchise, this meant a variety of things: a virtual reality space where fans could learn background information that expanded the world beyond the information that could fit in the narrative, actually producing the fictional candy and beverages from the series such as Chocolate Frogs and Butterbeer for fans to consume, or building a castle in Florida which let fans pretend they were stepping into the imaginary school of witchcraft and wizardry. The experiences provided by the Harry Potter franchise have a depth which far exceeds that which any one medium alone could ever provide. The term transmedia storytelling here is being intentionally used as a separate concept from the cross-media communications strategies that are employed by news outlets or other sources. This paper will be concerned only with transmedia storytelling efforts such as the Harry Potter franchise which are distinguished by the use of many components working together to create an immersive fictional story world.

Although Harry Potter is quite useful in explaining the general concept, it is a bit of an anomaly. Harry Potter is one of the largest transmedia narratives ever created, perhaps rivalled only by the Star Wars franchise. This paper is going to discuss transmedia storytelling by focusing on a much smaller example. When YouTube vlogger (and coincidentally popular wizard

rock artist) Hank Green first formally announced that he was co-creating a modern adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice* in the form of a series of video diaries, he confessed to his viewers that he was not sure it was going to work. After explaining the project, he admitted his doubts: “it is entirely possible that it just will not be a good way to tell a story” (“Introducing Lizzie Bennet”, 2012, 2:44). Now thousands of viewers, two Streamy awards, and a creative arts Emmy later, it seems that these video diaries and the associated content were, in fact, a fantastic way to tell a story (“3rd Annual Nominees & Winners,” 2013). In fact, as of March 16, 2013 the videos have had over 26 million total views and the series has 174 thousand subscribers (Su, 2013). The series has exploded in popularity, and is one of the most intriguing examples of transmedia storytelling to date.

The purpose of this study is to examine the various transmedia components of *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* as well as how fans use the various platforms to interact with the series. It was guided by a few key questions: How does *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* use transmedia elements? How did the audience consume and interact with the story? What transmedia components were most/least successful? In order to answer these questions, links to a short survey (hosted on SurveyMonkey) were posted in the YouTube comments of some The Lizzie Bennet Diaries videos, on Tumblr, on Twitter, on Google+ (before its integration with YouTube comments), and on Facebook. Between February 15, 2013 and April 4, 2013 over 1,500 people responded. No compensation was given to these participants. They responded purely from a desire to share their thoughts and help a fellow member of their community. For their support I am truly grateful.

This paper will discuss the history of transmedia, the various ways *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* used transmedia components, the fan community created by the series, some of the challenges faced by the production team, and speculation on the future of media.

Chapter 2

History of Transmedia

As the introduction hopefully shows, *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* was by no means the first narrative to incorporate transmedia elements. Depending on one's definition of transmedia storytelling, one could claim the concept has been practiced for hundreds of years. Some media theorists have even suggested that the Bible could be considered a transmedia narrative; the story is not limited to merely the written word but expands to include the oral tradition, art work, and music used by Christians to evangelize (Evans, 2011, p. 19). More typical examples of transmedia storytelling still stretch back many years. Consider for instance the G.I. Joe action figure. In the 1960s, the G.I. Joe started merely as a new toy for young boys intended to serve as a masculine version of young girls' dolls. In time, the franchise expanded to include: animated television series, comics, video games, and full length feature films. Action figures have since become a commonplace method to expand a franchise. In fact, they represent just a small fraction of the merchandise produced to accompany any media franchise. The introduction mentions just a few of the wide variety of Harry Potter related products which are available to fans. However, these products, while enjoyable, are generally not central to the transmedia narrative. Media expert Henry Jenkins explains:

Current licensing arrangements ensure that most of these products are peripheral to what drew us to the original story in the first place. Under licensing, the central media company - most often the film producers - sells the rights to manufacture products using its assets to an often unaffiliated third party; the license limits what can be done with the characters or concepts to protect the original property. Soon, licensing will give way to

what industry insiders are calling “co-creation.” In co-creation, the companies collaborate from the beginning to create content they know plays well in each of their sectors, allowing each medium to generate new experiences for the consumer and expand points of entry into the franchise. (2006, p. 107)

Jenkins is predicting a shift from using additional products to cash in on the passion of existing fans to actually using those products to expand a story.

In 1999, *The Matrix* hit theaters, and as complicated as many people found it, the film was just the tip of the iceberg for what the Wachowski brothers had planned. Over the next few years, they released web comics, an anime, a computer game, two more major motion pictures, and finally a massively multiplayer online game. Every single component was created intentionally to tell part of the narrative:

The Wachowski brothers didn’t simply license or subcontract and hope for the best. The brothers personally wrote and directed content for the game, drafted scenarios for some of the animated shorts, and co-wrote a few of the comics. For fans, the personal engagement made these other *Matrix* texts part of the “canon.” There was nothing fringe about these other media. (Jenkins 2006 p. 113)

Many considered the *Matrix* franchise a failure. The first film holds an impressive 87% rating on the film review aggregator Rotten Tomatoes while the final installment of the trilogy sunk to a rather rotten 36%. Even so, media expert Henry Jenkins feels “*The Matrix* is entertainment for the age of media convergence, integrating multiple texts to create a narrative so large that it cannot be contained within a single medium” (2006 p. 97). The truth is that there was a failure in marketing. For the dedicated fan it was a rewarding adventure; however, for the casual viewer, the world was mystifying and frustrating. The average moviegoers thought that they were seeing the third movie in a trilogy when in fact they were actually being given one of the final pieces to a much larger puzzle. To reach both casual movie goers and those interested in a more interactive media

experience, a franchise has to work as both a transmedia narrative and a standalone series of films. Unfortunately, *The Matrix* trilogy did not. Even so, it was an impressive example of a very complex method of storytelling.

A useful aspect of a transmedia story is the way various elements reach out to new audiences. Some creators actually started to use transmedia content to attract an audience before releasing the core content. An early example of this phenomenon appeared in early 2001. Arguably the origin of transmedia marketing, *The Beast* was a marketing campaign for Steven Spielberg's film *A.I* which got its name for the 666 original pieces of content (Rose, 2011, p. 23). The name turned out to be prophetic as the game spiraled into something more massive than even the creators had anticipated:

The game turned a fire hose of content on its audience: constantly updating websites, emails from characters, puzzles set by a mysterious Japanese businessmen, and codes from the robot revolutionary underground. Players attended Anti-Robot Militia rallies, cracked Enigma ciphers, and interpreted lute tablature along the way. (Phillips, 2012, p. 28)

The Beast is known as the first major Alternate Reality Game, and it quickly inspired a host of other transmedia marketing campaigns.

For example, in 2007 a small company called 42 Entertainment was hired to stage a transmedia marketing campaign for *The Dark Knight*, the second film of a Batman trilogy. It began when fans were offered the opportunity to apply to be henchman of the film's villain, the Joker. Those who applied received an email with a coded message directing them to a particular URL. Once there, the participants encountered a carnival game with a collection of addresses, each attached to stuffed animals. The addresses were for bakeries all around the country. Fans were instructed to visit each bakery and pick up an order for "Robin Banks." The name itself is a clue to the story which makes more sense if one says it aloud. Fans who requested the package

for Robin Banks were each given a cake. The cakes all had phone numbers written on top as well as instruction to “Call Me Now.” Once fans made the calls, they would hear a ringing sound coming from inside the cake. When they sliced into the cakes to find the phones, the participants encountered sealed evidence pouches each with a phone, a charger, some instructions, and a joker. Every time someone made the call the instructions ordered them to make, the address of their bakery disappeared from the website. Once all the cakes had been found, the website directed fans a page where they could order tickets for IMAX screenings of an unknown film in several major cities in the US and Canada. The screening turned out to be for some advanced footage of *The Dark Knight*, particularly the introductory scenes which featured the Joker’s very complex bank heist (Rose, 2011, p. 9-11). The transmedia event added some extra fun and excitement for dedicated fans without in any way taking away from the experience of the casual movie-goer.

Of course, not all transmedia narratives come from major marketing campaigns.

Independent transmedia storytelling efforts are just not as well known:

Why don’t these projects get the same kind of mainstream mindshare? That comes down to economics. It’s not that there are more marketing campaigns that use transmedia tools than there are original and indie works; it’s just that the marketing campaigns are much, much more visible. Why? Because they have money to throw around.” (Phillips, 2012, p. 23-24)

Even though they generally lack the razzle dazzle of major marketing campaigns, there are still many amazing small independent projects. Consider, for example *lonelygirl15*. When vlog-style videos began appearing on the *lonelygirl15* channel in 2006, viewers took them for exactly what they seemed to be – an outlet for a homeschooled teenager with strict parents to express her own thoughts and ideas. After about a month, however, it was revealed that the videos were in fact fictional. Homeschooled “Bree” was played by a graduate of the New York

Film Academy named Jessica Rose (Heffernan & Zeller, 2006). It was a series “which let audience members talk to a home-schooled girl and let her talk back to them” (Phillips, 2012, 23). Fans were able to comment on videos and in their own way interact with the characters. As time went on, the series moved from featuring the angst of a teenage girl, to a sort of sci-fi drama in which a cult-like organization hunted girls like Bree who were trait positive. The series was groundbreaking. An article published in *Wired* while the series was airing explained that the creators were able to “exploit the anonymity of the Internet to pull off a new kind of storytelling” (David, 2006). Without a series like *lonelygirl15*, to pave the way in fictional vlogging, *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* might never have happened.

Television has also embraced the power of Transmedia. According to media expert Sharon Ross explained that “By the late 1990s, networks – both broadcast and cable – sought to retain viewers by creating a more intense relationship between the audience and a show, increasingly through multi-platforming that gave television programs life in the worlds of film, print, the Internet, etc.” (2008, p. 5). *Dawson’s Creek* was one of the earliest television shows to experiment with the idea of using the internet to expand the world of the story and connect with fans. The creative team developed a website which looked much like one would expect the desktop of the show’s title character, Dawson Leery. Fans could explore his desktop and read messages between Dawson and some of the other characters: “As a television series, *Dawson’s Creek* was not a radical departure from network norms, but what it did on the web was more innovative. The device of the desktop allowed the producers to take viewers deeper inside the heads of the characters, to see other dimensions of their social interactions” (Jenkins 2006 p. 119). Of course, it is important to note that the internet is not the only way that producers have invited audience interaction into television shows. In *Transmedia Television*, Elizabeth Evans made the claim that even call-in shows such as *American Idol* can be considered transmedia: “Such programmes had developed a history of incorporating processes of transmediality, utilising

the internet and telecommunication devices to allow the audience direct input in the construction of the programme” (Evans, 2011, p. 9). Although it is a reality television program, *American Idol* still tells a story, and that story extends beyond the television screen when fans are invited to interact with it through a different medium – the telephone.

At this time, all major networks are experimenting with transmedia storytelling: “By 2006-2007, the networks were announcing transmedia strategies for all of their programs. NBC called it 360 entertainment; ABC, EnhancedTV” (Jenkins, 2006, p. 123). This business strategy is not unique to the United States. Other countries’ networks, such as those in United Kingdom are following the same philosophy. In fact, Evans feels that the BBC sees transmedia as integral to their business: “There is no sense of multi-platform, transmedia content being an add-on to the everyday business of television commissioning and production” (Evans, 2011, p. 36). Examples are easy to find. CBS now offers a feature called CBS Sync in an unobtrusive sidebar to videos streaming on their website. So far it is only available to a few select shows; however, if successful, the network intends to expand the feature. While users are watching their program, related content appears in the sidebar (CBS Interactive, 2014). For example, during an episode of *Criminal Minds*, the CBS Sync sidebar will display quick links to more in depth profiles of characters as they appear on screen, tweets posted by the characters, interesting facts about production, etc. Another example from across the pond is BBC’s massively successful *Doctor Who* franchise. The producers have experimented with several different types of transmedia content including flash games, websites, and mini webisodes they called ‘Tardisodes’ (Evans, 2011, p. 26). Transmedia content is everywhere. Right now, “Viewers are responding to various kinds of calls to tele-participation – invitations to interact with TV shows beyond the moment of viewing and “outside” of the TV show itself” (Ross, 2008, p.4).

Television shows and films are constantly inviting fans to go deeper. It used to be that there was a certain suspension of disbelief required of viewers as stories contained small

reminders that their content was fictional: “Once upon a time, nonfunctional phone numbers (555-0038) and fictional addresses (123 Main Street, Anytown, USA) were the de facto choice every creator made. Over time, audiences were trained out of their natural inclination to investigate further” (Phillips 2012 p. 5). This situation is no longer true. Phillips points out in her book that now when a phone number, street address, or web address appears on screen it is probably pointing to somewhere real that fans can explore, and fans love it:

“Creators have discovered that expanding their story universes to include these other components is feeding a core hunger of their truest fans: to have more, richer, deeper stories. Fans who love your creation are going to want to see more of it. They want to be a part of it. Transmedia - telling a story through multiple communication channels at once, particularly channels such as the web and social media - is the way to give them what they want.” (Phillips 2012 p. 6)

For production companies, this involvement is a dream come true. After all, the more dedicated fans are to a television show or movie, the more related products can be marketed to them. The major transmedia marketing campaigns can have millions of dollars thrown into them because the producers feel that ultimately the experience will make them enough money back to be worth it. Therefore, there are two drivers towards transmedia storytelling – one is the desire for more immersive and rich entertainment experiences from audience, while the other is the desire of production companies to generate as much revenue as possible out of a franchise.

Whether it is hidden clues in the background of *The Matrix* unlocking bonus content to those savvy enough to notice them or David Mitchell asking viewers to solve little puzzles and tweet their answers during commercial breaks of comedy panel show *Was It Something I Said?*, transmedia storytelling can be found in almost every media narrative today.

Chapter 3

Transmedia Components of *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries*

The Lizzie Bennet Diaries had components on a wide variety of social media platforms. YouTube was the most significant of these platforms, hosting the 100 core episodes as well as several hours of additional content. Nearly all of the survey responders (94.6%) indicated that they followed *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* main channel. Those that did not specified in the comments that they watched the videos, but were confused the use of the word “follow.”

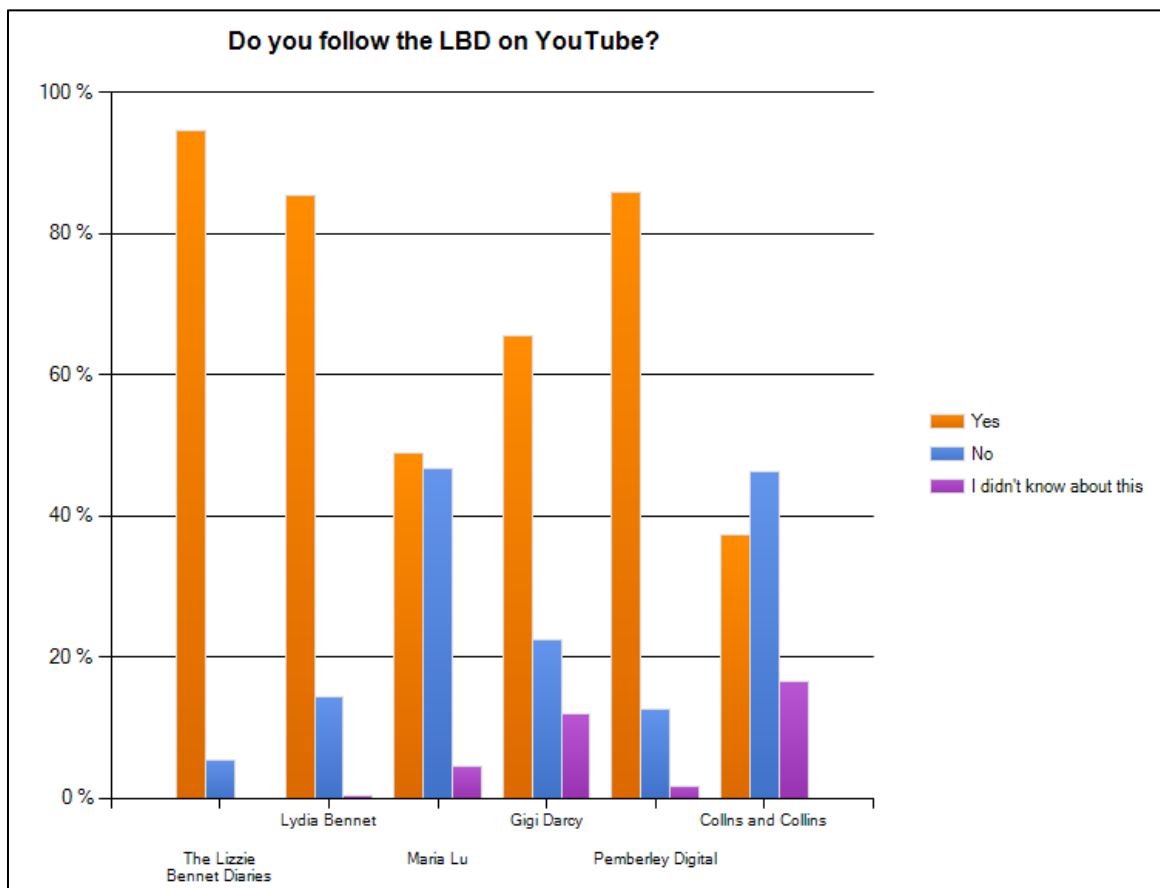


Figure 3: Survey responses regarding following the show on YouTube channels

100 episodes

The core content of the Diaries was located on a YouTube channel titled *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries*. This channel hosted the 100 central episodes which were written to be the video web logs, or vlogs, of the series' protagonist Lizzie Bennet. Every Monday and Thursday (excepting the week after Christmas) from April 9, 2012, the day the series started until March 28, 2013, the day the series ended, a new vlog was posted to the channel which continued the story. Though these videos, the audience learns about the life of Lizzie Bennet, a twenty-four year old grad student studying mass communication. She is a modern version of Jane Austen's Elizabeth Bennet from *Pride and Prejudice*, and during the year the videos were published, her character undergoes modern versions of the same situations Elizabeth Bennet faced two centuries ago. In her videos, Lizzie talks to the world about her life. Occasionally friends and family join her on screen and share their perspectives, but the vast majority of the story is told from Lizzie's point of view. Events that happened off camera were either described by Lizzie or acted out using what the characters called "costume theatre." In costume theater, Lizzie and her companions don simple costumes that represent each character (such as a hat and bowtie for William Darcy or a flower behind the ear for Jane Bennet) and read a script written by Lizzie. Some characters never even appear on screen, but fans are able to form a fairly solid impression of them from the costume theater. An example of this phenomenon would be Mr. Bennet, Lizzie's father. He never appears on screen, but Lizzie frequently portrays him using a pipe and hat as props.

Individual episodes were very brief; typically they were only about five minutes each. The series was written so that a viewer could choose to only watch these 100 episodes (which would take roughly seven hours) and still come away with a good understanding of the story.

Q &A

The Lizzie Bennet Diaries YouTube channel was also the home of ten “Question and Answer” videos published at random intervals over the course of that year. Every month or so, a video was be posted on the channel answering questions from fans. The questions are answered in character by Lizzie, occasionally with the support of another character. Fans ask questions ranging from complex questions about her relationship with her mother to simpler ones about the books on her bookshelves. During the Question and Answer videos, the audience was able to learn more about the characters as well as go more in depth with minor plot points that may have been glossed over in the main videos.

Lizzie was not the only character to film Q & A videos. Her younger sister Lydia also filmed two Question and Answer Videos. For both sisters, the Q & A videos were a place to interact with their fans. The questions were gathered from YouTube comments, Tweets, Google+ comments, and Facebook posts, so the voice of the fandom was particularly strong in these episodes. In fact, these videos often served as a more blatant sort of fan service – for example in the final Q&A video the tall dark and handsome William Darcy literally sweeps Lizzie Bennet off her feet and carries her away.

Additional Channels

The Lydia Bennet

Lizzie’s sister Lydia started a channel of her own a few months after the series began. The initial videos on the channel were short (under two minute) one-take videos supposedly shot

by Lydia on her cell phone. They chronicle any time she spent away from her sisters – and more importantly away from Lizzie’s vlog. These videos initially served to give Lydia some character depth, and they also gave viewers a chance to get to know her cousin Mary Bennet who only appears in one episode of *The Diaries*. As the videos progressed, they began to tell an important part of the story that was separate from Lizzie’s experience, namely when Lydia began her relationship with George Wickham. Rather than learning about their relationship after the fact like Lizzie does, the viewers were given the opportunity to witness Lydia’s reactions as George allured and manipulated the young woman.

Maria of the Lu

In September of 2012, videos began appearing on a third channel, “Maria of the Lu.” The channel belonged to Maria Lu, the younger sister of Lizzie’s best friend Charlotte. The videos started shortly after Charlotte moved to work at Collins and Collins, an instructional video production service. Charlotte was quite popular with fans, so in these videos, the viewers were able to follow the story of a beloved character. They also added a level of depth to Charlotte’s character, as viewers finally got the opportunity to see her both as a sister and in her professional environment. The audience was able to witness how the separation from Lizzie took its toll on Charlotte, just as losing Charlotte hurt Lizzie.

Collins and Collins

The next channel to appear was Collins and Collins. For a long time, the channel had only one video, in which Maria Lu explains how to use a light switch and solutions to common light switch problems (“Troubleshooting your Illumination Regulator - Better Living with Collins

and Collins”). A follow up video appeared in March, shortly before the show ended. The actress in the video who explained how to change a lightbulb was actually a fan of the series named Kelsey Geller. Kelsey was chosen to film the short instructional video after submitting an instructional video in response to the challenge shown in the figure below.

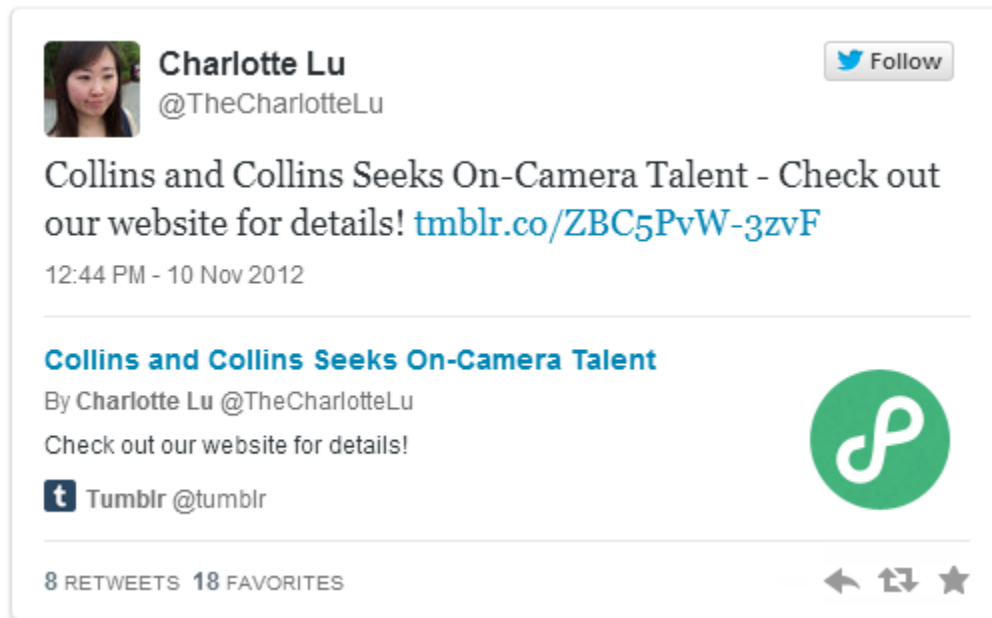


Figure 4: Tweet initiating an instructional video making competition

This channel essentially functions as an inside joke for the fans, almost like a DVD extra. In fact, several additional Collins and Collins videos were shot as DVD extras, and when the production team experienced some delays in getting those DVDs to fans, the videos were posted on the channel in The fact that Collins and Collins had its own channel also adds a sense of realism to the series as Collins and Collins is supposed to be a video production company.

GgDarcy

The GgDarcy channel never published a single video. When the channel appeared, Gigi Darcy had not yet made an onscreen appearance, despite having been casually mentioned in

episodes of *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries*. Instead of posting videos of her own, Gigi liked and commented on previous videos in the series. This interaction made Gigi Darcy feel like a real person to the viewers before they even saw her on camera. Additionally, noticing that Gigi liked particular videos inspired some viewers to go back and watch those episodes to see what caught her interest.

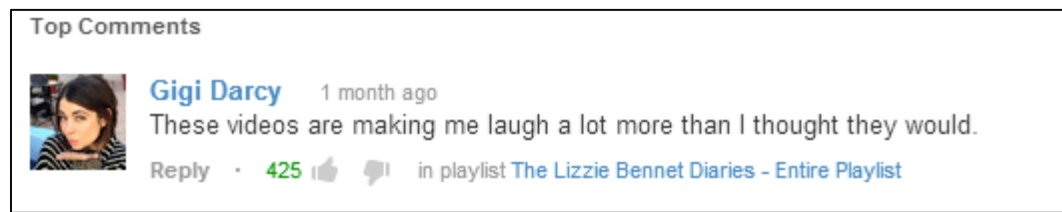


Figure 5: Gigi Darcy’s comment on “Vidcon Interruption – Ep: 25”

As is evident in the figure above, her comments on *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* routinely get hundreds of likes. The channel gave depth to a character who arrived on the scene late. It also opened up the possibility that she might make her own videos, which would give the viewers a chance to better get to know her, and perhaps more importantly, her brother.

Pemberley Digital

As it happened, Gigi did end up filming her own videos, just not on her personal channel. The final channel to mention is Pemberley Digital. Pemberley Digital is the fiction company owned by William Darcy, and this channel initially hosted the demonstration of the company’s fictional new app “Domino.” The new app was mostly just an excuse to show Gigi’s perspective on Lydia’s sextape scandal, and the effort William Darcy was putting into making sure the tape was never published.

Twitter

The second most used social network was Twitter. Every character that appeared on screen had a twitter account, which means that the series had 13 associated accounts for characters, as well as an account for Pemberley Digital and even one for Kitty Bennet, Lydia's cat.



Figure 6: Tweets from cast members with reply from Kitty Bennet

The twitter accounts were used early on the series to give more insight to events that happened off screen. For example, the Bennet family first meets the Bing and Caroline Lee as well as their friend William Darcy at a wedding. As the story is told in the form of a video diary, the audience does not get to witness this event on screen. Instead, the producers allowed the fans to experience the event through a series of Tweets. Although Caroline, Bing, and Darcy had not appeared on screen yet, their twitter accounts were already active. Through her video blog, Lizzie later complains to the audience that Caroline and Darcy spent the event on their phone. The audience knows this is true, and furthermore knows what they were saying because the entire interaction happened on Twitter.



Figure 7: Some of the character's tweets during the wedding reception

Viewers can already witness Darcy's discomfort in social situations first hand as well as how protective he is of his friend Bing.

The Twitter accounts were also frequently used to point to other transmedia elements. Both Lizzie and Charlotte's accounts tweeted the links to almost every video. Jane often tweeted links to her Lookbook while Lydia often tweeted links to her Tumblr posts. This redundancy made it much easier for fans to keep track of the various story elements.

Tumblr

Tumblr was mostly used to reach out to new audiences and direct them to the videos. However, it was also the home of more information about some of the characters. For instance, Charlotte Lu appears in many Lizzie Bennet episodes. The Diaries are Lizzie's, however, so most of Charlotte's screen time is devoted to giving an alternate perspective on Lizzie's life. The

audience actually learns very little about Charlotte's interests and personality from the videos. The Tumblr account supposedly run by her character gives Charlotte more depth. From her posts, the fans can learn about her love of documentaries on social justice issues and her desire to produce media that makes a difference.

Google+

The series' use of Google+ was interesting mostly in its lack of success. The team initially posted links to the videos on Google+ as Lizzie Bennet, but the response was not particularly impressive. Only a few people commented on the videos, and after episode 27, the team abandoned the account entirely.

Gigi Darcy

The introduction of Gigi Darcy into the series was fascinating from a transmedia perspective. Although she is mentioned occasionally by the characters on screen, Gigi does not appear in the videos until episode 77. She appears again in three more episodes on the *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* channel as well as a few episodes on the Pemberley Digital channel. Despite only appearing on screen for a few minutes of a multi-hour series, Gigi was such a well-developed character that the writers chose to center their next series, *Sanditon*, around her. The audience first met Gigi through her Twitter account. The writers started tweeting as Gigi Darcy in May of 2012, nearly eight months before the viewers met her through *The Diaries*. She interacted a bit with a few of the characters, but more of the posts were about movies and music. The account was connected to accounts on GetGlue which is a social network for movie and television fans (now named tvtag) and ThisIsMyJam, an application for sharing one song at a time with friends.

The character and the possibilities she afforded quickly became a favorite of the series'

Transmedia Producer Jay Bushman:

“Slowly introducing the audience to her through her music and movie choices was one of my favorite parts of LBD, and one of the big test cases to prove how well the whole transmedia storytelling aspect could work - especially to see how long of a lead we could have for a character who wouldn't appear on screen for months and months.”

(Bushman, 2013)

By Christmas, a little over halfway through the series, Gigi learns about Lizzie's video blog.

Starting with the Tweet shown below in Figure 8, the writers posted a series of Tweets as if Gigi Darcy was live tweeting a marathon watch through of the series.



Figure 8: A Tweet on the Gigi Darcy account initiating her livetweeting the series

Those fans following her channel got to see her react to the people and events in Lizzie's life, as well as how Lizzie portrayed her brother. When the events of the story brought Lizzie directly into Gigi's life, it was on Twitter that fans could watch her and Fitz (Darcy's oldest friend) plot to get Lizzie and Darcy to admit their feelings for each other.

San Francisco Day

Gigi's twitter account was also home to one of the most ambitious transmedia components of the series: San Francisco Day. The concept was to use Twitter to tell the story of Gigi and her brother William Darcy (generally referred to simply by his last name) giving Lizzie Bennet a tour of San Francisco because she is new in town. The tour of San Francisco happened at a rather crucial time in the plot. Fans were excited because seeing Darcy was a remarkably rare occurrence in this adaptation. Furthermore, at this time in the story, Lizzie was softening towards Darcy and the two were finally getting to know each other. Many fans were excited to finally see their ship starting to sail. This moment in the show was also dramatic for fans because those watching the Lydia Bennet channel could already see trouble brewing. Lydia was being seduced by George Wickham who viewers had already learned was not a nice guy. The climax of the story was on its way, and fans were anxious to see as many happy moments between Lizzie and Darcy as possible before the plot tore her away from him and San Francisco.

Over the course of January 26, 2013 a series of tweets appeared on the Gigi Darcy account. It started at 1:45 EST with a tweet sent to @TheLizzieBennet which read "I hope you've got your walking shoes on!" (See Figure 9 below).



Figure 9: First tweet of San Francisco Day

The tweets continued sporadically until 6:55 EST. Most of the tweets were pictures of Lizzie in from of famous San Francisco landmarks such as the Golden Gate Bridge or Alcatraz. Fans enjoyed these pictures – the tweets were all favorited several hundred times. The most popular tweets, however, were those that included a picture of Lizzie and Darcy together. Over the five hour event, only three pictures including Darcy appeared. These received well over 1000 favorites each as shown in Figure 10. The tweet on the left was marked as a “favorite” by 1,601 users, and the tweet on the right by 1,825 users.



Figure 10: Two of the San Francisco Day tweets featuring Lizzie and Darcy

Many of the survey responders mentioned San Francisco Day as one of the highlights of the series. As one survey responder put it, “My favorite day was the day GiGi, Lizzie and Darcy toured San Francisco; I loved seeing the pics as if it were actually happening” (Participant 158). As the day progressed, fans followed the trip on Twitter, and they discussed in little pockets all over the web. As quickly as new story components were posted, fans were discussing them in detail and using them to make fan art, as in Figure 11 below.



Figure 11: Fanart posted by tumblr user withmightandmain the same day this picture was posted by Gigi Darcy's twitter account

San Francisco Day was so successful that the team decided to create an epilogue to the series which was told in the same way, except on The Lizzie Bennet twitter account.

Chapter 4

The Lizzie Bennet Community

Who is behind it?

The show was created by Hank Green and Bernie Su. The two met at bar during a Google event in Mountain View. Hank had been considering the idea of writing a vlog-style modern adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice* (a story he and his wife both love), so he pitched the idea to Bernie (Cohen, 2012). With that conversation *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* was born. Together they put together a small team which made the idea a reality.

Hank Green

Hank is a Co-Creator, Executive Producer, Editor, and Post Supervisor for *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries*. He became famous for a channel called The Vlogbrothers which he shares with his brother best-selling author John Green. The Vlogbrother have more than 500,000 subscribers. He is also the Executive Producer of two educational YouTube channels: SciShow and Crash Course (“Hank Green”, 2012). His love of online video inspired him to found VidCon, an annual convention for online video (Bascaramurty, 2012), as well as help found the DFTBA Record label which mainly focuses on the music of independent artists on YouTube.

Bernie Su

Bernie Su is a Co-Creator, Executive Producer, Director, Head Writer, and Showrunner for *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries*. Before working on the series, he was the writer, director, and executive producer of LOOKBOOK: The Series: “a scripted dramatic series for the popular fashion social network LOOKBOOK.nu, which featured brand sponsorships Dolce Vita, Doc Marten’s, and Victoria Secret Pink” (“How Jane Austen Conquered Social Storytelling,” 2013). He also created and wrote *Compulsions*, a dramatic thriller which won both the Clicker Award for Best Original Web Drama and the Streamy Award for Best Writing in a Web Series (“Bernie Su,” 2013).

Jenni Powell

Jenni Powell is a producer for *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries*. Before her work on the series, she was already well established in the world of online video. She worked on cult internet series such as *lonelygirl15* and *Nobody’s Watching* as well as the massively popular series *The Guild*, and critically acclaimed series *With the Angels*. She is also the Director of Content and Social Media for VidCon and a producer with Geek & Sundry (“Jenni Powell,” 2013).

Jay Bushman

Jay Bushman is the Transmedia Producer and a writer for *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries*. In 2010, *New Scientist* labeled him “the epic poet of Twitter” for his “Twitter theatre” adaptations of such divergent source material as *The Empire Strikes Back* and a Herman Melville novella (Fisher, 2010). He also produced the “Dirty Work” for Rides.tv which won an Emmy for

Outstanding Creative Achievement in Interactive Media-Original Interactive Television Programming in 2012 (“How Jane Austen Conquered Social Storytelling,” 2013).

The Team

Other members of the team include: Stuart Davis, the Assistant Director; Margaret Dunlap, the Consulting Producer and a writer; Jason Raswant, the Cinematographer; Alexandra Edwards, the Transmedia Editor; Rachel Kiley, a writer; Kate Rorick, a writer; Anne Toole, a writer; Katie Moest, the Production Designer; Adam Levermore, the Graphic Designer; Heather Begley, the Makeup Artist; Michael Aranda, the composer and an editor; and Sam Mollo, and editor (“Team,” 2013).

The series was completely self-funded, so for many of the people involved, it was a passion project. The budget was tiny, but luckily for the Lizzie Bennet community, YouTube is the perfect place for big ideas on a small budget. In his book *Convergence Culture*, Henry Jenkins writes that “YouTube has emerged as a key site for the production and distribution of grassroots media - ground zero, as it were, in the disruption in the operations of commercial mass media brought about by the emergence of new forms of participatory culture” (2006, p. 274). Jenkins is talking mainly about the creation of content by amateur creators. From the brief bios presented here, it is clear that to call the team behind *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* amateur would be an insulting misrepresentation. This project was a professional effort, albeit one with a very small budget.

The Viewers

According to the survey responses collected for this study, the audience of *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* was predominately female. Of the 1578 participants, four chose not to answer the question, ten declared that they preferred not to answer, fifty-seven identified as male, and 1,507 identified as female. To put that another way, less than 5% of viewers did not self-identify as female.

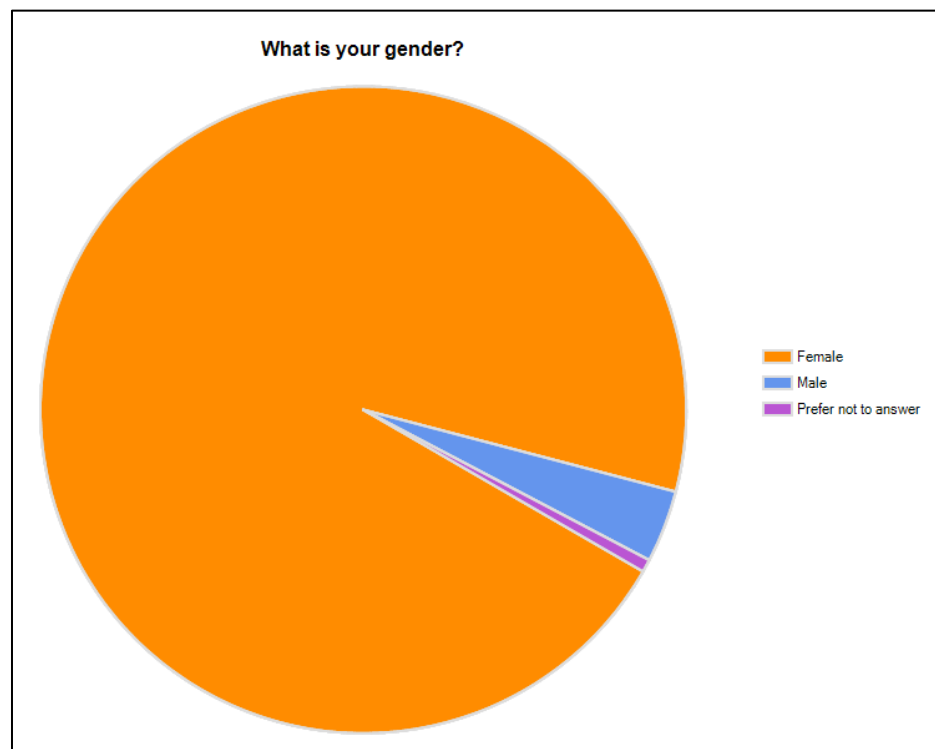


Figure 12: Survey response to the question “What is your gender?”

Such a drastic difference is worth noting. Perhaps the series attracted a mostly female audience because it was based on *Pride and Prejudice* or because the majority of the screen time belonged to the female characters. Perhaps women enjoy engaging with transmedia narratives more than men do. Perhaps women are more attracted to the social and community aspect of such a show than men. These are all interesting questions, but further study will be required to answer them.

The series attracted a slightly greater diversity of people in terms of age; however, the show clearly attracted a particular demographic. Just over 64% of survey responders were between the ages of 18 and 24, with 25 to 34 as the next common range followed by under 18.

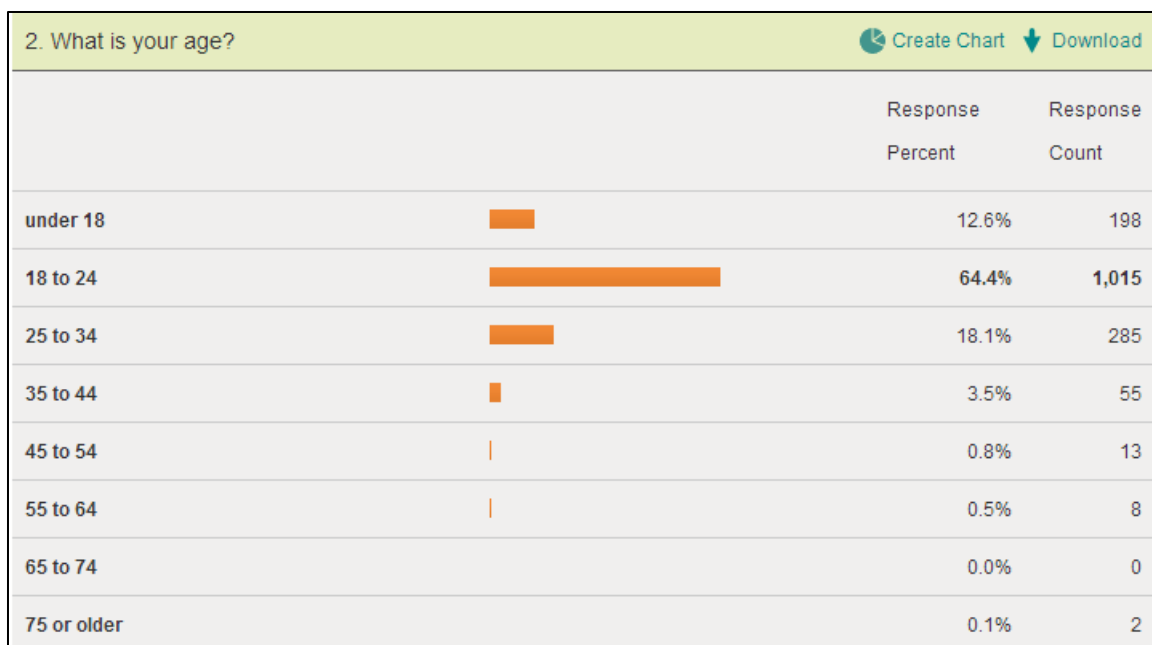


Figure 13: Survey Responses to the question “What Is Your Age?”

These results are close to what the creators anticipated. In an interview given shortly after the show premiered, Hank Green remarked,

My experience with YouTube and online video is you're a lot better off making content for the audience that's comfortable and familiar with that format. At this point that's anywhere from 13 to 25, maybe anywhere from 13 to 30 if you cross your fingers. I'm thinking our audience will be on the upper end of that. Hoping for college-age, a little younger, and a little older. (Cohen, 2012)

Looking at these survey results as a representative sample of the audience, one can see that Hank's prediction turned out to be quite accurate. The majority of viewers were college-age (between 18 and 24), and less than five percent of viewers were over the age of 35.

Part of the reason Hank so accurately predicted the audience was that many Lizzie Bennet fans were already part of Hank's existing YouTube following. As explained above, Hank and his brother John run a very successful YouTube channel together fittingly called *The Vlogbrothers*. Before *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries*' team posted their first episode, Hank made a video about the project and asked his followers to give the series a try ("Introducing Lizzie Bennet", 2012, 2:44). According to the survey responses, many of them did (See Figure 14).

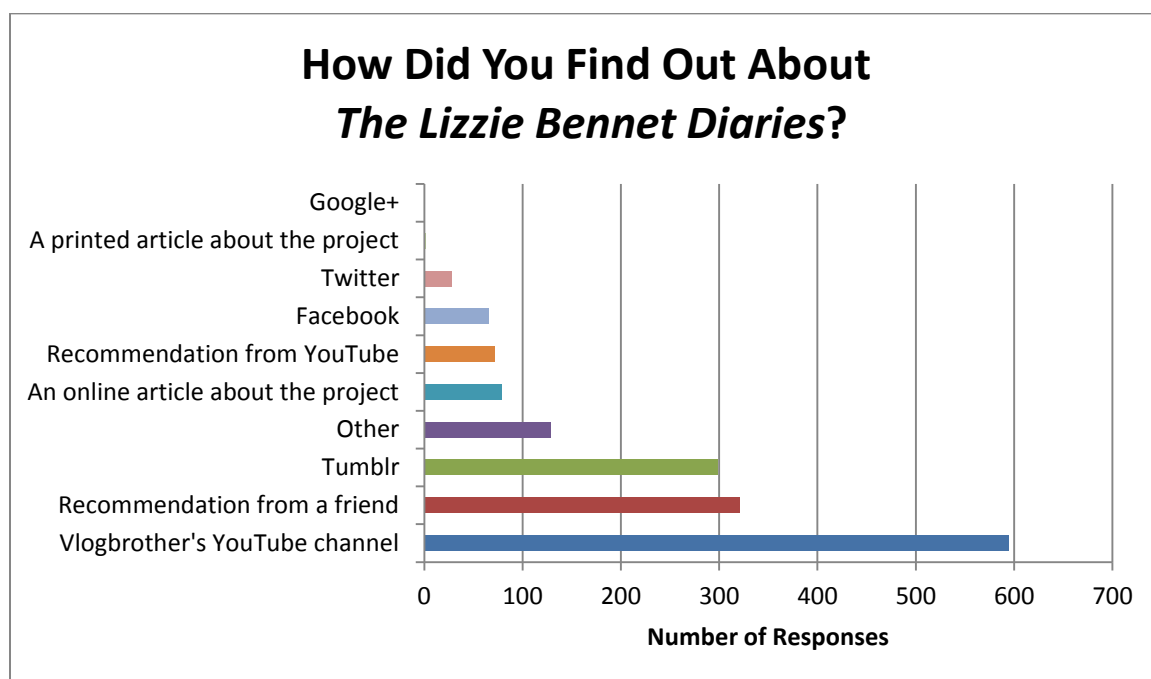


Figure 14: Survey responses to: "How did you find out about *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries*?"

A large portion of *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* fan base found the series because they watched *Vlogbrothers* videos. In fact, *Vlogbrothers* viewers (who refer to themselves as Nerdfighters) made up about 40% of the Lizzie Bennet community. As will be explained in a later section, this built in fanbase was invaluable to *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries*, and without their support early in the project, the team would not have been able to fund later episodes. The next most popular response was "Recommendation from friend." That highlights the real reason why *The Diaries* were so successful in the long term: people really enjoyed watching them and encouraged others

to join them. In some respects, nearly every other category listed can be seen as a subset of a category one might call “Recommendation from a fan.” Viewers actively encouraged their friends to watch it not only by actually telling them to do so, but also posting about the series on Tumblr, Facebook, Twitter, personal websites, blogs, etc. The “Other” section was filled with participants writing in that they heard about the series through posts on various blogs and social networks. One participant attributed his discovery of *The Diaries* to ARGNet, a news resource available for players of online collaborative Alternate Reality Games, and another mentioned the Forever Young Adult blog. Many mentioned Felicia Day’s “The Flog” (a weekly vlog in which the actress explores new experiences from archery to using a chainsaw). Hearing the show recommended by Geek Royalty such as Felicia Day marked the series with a stamp of quality, so her choosing to recommend the show became an important factor in its success (Day, 2012, 0:53 - 1:14). In an interesting turn of events, roughly a dozen responders reported first learning about the series by reading fanfiction. The active participation of viewers in the series and their independent content creation actually brought in new viewers.

Participatory Culture

An interactive transmedia narrative makes the audience more than just a passive group. Rather, the viewers of *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* were participants in the story. As Ashley Clements, the actress portraying Lizzie explained, “In this story, the camera is kind of a character. You guys, the audience, are kind of a character, and there are times where I’ve talked to you and there are times [like with the Q&A videos] where your words are in the script” (Clements & Gordh, 2013, 44:01 - 44:19). The Lizzie Bennet Diaries is an example of what Henry Jenkins termed “participatory culture.” In his book *Confronting the Challenges of Participatory Culture: Media Education for the 21st Century*, he provides this definition:

“A participatory culture is a culture with relatively low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement, strong support for creating and sharing creations, and some type of informal mentorship whereby experienced participants pass along knowledge to novices. In participatory culture, members also believe their contributions matter and feel some degree of social connection with one another (at least, members care about others’ opinions of what they have created)” (2009 p. xi).

The Lizzie Bennet Diaries community met all three of his criteria. The barriers were low: all someone had to do to join the community was watch the videos and express their thoughts and feelings about the series somewhere online. Just watching one four minute video was enough to make someone a part of the community.

Secondly, the support for artistic expression and sharing creations was very strong. Fans reblogged each other’s tumblr posts and posted links to each other’s fanart. Impressively, the support for artistic creation did not exist only among the fans - the creators of the series often recognized art created by fans by reblogging it on the official Tumblr account as in the figure below.



Figure 15: Screenshot of fanart reposted on the Official Lizzie Bennet Diaries Tumblr

This choice was particularly impressive because as Jenkins points out in his book, “And so far the media companies have shown a remarkable willingness to antagonize their consumers by taking legal actions against them in the face of all economic rationality” (2006, 163-164). Fans creating content based on media they like often face real antagonism from the creators of the original content. Consider, for example, the Potter Wars mentioned in the introduction. Warner Brothers decided to take legal action against a fifteen year old girl for creating a guide to the Harry Potter world website.

Other media franchises have chosen to embrace fan content creation – at least to an extent. For instance consider LucasFilm’s reaction to the myriad of Star Wars fanfiction over the years. The company chose to ignore most of the content for a long time, only taking a stand when it came to art or fiction which was pornographic in nature. However, once the internet appeared,

LucasFilm's reaction changed. The company began to actively encourage fans to create their own Star Wars parodies and documentaries by making AtomFilms – an official site for fan created videos. The rules were strict, but if participants followed them, fans could even compete in the *Star Wars* Fan Film Awards. George Lucas himself would select his personal favorite (Rose, 2011, p. 93-94).

Unfortunately, in this respect, *Star Wars* is something of an anomaly. Generally the mentality of production companies is more similar that that which is bemoaned in *Convergence Culture*:

“Marketers have turned out children into walking, talking billboards who wear logos on their T-shirts, sew patches on their backpacks, plaster stickers on their lockers, hang posters on their walls, but they must not, under penalty of law, post them on their home pages. Somehow, once consumers choose when and where to display these images, their active participation in the circulation of brands suddenly becomes a moral outrage and a threat to the industry's economic well-being” (Jenkins 2006 p. 142).

Happily, *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* does not share this troubling mentality. Fans posted all sorts of content online using screenshots from the series, logos created for the series, and quotes from the episodes (See Figure 16 below) with the approval and support of the creators.



Figure 16: Pemberley Digital fanmade t-shirt design

An important component of this support is that people freely shared their art and ideas online. The fans who designed the t-shirt in Figure 16 did not attempt to produce and market the shirt – they merely shared the idea. The same is true for *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* Monopoly game, LBD-Opoly designed the board, the cards, the money, etc and then provided a link where fans could download the game and print their own copies. The community created content because they loved the series. The Lizzie Bennet fandom was much like Henry Jenkin’s explanation of fan fiction writing communities: “For many fans the noncommercial nature of fan culture is one of its most important characteristics. These stories are a labor of love; they operate in a gift economy and are given freely to other fans who share their passion for these characters” (2006, p. 180-181). Had the participants in the community tried to make money off of *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries*, the creators might have reacted differently.

The third category, informal membership, is harder to pin down, but *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* community certainly had a system where more involved users passed information to novices. Many participants in the survey explained that although they personally did not have time to seek out all of the content, they did not feel they had missed out on anything because other members of the community shared their knowledge. Some parts of the community used a formal system such as a shared GoogleDoc. Other fans relied on the conversations on tumblr to keep them up to date with story events. One viewer explained in the comment section of the survey that she liked the transmedia components of the show, “but I follow it through secondhand knowledge. I simply check Tumblr, if an important transmedia event is happening, the info will show up there” (Participant 38). There was even one survey responder who wrote that “I printed out some of your question pages so I’ll have a handy cheat sheet for finding some of the things I did not know existed until I read the questionnaire” (Participant 1354).

An enormously popular example of involved users passing information on to novices is the Socially Awkward Darcy Facebook page. The page was made and maintained by a group of friends who were passionate fans of the show. Many survey responders recognized Socially Awkward Darcy as the funnel through which they consume the show. Comments such as “Luckily for me, there’s Socially Awkward Darcy (Facebook page) and the slightly rabid fan base that keep all of us up-to-date on everything LBD related (and then some) from every side of the internet” (Participant 145) were far from uncommon. The young women running the page tracked all of the components of the series and monitored interesting content created by the community. The linked to any content they deemed valuable, so fans had an easy one stop shop which aggregated the content. Some of the survey responses were from people who found the survey because Socially Awkward Darcy saw the link and decided to give it a signal boost: “I saw the request to complete this survey on Socially Awkward Darcy which is where I go to get linked to all the transmedia stuff like twitter, plus I just can’t get enough of all the hilarious fanart”

(Participant 142). Without their help, this study would have had several hundred fewer participants.

Verisimilitude

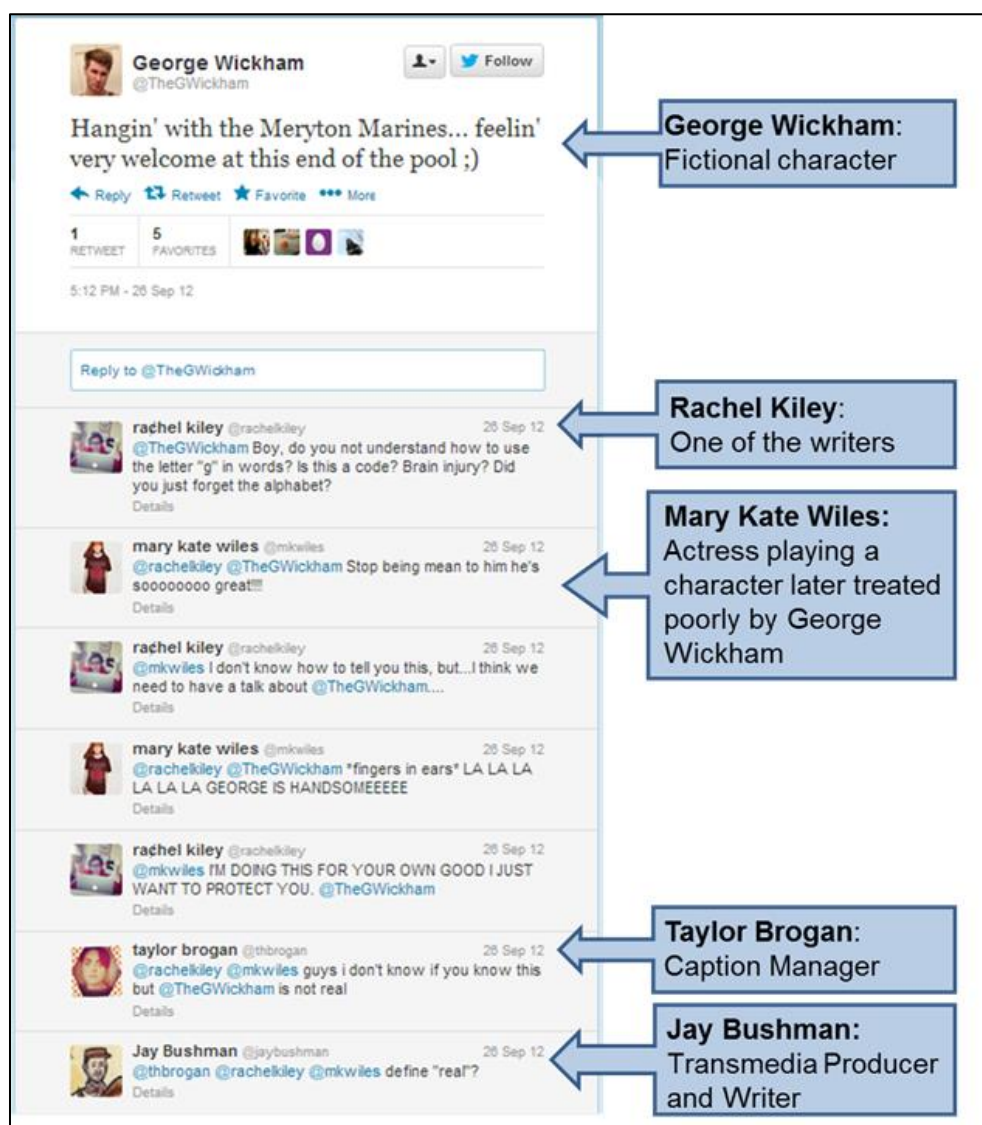


Figure 17: A tweet from fictional character George Wickham with responses

One of the aspects of the series that particularly appealed to some fans was the blurred boundary between the real world and the world of the characters. The figure above shows a tweet

from George Wickham, the story's villain. At the time of this tweet, his character had been introduced, but his treacherous nature was not yet known to the characters. Fans of Jane Austen's novel, however, were familiar with the character of George Wickham, so the response to him was mixed. Viewers experiencing the story for the first time generally liked him, or at least his abs which he was not shy about displaying. Novel fans, on the other hand, often loathed him instantly, and some were quite vocal about it. The reply criticizing his grammar is therefore only remarkable because of its source: a writer of the series. The reply defending him is similarly remarkable only for its source: the actress playing Lydia Bennet. As Lydia is the character who will later suffer the most, the following seemingly heated interaction is merely a joke between the two of them, hinting at events to come. Taylor Brogan, a fan of the show who will later join the production team as caption manager, then reminds them that this fellow they are making such a fuss over is not in fact "real" which prompts Jay Bushman, the transmedia producer of the series to ask her to "define real?"

In some ways this interaction exemplifies the delicate balance the LBD walked between fiction and fact. Lizzie Bennet was presented as just another vlogger, talking about her life on the internet. The audience was encouraged to interact with her as if she were an actual person, and many fans did. Many comments on the videos were directed to her personally, and in tweets as well as several Question and Answer Videos, Lizzie Bennet interacted with her fans directly.

Survey responders were asked to identify the extent to which they agreed with the statement "I sometimes forget that the characters are not real people." As shown in the following chart, over 50% of the survey responders selected that they either agreed or strongly agreed with

the statement.

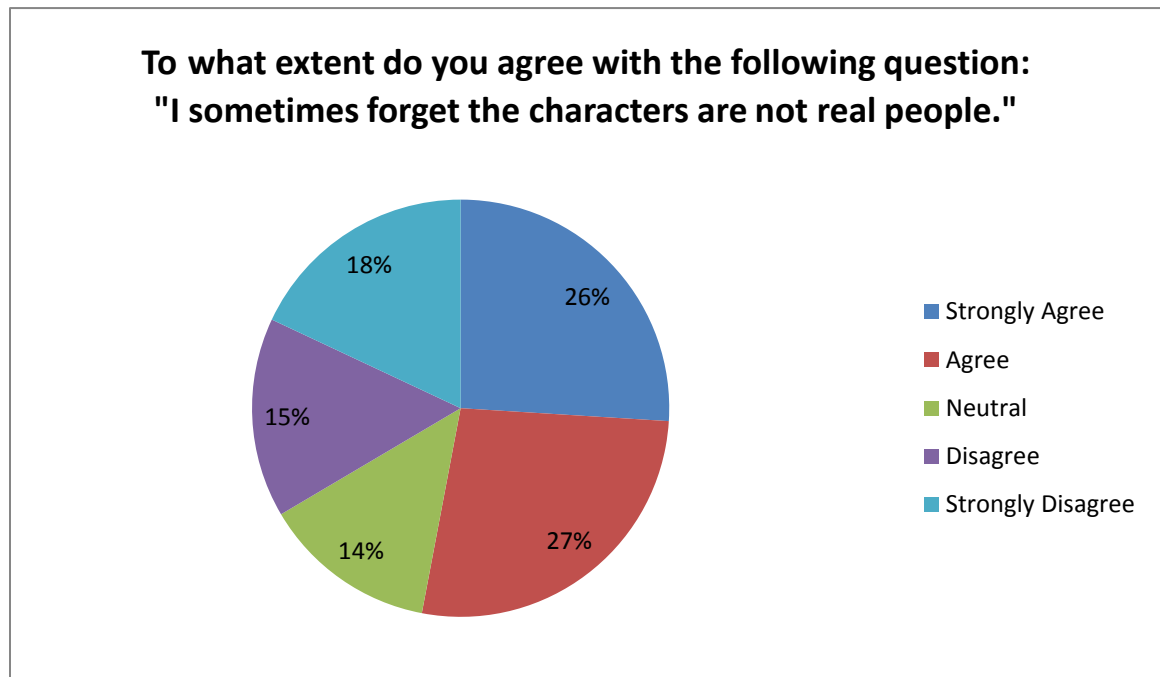


Figure 18: A chart of survey responses on the authenticity of the characters

The fact that so many viewers became so immersed in the show that they could forget that what they were watching was fiction is a tribute to the hard work of the production team. They were wonderfully creative and thorough in creating an online presence for each character. Ricky Collins, the aspiring businessman had an account on LinkedIn, a social network for professionals. On the other hand, playboy George Wickham had a presence on the dating website OkCupid. One of the most popular accounts was the Lookbook created for Jane Bennet, Lizzie's sister who works in the fashion industry. The account, named "LooksbyJane" was occasionally updated while the series was running with various "Looks" modelled by the character. On the profile page, there is absolutely no indication that Jane Bennet is a fictional character, so it is possible, and even probable that some of the LooksbyJane fans think Jane Bennet is a real person a fact on which some of the survey responders chose to comment.

The responses to the statement “I sometimes forget the characters are not real people” were fascinating. More intriguing than that chart, however, were the reactions to that statement which appeared in the comment section. The survey ended with a final comment box asking responders whether or not they liked the use of transmedia in the Lizzie Bennet Diaries. A surprisingly large number of people took the opportunity to elaborate on their response to that statement.

Many people found the blurred line between fiction and reality to be very exciting. For some, the appreciation of the transmedia elements was simple: “It gives the characters more depth and makes them seem like they could be real people from 2013 who have an online presence.” (Participant 15). They appreciated the authentic feel of the show. For others it was the most important part of the series:

This isn't just a "web-series", there's plenty of those, this is immersion within a world that we love to a degree that no other fandom has ever had before. Trekkies may have their own language, Whovians may be able to recite the chemical makeup of Gallifrey's atmosphere, but WE can have canonical conversations with these characters. It's fantastic.

(Participant 41)

The level of immersion in *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* was central to this responder’s passion for the series. She was certainly not alone. Participant 248 was the first person to comment on the transmedia format of the series that she loved the way “it gives a sense of verisimilitude,” but she was by no means the last. Dozens of participants enthusiastically responded to comment box on the subject of how real the series felt, often referencing William Darcy’s use of the word verisimilitude.

On the other hand, many fans expressed their concern over the somewhat blurred line between fantasy and reality. As one responder explained,

To me, the fact that Jane Bennet's Lookbook account has 1500 fans and most of them probably don't know it's a fictional character, is a made up story that goes beyond its bound. To be honest, I find that fact very disturbing. As I see it: Stories are stories, life is life. Fictional characters are fictional characters and real people are real people. Fictional characters shouldn't pretend to be real people. (Participant 110)

Another survey responder wrote,

They're not confined to one medium like most characters; like real people, they're in a whole bunch of different places, which makes the story seem more like real life and less linear. Lizzie Bennet, for example, feels more fleshed out by default because she's not pressed into the screen of a fictional video. When you click out of the page, she doesn't disappear. Whether that's 100% healthy for helping fans distinguish between fiction and reality, however, is yet to be seen. XD" (Participant 1317)

It was not uncommon to see participants comment that they enjoyed the transmedia components, but they worried about the effect the immersion would have on other audience members:

One concern: people already take TV shows and other fictions VERY seriously, how much more emotionally invested will they get if the characters are more like real people with twitters and tumblrs? Could be a problem for some people, but it's pretty fun for me. (Participant 8)

This concern is not without merit. Consider, for instance, the most recent series of *Sherlock*.

Amanda Abbington, the actress playing Mary Watson, a newly introduced character who marries the famous Dr. John Watson in one of the episodes, actually received death threats from *Sherlock* fans. Apparently a small subset of the Sherlock fandom was so heavily invested in the romance they hoped was blossoming between Sherlock Holmes and his stalwart assistant that they could not handle the idea of a new character coming between them (Charalambous, 2014). Such

vehement reactions to the lives of fictional characters are frightening especially as they go far beyond what would be considered acceptable even if Sherlock, Mary, and John were real people.

Happily, the death threat sending portion of the Sherlock fandom is tiny. The vast majority of Sherlock fans are appalled that such a thing could happen. In fact, many were quite pleased by the announcement as Amanda Abbington is the real-life partner of Martin Freeman, the actor who plays Dr. Watson in the show (Romano, 2013). They felt the casting choice and introduction of the character seemed fitting.

Former Wired reporter Frank Rose explains in his book *The Art of Immersion* that the backlash against increasingly immersive storytelling experiences is not a new phenomenon: “Every new medium that has been invented, from print to film to television, has increased the transporting power of narrative. And every new medium has aroused fear and hostility as a result” (2011, p. 36). Rose argues that Bradbury’s *Fahrenheit 451* warned that television was dangerously immersive, and before that Huxley argued that films were dangerous in *Brave New World*. He furthermore makes the point that it is not only recent storytelling mediums which have been deemed dangerously immersive – centuries earlier Don Quixote’s battle with windmills represented the harmful effects of reading too many novels. He immersed himself too deeply in the stories he read until he became delusional. Having the benefit of perspective many years after these fears were raised, it is clear that books, television, and movies all failed to doom humanity. Luckily storytellers of the past did not abandon immersive techniques just because they were challenged. Had society completely rejected television, film, and novels because they were immersive, *To Kill a Mockingbird* might never have been written. Mr. Smith would never have gone to Washington. There would be no Captain Kirk to boldly go anywhere or kiss anyone.

As dangerous as the blurred lines seem, they can also be rather beautiful. In the introduction, the Harry Potter Alliance was mentioned. The HPA’s mission statement explains that the group “takes an outside-of-the-box approach to civic engagement by using parallels from

the Harry Potter books to educate and mobilize young people across the world toward issues of literacy, equality, and human rights. Our mission is to empower our members to act like the heroes that they love by acting for a better world” (Harry Potter Alliance 2012). For example, when it was brought to the HPA’s attention that the licensed Chocolate Frogs sold by Warner Brothers might not be made using fair trade chocolate, the organization launched a petition signing campaign called “Show Us The Report” asking the company to allow fans to see a report proving that Chocolate Frogs were not produced using child labor. Furthermore, the HPA began to sell alternative Chocolate Frogs made with Fair Trade Chocolate (Harry Potter Alliance 2013). Fans of the Harry Potter franchise were so inspired by the characters that they felt it was their responsibility to make the world a better place.

According to survey responders, the same connection and inspiration can be found with characters of *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries*. One responder explained that she had always loved the character of Jane Bennet, but the way Jane was made real by *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* truly inspires her:

Since first being introduced to *Pride and Prejudice*'s characters many years ago, I have wanted to be Jane Bennet when I grow up. I may still not be an oldest sister, the most beautiful girl at the ball, or completely grown up, but I have found a realistic Jane whose timeless sweetness I can emulate. It is incredible how well these writers, actors, and producers (and whoever posts on Twitter) have brought old role models to new light.

(Participant 1465)

This new Jane felt authentic and honest to the survey responder which made the character’s kind and generous nature seem much more achievable. Jane suddenly became the sort of person one could strive to become.

The show’s verisimilitude also made it a good forum for discussion. As real as the characters may have seemed, the fact that they were fictional provided viewers with a safe space

to have ethical discussions surrounding their conduct. Jenkins observed similar conversations occurring around reality television:

Rather than being morally debasing, ethically dubious on-air conduct frequently encourages a public discussion of ethics and morality that reaffirms much more conservative values and assumptions. In a multicultural society, talking through differences in values becomes a mechanism by which different social groups can learn more about how they each see the world, so there is real value in gossip that extends into virtual rather than face-to-face communities. (2006, p. 84-85)

Having a large public discussion about the choices real people are making in their lives can be invasive and cruel. Discussing fictional characters or the semi-fictional personas adopted by reality TV participants, however, provides a safe platform for discussions of ethics and morality. In the Lizzie Bennet fandom, the discussions about ethics and morality were ubiquitous. As one participant wrote: “I like that they have been able to discuss deep issues about connectivity, privacy, and intimacy while still remaining light-hearted” (Participant 293). An example of such a discussion was the one surrounding Lizzie’s description of Lydia in “My Sisters: Problematic to Practically Perfect – Ep: 2” where she says “Ugh, Lydia’s being a stupid whore-y slut again!” (0:10-0:12). Many fans reacted strongly to this moment, and they were vocal on various social networks about their disappointment with Lizzie for “slut-shaming.” Many viewers saw a modern day Elizabeth Bennet as a feminist who would respect a woman’s right to express her sexuality in whatever way she chose. The criticism was so strong that Bernie Su wrote a post to the fandom, apologizing for writing that dialogue and assuring fans that he would write a much more thoughtful dialogue for Lizzie in regards to her little sister’s promiscuous behavior (“BTS: Slut-shaming”, 2012). The post no longer appears on Bernie Su’s Tumblr, but a copy was posted to the Lizzie Bennet Diaries’ website.

As much as the sisters love each other, Lizzie and Lydia spend much of the series at odds with one another. Fans quickly took sides in their conflicts which spurred some interesting discussions about sibling relationships, judging others, and maturity (See Figure 19 below).

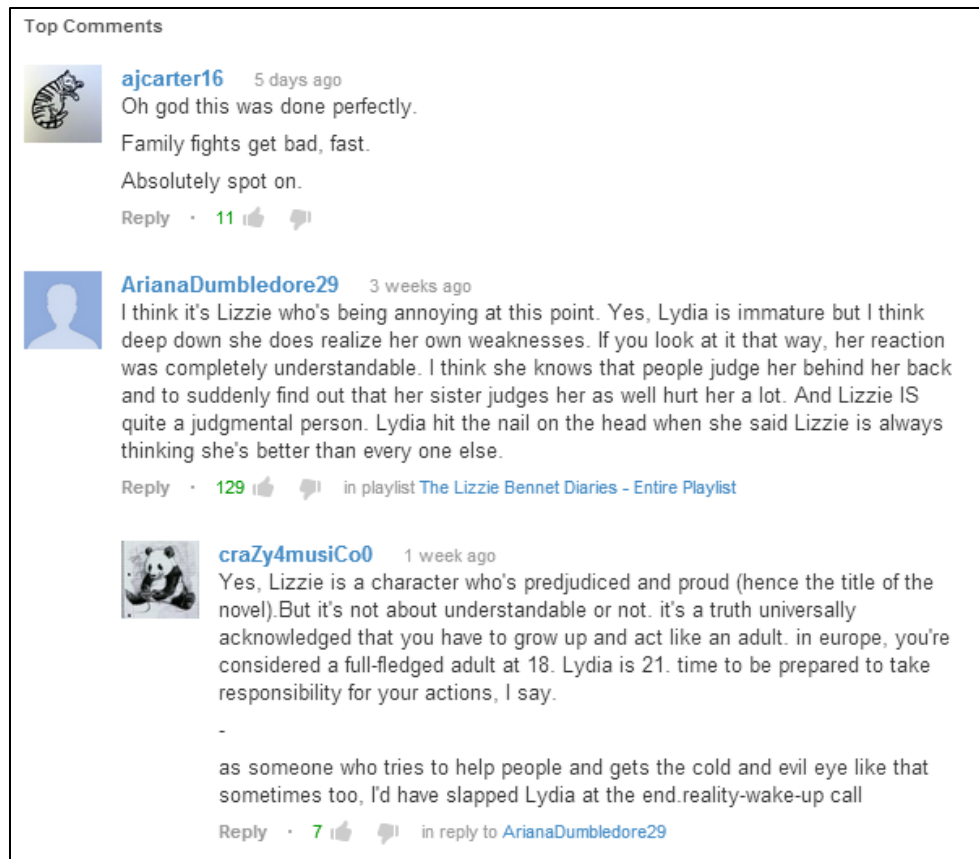


Figure 19: Screenshot of the top comments on "How to Hold a Grudge - Ep: 74" taken on January 31, 2013

Viewers had their own beliefs about right and wrong and *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* provided them with a framework to start a discussion as a community. Some even found the series and the conversations it sparked life changing:

Watching it as it happens has helped me to assess myself and where my life is going and make serious changes. I would say the transmedia aspect not only helps the show further the story but also gives the viewer something more to relate to and another level of

immersion that most other shows should consider for their own viewership. (Participant 338)

Unfortunately, the degree to which the some viewers blurred the lines between fantasy and reality actually became a challenge for the writers. This will be discussed in the next section.

Chapter 5

Challenges

Who is in charge?

In the world of the story, George Wickham enters into a relationship with Lizzie Bennet's little sister Lydia. The relationship was not a healthy one, and it culminated in George filming a sextape with Lydia which he then sold to an adult film company without her knowledge or consent. This betrayal was hinted at in the series of Tweets in Figure 17. The event was incredibly emotional for the characters and, by extension, to the many fans who had come to love them all so dearly. Some fans felt so protective of Lydia that they wanted to step in and stop the tape's debut themselves (See Figure 20).

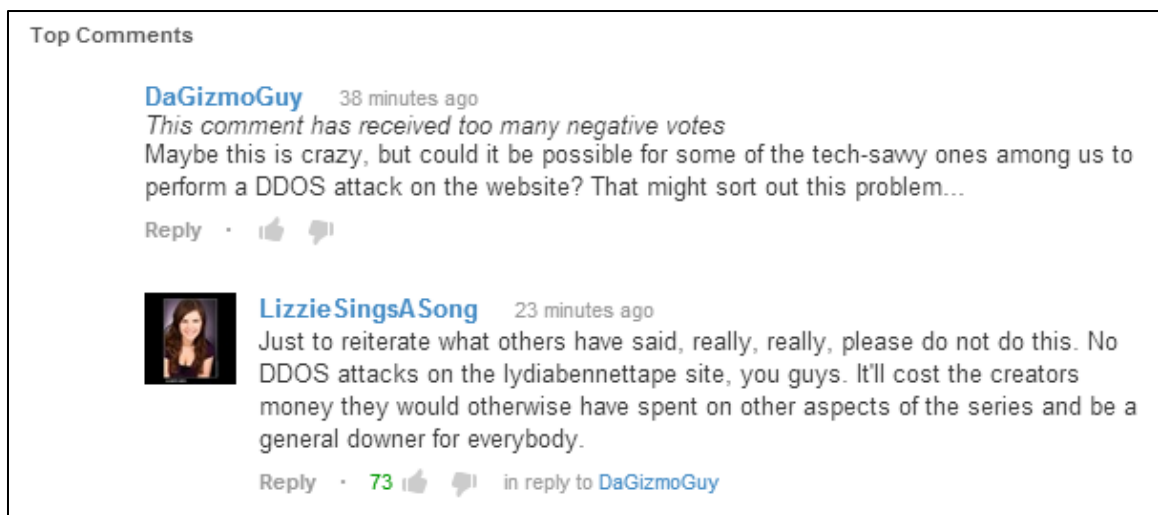


Figure 20: Top Comments on "Sisterly Support - Ep: 86" (screenshot taken February 7, 2013)

The voices of fans suggesting that the community take matters into its own hands were quickly drowned out by other community members explaining that it was a bad idea. Nevertheless, the possibility remains that some viewers were so invested in the story that they tried to take down

Novelty Exposures themselves. The site did go down temporarily on February 3, 2013. Whether that was due to fan interest overloading the servers or an attack is unclear. The team was forced to think quickly and create a Twitter account for the company, so they could assure viewers that it was not an intentional part of the story (See Figure 21).



Figure 21: Tweet from Novelty Exposures after the website went down

Whether fans actually launched a Distributed Denial of Service attack on Novelty Exposures or not, the situation does highlight what a difficult balancing act storytellers have to walk between allowing fan involvement and maintaining control of the story.

No Money? No Problem! Well... Maybe.

One of the key challenges faced by the show has already been mentioned: the lack of funding. The team addressed this issue in a variety of ways. Costume Theatre saved the team from the need to hire additional cast members to play characters such as Mr. Bennet or Catherine de Bourgh. They also saved money on sets. In an interview shot on set, Producer Jenni Powell explained, "We are doing this interview in Lizzie's room, but this is actually my room. In thinking about Lizze, I was like 'you know, she reads all the same books I do. Let's just shoot it in my apartment. Like, I can dress the set'" (*The Stylish*, 7:03-7:15). In fact, a lot of aspects of the show belonged to the cast and crew. The team could not afford a wardrobe department, so the

cast generally wore their own clothes. There was only one makeup artist in the crew, so often they also did their own makeup. Rather than despairing over their difficult economic situation, the production team celebrated the brilliant ways they managed to create a 100 episode show on a shoe string budget. As showrunner Bernie Su put it, “when creativity marries economics it makes a beautiful baby” (Cohen, 2012).

Initially, the team fronted the money to produce the first few episodes, and then used the ad revenue from those episodes to fund the rest. It took a few months to attract an audience large enough for the show to be able to support itself through ad revenue – roughly 100,000 viewers (“Hank is maybe crazy,” 2012). Even though the audience reached this size, *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* did not and could not make enough money through advertisements to pay any of the team members a living wage:

The way that the internet works right now is you have to get millions and millions and millions of views to get enough money just to pay one person like a living wage at all. And so we did not pay anyone well to be a part of this. It just- we didn’t. They did it because they love Jane Austen and they love web video and they were excited about this project. (Green, 2013, 1:32-1:49)

As the show was wrapping up, the team launched a Kickstarter campaign to fund the production of DVDs of the series. They announced that the money they received would go to manufacturing the DVDs, production of the new short series, and royalties for the cast and crew. The goal was to raise \$60,000, but by the end of thirty days, 7,158 backers had pledged \$462,405 (Pemberley Digital, 2013). Had the record shattering Veronica Mars Kickstarter not launched in the same month, Pemberley Digital’s campaign would have been the most successful campaign in the TV & Film category of the year. (Christian, 2013).

The success of *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* was remarkable enough to gain the attention of the digital media production company DECA. DECA focuses their efforts on empowering

content for women, so it is no surprise that a show centered around the lives of modern women would catch their eye (“About Us,” 2014). The team behind *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* and DECA worked together to come to an arrangement whereby DECA would fund their next major project, *Emma Approved*. From a financial perspective, *Emma Approved* is much more successful than *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries*. According to a post on TurnStyle News, “despite having only 80% of the audience of the first series, *Emma Approved* is pulling in five times the cash” (Nelson, 2014). The article attributes the increased income to the show to the creator’s decision to post links in the description where fans can purchase outfits that characters in the show wore. The staff negotiated with online retailers to receive a referral fee for the increased sales.

As successful as the show seemed, there are still some difficulties that cannot be ignored. Chief among them is the fulfilment of promises made during the Kickstarter campaign. The project was successfully funded on April 22, 2013, but nearly a year later, backers still have not received their DVDs. On February 28, 2014, Bernie Su sent out his 27th update to backers explaining that the DVDs still are not ready to be shipped because there are errors on Discs 4 and 9 (Su, 2014). Currently the goal is to get the DVDs into the hands of fans sometime in April.

Bernie Su Burning Out

One of the challenges of this model is the workload it demands. The production team for *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* was relatively small, but they took on a lot of work. Appendix A contains a full list of the components of the series. To mimic actual users’ use of these social networks, they all had to be updated constantly. In addition to all of the content being created as part of the story, the team was also providing an enormous amount of behind the scenes content through interviews, google hangouts, Q&A sessions, etc. It was overwhelming for the production team, most specifically the Head Writer:

Here is something that apparently not even the people I work with daily know. I NEEDED LBD to end. It had to end. It needed to end because I was exhausted. Those of you fans who saw me in the hangouts from time to time should remember that I would be doing 6 days a week 14 hour days at the office. Not leaving until around midnight every night. As much as I enjoyed it, it wasn't sustainable for me. Mental health, quality of life, all of it was out the window for the show. (Su, 2013, p. 4)

Bernie wrote this explanation of how exhausting *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* was in Google Doc he shared with fans about criticisms of the team's next project *Emma Approved*. Capitalizing on the success of *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* to launch a brand meant that Bernie Su and those who worked with him did not get a break. They jumped immediately into attempting to fulfill the promises they had made with the Kickstarter campaign as well as developing two new series for Pemberley Digital, a fictional company in *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* which became a real company. It all proved to be too much. In December Bernie announced that *Emma Approved* would be going on hiatus (Su, 2013, p. 2). It will be interesting to see in future months if the team is able to find the time and energy to give the *Emma Approved* fans as rewarding an experience as the *Lizzie Bennet* fans enjoyed.

Global Audience

As a web series, the *Lizzie Bennet Diaries* had a unique relationship with its global audience. The main episodes and all supporting transmedia elements were published freely on the internet; therefore, every part of the show was available everywhere in the world (at least, everywhere in the world with internet access) simultaneously. Television shows do not have this advantage. Episodes can air internationally weeks or even months after airing in their home country. For instance, BBC's *Sherlock* initially aired in July of 2010 in Britain (Love 2010), but it

did not air in the United States until October of that year (Hale 2010). This difference in broadcast times limited the fan community. American fans (excepting of course those who chose to illegally download the show) were several months behind the British fans, so they had to be cautious when interacting with British fans of the show to avoid spoilers. By publishing online with no restrictions, the producers of *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* enabled their show to reach a global audience instantly. Several responders to the survey indicated that they were from countries outside of the United States. One responder wrote: ““I live in Denmark, and while I follow many US shows, I rarely feel connected. LBD not only allows me to feel connected to the characters, I can also interact with them, in a way that's true to their characters, and not generic and computerized.” An important point to note is that this young woman was able not only to watch the series from across an ocean, but also successfully participate in the transmedia elements of the show by interacting with the characters. The staggered release of episodes depending on country often prevents the audience from successfully enjoying transmedia aspects of a television show. Elizabeth Evans explains that “the transmedia nature of programmes such as *Lost* or *Heroes* breaks down in a European market. The delays in broadcast transmission of the television episodes mean European viewers cannot fully engage with non-television based transmedia content as they have not seen the corresponding television episodes” (2011 p. 37). This challenge that has troubled more traditional media producers for years simply vanished with *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries*’ model.

Of course, *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* faced its own set of challenges when it came to having a global audience. One of these challenges was the fact that story elements sometimes occur in real time. An example of this would be a transmedia event called “Touring San Francisco.” The plot of the event was William Darcy showing Lizzie Bennet around San Francisco because she was new in town while his younger sister Gigi took pictures of the excursion which she tweeted as they visited various San Francisco landmarks. Fans were able to

follow tour on twitter from when the first picture was posted at 11:10am PST to when last was posted at 3:55pm PST (“Touring San Francisco” 2013). For audience members in the United States, this transmedia event was well received. Even though it was not directly asked about on the survey, many responders used the comment section to express how special watching the event

“My favorite day was the day GiGi, Lizzie and Darcy toured San Francisco; I loved seeing the pics as if it were actually happening.” - Participant 1041

“The best use of transmedia, however, was undoubtedly Gigi's twitter documenting her tour with Lizzie and Darcy through San Francisco, with the accompanying photos. It allowed fans to experience a part of the story in real time rather than just an uploaded video. It was a stellar use of the transmedia aspects of the story.” - Participant 507

“The day that Lizzie toured San Francisco with GiGi and Darcy was a fun day for all the viewers, since we could 'see' how the day was progressing through GiGi's pictures.” - Participant 779

Figure 23: Quotes from Survey Responders about “Touring San Francisco”

in real time was for them:

Fans in the United States were able to enjoy following the events in real time. However, the survey responder from Denmark had a slightly different experience: “Gigi and Darcy showing Lizzie SF was very impressive, even though I was not able to follow the story in real time.” She still enjoyed the story element, but as she was not willing to stay up until 1am CET that night

waiting for a new tweet, she could not experience it in real time. Living on the other side of the world prevented her from enjoying the show in the same way as American fans.

The time difference also proved to be a challenge even for fans within the United States. Sometimes characters would be available to interact with fans through social media. Unfortunately, these interactions often occurred in the evening, which for fans living on the East Coast meant that the characters were only available in the middle of the night. One survey responder expressed her disapproval:

My only disappointment with this is that I'm 3 hours behind them (I'm in EST) so when conversations get going on Facebook, I'm often already in bed and miss them. I would love to actually get in a conversation with a character, but it's like they're only doing it for an hour or two every few weeks (other than just to post the links of new episodes) and then it's done. No replying to something later, only to the things that come that moment. I know that there's probably a ton of traffic and it's hard to keep up with, but it's still a bit disappointing.” - Participant 114

Within her response, the participant expresses several solutions to this issue. She notes that the opportunities to interact with characters are rare and relatively unpredictable. The only constant seemed to her to be that the characters only answered fan questions in the evening. In the future, transmedia storytellers could put more effort into making it clear when characters are going to be available, so fans who really want to interact can arrange their schedules to be available to participate. If such regularity does not work with the plot or the established character traits, offering these opportunities at a wider variety of times could also be an effective solution. Perhaps a character could sign on while she is having her morning coffee, or another could be having a bout of insomnia and he could turn to social media to pass the time.

The time difference is not the only challenge with which the global audience presented *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries*. There was also a language barrier. For the videos themselves, the

production team could use captions. The videos are captioned in a variety of languages, including: English, Dutch, French, German, Hebrew, Italian, Portuguese, and Spanish. The FAQ page for *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* also reminds the audience that “YouTube also provides an automated caption translator for 300 languages” (“FAQ” 2013). When it comes to the videos, the team has accommodated the global audience as well as one could expect. The transmedia components, however, are a different story. One survey responder explained: “I have one problem with transmedia and it's that I can't share the experience with a lot of friends because I live in a Spanish-speaking country. I don't really know how available are subtitles for videos (I don't use them), but I believe they can be turned on for most of the episodes, whereas transmedia only comes in English.” *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries*’ FAQ page insists that any viewer can fully understand the plot simply from the videos on YouTube; however as was discussed in the previous section, the interaction with transmedia components of the show was a rewarding experience for many members of the audience. When writing about the transmedia components of *The Matrix*, media expert Henry James explained that “the consumer who has played the game or watched the shorts will get a different experience of the movies than one who has simply had the theatrical film experience. The whole is worth more than the sum of the parts” (Jenkins 2006 p. 104). *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* is much the same in this regard. Interacting with more pieces of the story provides fans with a richer experience than simply watching the episodes. Although the story can be understood through just the videos, many fans may want the opportunity to go deeper. The international audience should not be excluded simply because they speak a different language.

The challenge of a language barrier is in some ways more difficult to solve than the issues inherent in the time difference, and the honest truth is that there may not be a good solution. More accurately, there may not be a good solution *yet*. For instance, right now if a storyteller wants to reach both a Spanish audience and an American audience, the easiest choice

might simply be to create two versions of all components, one in Spanish and another in English. For instance, for *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries*, the producers could have created a secondary twitter account for the protagonist which was identical to the original, except it could have been in Spanish.



Figure 24: The original first tweet followed by a Spanish version of the same tweet

This solution has several flaws, however. Firstly, maintaining just the existing English accounts was already a challenge enough for a low budget web series like *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries*. Creating additional accounts in other languages would increase the production team's workload exponentially. Simply using google translator to generate the alternate versions of the content (as shown in Figure 24 above) would cost less than hiring human translators, but it would still take more man hours than a show of this nature can sacrifice. Furthermore, while this method might help a larger audience consume the show, it would make audience interaction difficult. For characters to interact with fans, on all of the language accounts, the producers would have to

provide translated versions of any fan questions or comments to which characters respond. Soon the entire endeavor seems like far more effort than it is worth.

The simplest and most effective solution may actually not be within the storyteller's control. As of right now, automatic translation software is still flawed. A fluent Spanish speaker would probably find several flaws in just that simple tweet shown above. For instance, the twitter handle was translated to “@ElLizzieBennet” which is not ideal as “el” is the masculine form of “the,” and Lizzie Bennet is a young woman. Happily, translation software has been making dramatic improvements (Chen 2013 p. 1237). Facebook is already so satisfied with its instant translation service that it allows users to translate content to their declared language with a simple “Translate” button next to content in a different language (Greengard 2011), and as previously mentioned, *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries*’ team relied on YouTube’s automatic captioning and translation to make the series available in hundreds of languages. The language barrier that caused one survey responder to cry, “I like for the lbd Show to be more accessible to other language... Greek!!! Greek” will fade away as technology advances.

Chapter 6

Future Trends

Education

Stories are more than mere entertainment – storytelling is also one of the oldest tools educators can use to teach. Before we learned through books and other media, we learned through stories. As one author reminds us, “The Old Testament and much history came down through the telling of stories and legends” (Todd, 1973, p. 42). A paper by human rights and education researcher Dr. Nathalie Piquemal explains how both Western and Native cultures use storytelling to impart lessons to children. According to her, Western stories traditional impart a concern for morality, good vs. evil, and order vs. chaos while tribal stories often focus more on harmony and balance. She writes that “the importance of storytelling as a learning tool is unquestioned” (2003). The only thing that remains in question, according to Piquemal is whether there is a place for Native oral traditions along with Western traditions in the education system.

The immersive nature of media projects such as *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* creates fascinating opportunities. In the book *Video Games and Learning: Teaching and Participatory Culture in the Digital Age*, the author addresses criticism to his claim that video games such as *Pirates!* could be valuable educational tools:

One response might be, “Of course *Pirates!* is fun. You get to be a pirate.” It’s true that learning history is more fun when you approach it as a pirate. But is that a bad thing? Why not learn academic content by playing interesting roles, such as learning history by becoming a privateer or studying science as a forensic investigator? (Squire, 2011, p. 5)

In his book, Squire explains his own research in integrating gaming and education. He explains how even pro-footballers use video games like *Madden* to learn how to recognize formations and better their game (2011, p. 11). According to Squire, when students can interact with their lessons, they are more likely to learn. Based on my own personal experiences, I would have to say I agree. To be honest, I do not remember much of what I learned in eight grade history class, but I clearly remember Oregon Trail day. The eight grade teachers at my middle school saw how popular the video game was among students, and they decided to take the idea a step further by turning the woods down the hill from the school into our own little Oregon Trail. As we made our way along the trail, teachers would stop us and each would read a card with a situation that pioneers may have encountered on the trail. I met my death by venomous snakebite. Although medical practices have moved forward in the last few centuries, at the time the remedy would have been to tie a tourniquet onto my leg to stop the venom from spreading while attempting to suck it out. I tragically forget the tourniquet. By bringing the lesson to life before our eyes, our teachers taught us about the Oregon Trail in a way that we could remember, and more importantly, understand.

An important aspect of Squire's argument is that education should never be one size fits all. He explains that different strategies work for different students. Some students may learn best by reading from a text book, and if so, they should be encouraged to do so. For many students, however, simple textbook readings and lecture classes can be unengaging and therefore not educational. For these students, a more interactive media experience could help them learn.

The same argument could be applied to *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries*. The question then would be: Why not learn about classic literature by interacting with modernized versions of characters from the novel? The participants in the survey certainly seemed to think it was a good idea. Response after response addressed how the way *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* was presented allowed them to better understand the characters and their motivations.

“I love it! I think it brings a new element to the characters that helps me understand them and their choices better. Particularly Lydia, I am much more sympathetic to her plight than I ever was before.” (1052)

“Yes, it has developed the characters way beyond any other adaptation. We didn't get to know anyone besides the Bennets (and even them partially) and Darcy on the book, the movies or the tv series. Now we can connect even with characters that we used to dislike (yes, Lydia).” (79)

Several responders even mentioned the power of the series to attract a new audience to Jane Austen's classic novel:

“I think it's an innovative way to bring *Pride and Prejudice* into the modern world. Hopefully it will get people interested in reading the book. I hope they do this for *Sense and Sensibility* or one of Austen's other books.” (74)

“I think it's such a great way to involve people in the series. It's so interactive, and I know for fact that it reaches people who wouldn't normally be interested in *Pride & Prejudice*--my ex-boyfriend was the first to recommend the series to me, and he's never read the original story.” (288)

One participant in the survey explained that she would like to use a project like *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* in her classroom:

“I love the transmedia aspect. As a teacher, the idea of using this in my classroom is such an exciting one. The fantastically well-developed online personas make it easier (and more fun) to help explain not only the story to students, but the ideas of character and story development. It also allows students to see a myriad of ideas for their own assignments and projects that will help teachers meet their state and national standards involving 21st Century Skills as well as the ever present English standards of Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking, and Viewing.” (658)

One of the greatest educational aspects of the show has nothing to do with Jane Austen or literature. In addition to learning about the plot and characters of *Pride and Prejudice*, fans also learned about creating content for the internet.

Age of the Amateur

As was made clear above, *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* was not an amateur production. The series was the brainchild of a group of very skilled and experienced storytellers and digital content creators. Wonderfully, however, it did inspire several amateur teams to launch their own projects. Figure 25 shows a comment posted on one of the final Lizzie Bennet episodes.



Figure 25: Comment on an episode of *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* advertising an amateur series based on *The Great Gatsby*

Viewers who went to the Nick Carraway page were greeted with a video from one of the creators who also would be portraying Nick Carraway in the series. Bryan Stewart’s introduction was a bit shy: “It obviously won’t be as huge of a production as *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries*, but we have a fancy camera. We have really ghetto lighting and some really cool software, so I promise you it won’t be ridiculously horrible” (Stewart, 2012, 0:37 – 0:47). Bryan and his friends made a thirty episode series which ended on February 10, 2014. The show did not reach anything near the wild popularity of *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries*, but it was a credible first effort especially considering the even more limited budget. Because they chose to adapt a story that is not yet out of copyright, the team could not even rely on advertising revenue to make back some of the production costs.

There has been some criticism from Bernie Su regarding projects like *The Nick Carraway Chronicles*. He said in an interview that “a lot of our copycats out there on the Web use the bedroom as the main set. What you need to do is reimagine the world of the story. If you do ‘Dracula,’ put him on the moon. Set it on a space station. That would be the reimagination” (Peikert, 2014). For a professional, for profit project, Bernie may very well be correct. However, for an experimental amateur effort such as *The Nick Carraway Chronicles*, modeling the series after *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* was a smart choice. It works for the same reason that writing fanfiction can be beneficial to young writers: “Building their first efforts upon existing cultural materials allows them to focus their energies elsewhere, mastering their craft, perfecting their skills, and communicating their ideas” (Jenkins, 2006, p.191).

Another project inspired by *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* was A Tell Tale Vlog. Bernie Su liked the show so much he even recommended it on his personal blog (See Figure 26).

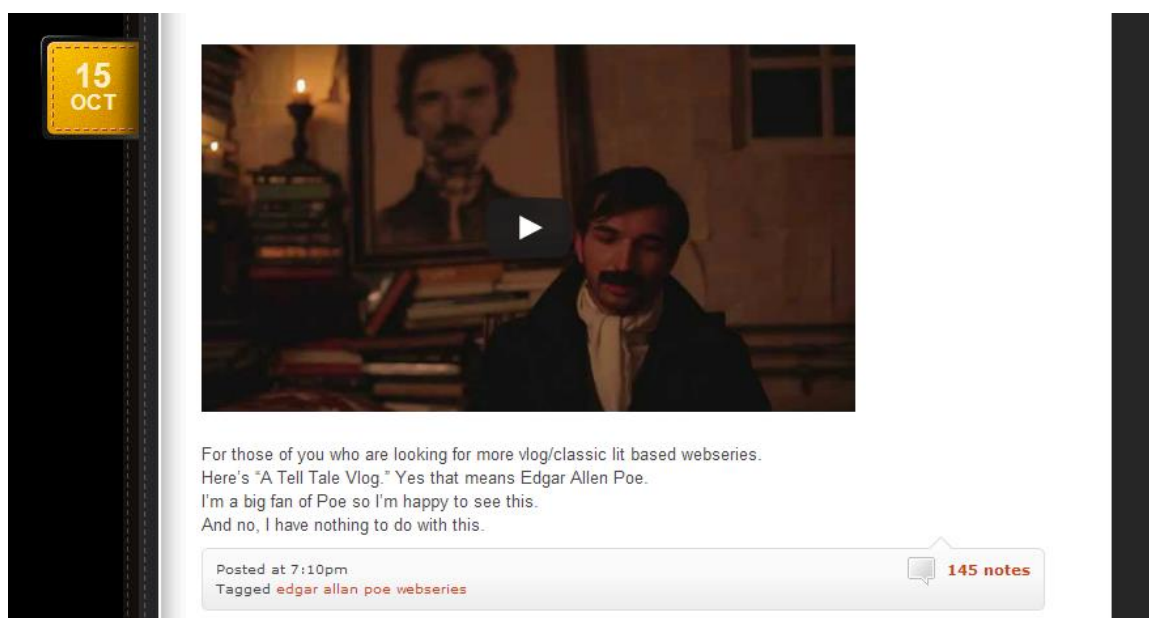


Figure 26: Bernie Su’s post recommending “A Tell Tale Vlog”

He also recommended *The Autobiography of Jane Eyre*, a modern adaptation of Charlotte Bronte’s beloved novel. When the creators reached out to the audience for help funding the show,

they received \$11,176 CAD which was over twice as much as they requested through crowdfunding platform indiegogo (“The Autobiography of Jane Eyre,” 2013). As Henry Jenkins puts it, “Lower the barriers of participation and provide new channels for publicity and distribution, and people will create remarkable things” (Jenkins 2006 p. 156). The question now is where the media productions fit into the greater media landscape. Right now, the internet is offering allowing amateurs to create content in ways that are entirely new: “The Web represents a site of experimentation and innovation, where amateurs test the waters, developing new practices, themes, and generating materials that may well attract cult following on their own terms” (Jenkins 2006 p. 152-153). These projects are blurring the lines between amateur and professional media producers. Some companies have begun to take advantage of this fact. For example, in 2007 Nick Haley an 18 year old in England thought it would be fun to make a commercial for his iPod Touch and post it on YouTube. To make the commercial, he used video from Apple’s website a song that had been stuck in his head. Someone at Apple saw his video, and within a week Haley was in Los Angeles working Apple’s advertising agency on a version for TV. A little over a month after he posted his video on YouTube, a professional version of the commercial was on the air (Rose, 2011, p. 240). If a teenager on a laptop can produce a commercial of high enough quality to capture the attention of a major ad agency, it does not seem much of a stretch to say that the industry is in for some changes. As Jenkins explains:

“Amateur filmmakers are producing commercial- or near-commercial-quality content on minuscule budgets. They remain amateur in the sense that they do not earn their revenue through their work (much the way we might call Olympic athletes amateur), but they are duplicating special effects that had cost a small fortune to generate only a decade earlier” (Jenkins 2006 p. 147).

Amateur creators are in a position to become legitimate competitors to mainstream media. These successful amateur productions hint at a future suggested by Jenkins in

Convergence Culture: “in the age of convergence culture, there may no longer be a strong mainstream but rather a range of different niche sites of media production and consumption” (Jenkins 2006 p. 276). However, as Jenkins himself would be quick to add, any statements saying that the media as it currently exists is dead are premature. In fact, he even states in his book that “I want to avoid the kind of grand claims about the withering away of mass media institutions that make the rhetoric of the digital revolution seem silly a decade later” (Jenkins 2006 p. 257). I share that sentiment. Instead, I would suggest that the media landscape is changing, with various forms of media serving different purposes. Jenkins explains it well when he says, “The power of grassroots media is that it diversifies; the power of broadcast media is that it amplifies” (2006, p. 268). Of course, Jenkins is simplifying a bit here. He is not suggesting that mainstream media and participatory culture exist in a sort of binary with no overlap. Rather, he is highlighting the opportunity that different platforms have to complement each other.

To me, the new opportunities in storytelling are what make now such an interesting time in media. Andrea Phillips wrote in the preface to her book that “New platforms and business models are emerging, gatekeepers are falling, and those possibilities can take your breath away. Creators are learning how to spin these platforms together into complex, integrated works in which the whole is greater than the sum of its parts - that’s transmedia” (Phillips, 2012, p. xi). New, beautiful and complex worlds are being created that are blending with our world in amazing ways. Movie producers can create an elaborate nationwide scavenger hunt for burner phones hidden in chocolate cakes. A few teenagers can buy a camera and make their favorite book from English class an interactive experience set in the modern day just for the fun of it. A team could shoot a nearly ten hour long interactive adaptation of a Jane Austen novel and create over 30 social media accounts containing additional story elements with almost no funding. That is fantastic.

Appendix A

Components of *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries*

Youtube

- The Lizzie Bennet Diaries <http://www.youtube.com/LizzieBennet>
- TheLydiaBennet <http://www.youtube.com/TheLydiaBennet>
- Maria Lu <http://www.youtube.com/MariaOfTheLu>
- Pemberley Digital <http://www.youtube.com/PemberleyDigital>
- Collins and Collins <http://www.youtube.com/CollinsandCollins>
- LydiaBennetTape <http://www.youtube.com/LydiaBennetTape>
- Gigi Darcy <http://www.youtube.com/GgDarcy>
- LooksByJane <http://www.youtube.com/LooksByJane>
- TheCharlotteLu <http://www.youtube.com/user/TheCharlotteLu>

Twitter

- LizzieBennetDiaries (@TheLBDofficial) <https://twitter.com/TheLBDofficial>
- Pemberley Digital (@PemberleyDig) <https://twitter.com/PemberleyDig>
- Fitz Williams (@FitzOnTheFitz) <https://twitter.com/FitzOnTheFitz>
- George Wickham (@TheGWickham) <https://twitter.com/TheGWickham>
- Maria Lu (@MariaOfTheLu) <https://twitter.com/MariaOfTheLu>
- Rick Collins (@MrRickCollins) <https://twitter.com/MrRickCollins>

- Mary Bennet (@TheMaryBennet) <https://twitter.com/TheMaryBennet>
- Gigi Darcy (@ggdarcy) <https://twitter.com/ggdarcy>
- Kitty Bennet (@TheKittyBennet) <https://twitter.com/TheKittyBennet>
- Jane Bennet (@LooksByJane) <https://twitter.com/LooksByJane>
- Charlotte Lu (@TheCharlotteLu) <https://twitter.com/TheCharlotteLu>
- Lydia Bennet (@TheLydiaBennet) <https://twitter.com/TheLydiaBennet>
- William Darcy (@wmdarcy) <https://twitter.com/wmdarcy>
- Caroline Lee (@that_caroline) https://twitter.com/that_caroline
- Bing Lee (@bingliest) <https://twitter.com/bingliest>
- Lizzie Bennet (@TheLizzieBennet) <https://twitter.com/TheLizzieBennet>
- Novelty Exposures (@NoveltyXposures) <https://twitter.com/NoveltyXposures>

Facebook

- The Lizzie Bennet Diaries <https://www.facebook.com/LizzieBennetDiaries>
- Lizzie Bennet <https://www.facebook.com/TheLizzieBennet>
- Jane Bennet <https://www.facebook.com/LooksByJane>
- Lydia Bennet <https://www.facebook.com/TheLydiaBennet>
- Charlotte Lu <https://www.facebook.com/TheCharlotteLu>
- Pemberley Digital <https://www.facebook.com/PemberleyDigital>

Tumblr

- The Lizzie Bennet Diaries Official <http://thelbdoofficial.tumblr.com/>

- Just Charlotte <http://thecharlottelu.tumblr.com/>
- THE LEE DEE AH – Bennet <http://thelydiabennet.tumblr.com/>
- Looks By Jane <http://looksbyjane.tumblr.com/>
- Maria Of the Lu <http://mariaofthelu.tumblr.com/>

Lookbook

- Jane Bennet <http://lookbook.nu/looksbyjane>

This is my Jam

- GgDarcy <https://www.thisismyjam.com/ggdarcy>

Get Glue

- Gigi Darcy (no link available - GetGlue is now tvtag)

LinkedIn

- Rick Collins <http://www.linkedin.com/pub/rick-collins/62/714/21>

Pinterest

- Jane Bennet <http://www.pinterest.com/LooksByJane/>

Google+

- The Lizzie Bennet Diaries <https://plus.google.com/114595346128576815385/videos>

OkCupid

- TheGWickham <http://www.okcupid.com/profile/TheGWickham>

Reddit

- The Lizzie Bennet Diaries <http://www.reddit.com/r/LizzieBennet>

Website

- The Lizzie Bennet Diaries <http://www.lizziebennet.com/>
- Untitled 1 <http://www.lydiabennettape.com/>
- Pemberley Digital <http://www.pemberleydigital.com/>
- Collins & Collins <http://www.collinsncollins.com/>

Appendix B

Index of Fanart



Figure 2: fanmade scene from Harry Potter and the Order of the Pheonix using screencaps from the film and text from the book.

Original post:

<http://excepttheeyes.tumblr.com/post/72814800418/book-quotes-order-of-the-phoenix-while-the>



Figure 11: Fanart posted by tumblr user withmightandmain the same day this picture was posted on Twitter

Original Post:

<http://withmightandmain.tumblr.com/post/41549782478/but-i-believe-i-must-date-it-from-my-first-seeing>



Figure 15: Screenshot of fanart reposted on the Official Lizzie Bennet Diaries Tumblr.

Original Post:

<http://chococonut.tumblr.com/post/32671660174/congratulation-to-the-lizzie-bennet-diaries-team>



Figure 16: Pemberley Digital fanmade t-shirt design

Original Post:

<http://justonemoresillygirl.tumblr.com/post/41927648386/i-would-like-this-to-be-a-thing-joint-credit-to>



Mentioned in Chapter 4: LBD-opoly

Original Post:

<http://alsokatie.tumblr.com/post/57748128419/lizzie-bennet-diaries-monopoly-download-here>

Download Here:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/mlnk4uf9zyznmsu/hEh7hmauiJ>

Appendix C

The Survey

Page 1 - Consent Form

Title of Project: How Transmedia Facilitates Fan Involvement in The Lizzie Bennet Diaries

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1. Purpose of the Study: The purpose of this research study is to explore how fans of The Lizzie Bennet Diaries become involved with the series using various social media platforms.

2. Procedures to be followed: You will be asked to answer a variety of questions about your interaction with the show on a survey.

3. Duration: It will take about 15 minutes to complete the survey.

4. Statement of Confidentiality: Your participation in this research is confidential. The data will be stored and secured by Survey Monkey in a password protected account. Your confidentiality will be kept to the degree permitted by the technology being used. No guarantees can be made regarding the interception of data sent via the Internet by any third parties. In the event of a publication or presentation resulting from the research, no personally identifiable information will be shared.

5. Right to Ask Questions: Please contact Jennifer Thompson at jrt5166@psu.edu with questions or concerns about this study.

6. Voluntary Participation: Your decision to be in this research is voluntary. You can stop at any time. You do not have to answer any questions you do not want to answer.

You must be 18 years of age or older and somewhat familiar with The Lizzie Bennet Diaries (ie have watched at least one episode) to take part in this research study. Completion and submission of the survey implies your consent to participate in this research. Please keep this form for your records.

Page 2 – Basic Information About Participants

This page will provide me with some basic information about you. The goal of these questions is to help me obtain a better understanding of The LBD's audience.

1. What is your gender?
 - Female
 - Male
 - Prefer not to answer
2. What is your age?
 - Under 18
 - 18 to 24
 - 25 to 34
 - 35 to 44
 - 45 to 54
 - 55 to 64
 - 65 to 74
 - 75 or older
3. How did you find out about the *Lizzie Bennet Diaries*?
 - Tumblr
 - Facebook
 - Twitter
 - Google+
 - Vlogbrother's YouTube channel
 - Recommendation from a friend
 - An online article about the project
 - A printed article about the project
 - Recommendation from YouTube
 - Other (Please Specify)

4. Approximately when did you start watching the Lizzie Bennet Diaries?

- Approximate Date (mm/dd/yy): _____

Page 3 – How do you interact with the series?

The questions on this page will help me understand how other fans interact with the show and the characters.

5. Do you follow the LBD on YouTube?

	Yes	No	I didn't know about this
The Lizzie Bennet Diaries	☐	☐	☐
Lydia Bennet	☐	☐	☐
Maria Lu	☐	☐	☐
Gigi Darcy	☐	☐	☐
Pemberley Digital	☐	☐	☐
Collins and Collins	☐	☐	☐
Other (please specify)			

6. Do you follow the LBD on Facebook?

	Yes	No	I didn't know about this
The Lizzie Bennet Diaries	☐	☐	☐
Lizzie Bennet	☐	☐	☐
Jane Bennet	☐	☐	☐
Lydia Bennet	☐	☐	☐
Charlotte Lu	☐	☐	☐

Other (please specify)

7. Do you follow the LBD on Twitter?

	Yes	No	I didn't know about this
The Lizzie Bennet Diaries	☐	☐	☐
Lizzie Bennet	☐	☐	☐
Jane Bennet	☐	☐	☐
Lydia Bennet	☐	☐	☐
Mary Bennet	☐	☐	☐
Kitty Bennet	☐	☐	☐
Fitz Williams	☐	☐	☐
Gigi Darcy	☐	☐	☐
William Darcy	☐	☐	☐
Caroline Lee	☐	☐	☐
Bing Lee	☐	☐	☐
Charlotte Lu	☐	☐	☐
Maria Lu	☐	☐	☐
Ricky Collins	☐	☐	☐
George Wickham	☐	☐	☐
Pemberley Digital	☐	☐	☐
Novelty Exposures	☐	☐	☐
Other (please specify)			

8. Do you follow the LBD on Tumblr?

	Yes	No	I didn't know about this
Lizzie Bennet	☐	☐	☐

Jane Bennet	☐	☐	☐
Lydia Bennet	☐	☐	☐
Charlotte Lu	☐	☐	☐
Other (please specify)			

9. Have you ever visited any of the following websites?

	Yes	No	I didn't know about this
The Lizzie Bennet Website	☐	☐	☐
The Pemberley Digital Website	☐	☐	☐
The Collins and Collins Website	☐	☐	☐
The Lydia Bennet Sex Tape Website	☐	☐	☐
Other (please specify)			

10. Do you follow the characters on any other social networks?

	Yes	No	I didn't know about this
Gigi Darcy's This is My Jam	☐	☐	☐
Jane Bennet's Pintrest	☐	☐	☐
Ricky Collin's LinkedIn	☐	☐	☐
Jane Bennet's Lookbook	☐	☐	☐
The Lizzie Bennet Diaries on Google+	☐	☐	☐

Other (please specify)

Page 4 – Interaction with characters

This page asks questions about interactions fans have had with characters. If you have never interacted with the characters, feel free to skip it or simply put "N/A" and "No" for all questions.

11. Have you ever directly contacted a character? (ex Tweeted @ggdarcy or asked Lizzie Bennet a question on tumblr or commented on a YouTube video)

- Yes
- No

12. How often do you contact characters?

After Every Video		Sometimes		Only Once	N/A
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

13. How have you contacted characters?

- Twitter
- Facebook
- Tumblr
- YouTube
- Google+
- This Is My Jam
- Lookbook

- GetGlue
- Email
- N/A

14. Which characters have you contacted?

- Lizzie Bennet
- Jane Bennet
- Lydia Bennet
- Mary Bennet
- Kitty Bennet
- William Darcy
- Gigi Darcy
- Bing Lee
- Caroline Lee
- Fitz Williams
- George Wickham
- Ricky Collins
- Charlotte Lu
- Maria Lu
- Collins and Collins
- Pemberley Digital
- Other (Please Specify)

15. Did the character respond? If so, please elaborate on the interaction)

- No
- N/A

- Yes (please explain)

Page 5 – Your satisfaction with the LBD

16. State the extent to which you agree with the following statements:

	Strongly Agree			Neutral			Strongly Disagree
I like that the characters have Twitter accounts	☐	☐		☐	☐		☐
I find it difficult to keep up with the various social media components of the show	☐	☐		☐	☐		☐
I think the Lizzie Bennet Diaries is a fantastic series	☐	☐		☐	☐		☐
I sometimes forget that the characters are not real people	☐	☐		☐	☐		☐
I wish the characters did not Tweet	☐	☐		☐	☐		☐
I enjoy talking to people about the LBD online	☐	☐		☐	☐		☐
If the producers of this show made another series I would watch it	☐	☐		☐	☐		☐
I feel no sense of personal connection to the characters	☐	☐		☐	☐		☐
Sometimes I feel left out of the LBD community	☐	☐		☐	☐		☐
I have made LBD fanart of some kind	☐	☐		☐	☐		☐
In between episodes, I check various social media sites to see what the characters are up to	☐	☐		☐	☐		☐
I like the idea of communicating with one of the characters	☐	☐		☐	☐		☐
Giving all the characters such in depth online personas is a waste of time	☐	☐		☐	☐		☐

Page 6 – Any Final Thoughts?

This section is an open area for you to express any thoughts that you feel may be of use to me in my research. My particular focus is on the show's use of transmedia.

17. Did you like the LBD's use of transmedia? Please elaborate

18. If you would be comfortable answering followup questions, please leave your email below. If not, just hit submit.

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ACADEMIC VITA

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- EDUCATION:** The Pennsylvania State University University Park, PA
Schreyer Honors College
B.S. in Information Sciences and Technology Expected May
2014
B.S. in Security and Risk Analysis
Minor: English
- EXPERIENCE:** The Pennsylvania State University State College, PA Fall 2013
Learning Assistant
- Facilitate communication between experts and novices
 - Coach individuals in achieving learning goals
- GE Transportation Erie, PA Summer 2013
IT Leadership Program Intern
- Document the data flow for two critical processes used in testing locomotives
 - Collect user requirements for new software from leaders of seven engineering teams
 - Analyze and resolve issues with an Excel Macro used to generate graphs and calculate control limits of environmental conditions for a testing facility
 - Draft a specification for a UniPlot template which will allow engineers to quickly visualize and analyze post processing data
- Skipso London, United Kingdom Summer 2012
Summer Intern
- Ensure that user input into all forms is correctly validated
 - Research and implement Cross-site Request Forgery Attack Protections
 - Research and implement Cross-site Scripting Attack Protections
- The Pennsylvania State University State College, PA January 2012 – present
Resident Assistant
- Enforce rules and regulations to ensure the safety and wellbeing of residents
 - Mediate interpersonal problems between residents
 - Develop and coordinate educational programs for residents

SKILLS:	C++	php	Database Design	Symfony	Project Management
	SQL	VBScript	Team building	Leadership	Analyst's Notebook
	HTML	Java	Intermediate German	XSS Protection	CSRF Protection

ACTIVITIES:	Schreyer Honors College Orientation, Mentor	Fall 2011
	Phi Eta Sigma, Scholarship Chair	2011
	Campus Girl Scouts, Webmaster	2010 – present
	Member of Women in IST (WIST)	2010 – present
	Doctor Who Fan Club, Webmaster	2010 – present

HONORS:	Dean's List 2010 - present
	National Merit Scholarship Finalist
	Girl Scout Gold Award Achiever