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I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Tina Mendzigall entitled “An Analysis of Values Conveyed by Fiction in Boys’ Life Magazine, 2002-2006.” I have examined the final electronic copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science, with a major in Communication and Information.

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An Analysis of Values Conveyed by Fiction in *Boys’ Life* Magazine, 2002-2006

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Abstract

Scholars involved in gender research generally advocate the idea that gender subjectivities are based on active social construction and interaction and as such are amenable to change. Notions and values of masculinity therefore are cultural constructs that are reflected and articulated through symbolic systems such as spoken and written language. Fiction narratives in teens’ magazines are one form of textual media content in which these values can be expressed. The purpose of this study was to explore the textual representations of American values of masculinity in 56 contemporary fiction stories of Boys’ Life magazine by conducting a qualitative content analysis. The study used the values of the Scout Law as one definition of masculinity formulated by the Boy Scouts of America, one of the nation’s leading youth organizations and publisher of Boys’ Life magazine. Through close reading and thematic coding, this study revealed, on the one hand, that the values, with two exceptions, are well-reflected in different meanings and contexts and constructed through the use of different literary devices in the narratives. The study also indicated, on the other hand, that the portrayal of these values may lead to a rather narrow definition of a boy’s life and contribute to the limited construction of traditional masculinity. Further, it appeared that social recognition is represented as an important aspect in terms of performing in accordance with the values of the Scout Law. The study discusses implications of these and other findings as well as suggestions for further research.
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1 Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Scholars involved in gender research generally advocate the idea that gender subjectivities are based on active social construction and social interaction and as such are amenable to change (Beall, 1993; Dutro, 2002; Connell, 2000; Bean & Harper, 2007). Throughout the course of this active production people use various resources and strategies available within social settings (Connell, 2000). Berger, Wallis, and Watson (1995) point out that “[t]he formation of gender differences in language – that is, the ways in which categories of the masculine and feminine are defined by and eventually ingrained in language – most often produces a rigid and fictive construction of reality” (p. 3). In this vein, Connell (2000) argues that “masculinity exists impersonally in culture as a subject position in the process of representation, in the structures of language and other symbol systems” (p. 30).

Guided by these overarching assumptions, gender studies have increasingly investigated the influence that mediated gender representations exert on young audiences by proposing appropriate and socially desirable schema of masculinity and femininity. Research on the impact of gender representation and the processing of fictional information has demonstrated powerful effects on its audience. One study, for example, finds that children’s memories of their favorite educational television program are heavily gender stereotyped (Calvert, Kotler, Zehnder, & Shockey, 2003). While much research has focused on the impact of audio-visual gender representations and its impact on young audiences, other studies have shown that even the textual information alone can
alter adult readers’ judgments, beliefs, and attitudes (e.g., Prentice, Gerrig, & Bailis, 1997). It seems justified to assume that this effect is likely to be even stronger in children and adolescents. Experimental studies report how stories can change youngsters’ attitudes and beliefs in relation to gender depending on whether the narratives feature stereotypical or nontraditional characters, roles, and activities (e.g., Trepanier-Street & Romatowski, 1999).

In light of such powerful effects, researchers have increasingly investigated the ways in which gender and gender stereotypes are configured and represented in the media. Influenced by the new feminist movement of the 1970s, gender related research has predominantly focused on concerns about portrayals of women and girls and has only marginally addressed masculinity and the positioning of boys (Stephens, 2002a, Connell, 2000). Findings are primarily based on quantitative content analyses of visual and textual images using a broad range of variables. The most commonly researched variables are gender of the main character or central role, female and male characters in titles and illustrations, and gender of the author. In addition, researchers have investigated the roles and occupations, attributes and personality traits, as well as the use of emotional language. Generally, results indicate an under-representation of female characters and the strong tendency for representing stereotypes, a trend that has not changed to a great degree over time. A potential drawback of studies of quantitative analysis is that they rely on predefined concepts of masculinity and neglect the more subtle ways of gender constructions. In addition, discussion about the potential effects of stereotypical roles on boys and men has been limited.
During the last decade, research on men and masculinities has grown tremendously and studies in various countries worldwide have produced a broad range of diverse ethnographic documentations about the social construction of masculinity (Connell, 2005). Several of the key conclusions of recent studies that are summarized by Connell (2000) seem particularly relevant. First, research has demonstrated that there is no single definition or pattern of masculinity and that therefore it would, in fact, seem more appropriate to speak of ‘masculinities’. Second, these multiple masculinities can often be very complex and even contradictory: “Masculinities are often in tension, within and without” (Connell, 2000, p. 13). Third, since they are actively constructed within a certain social, cultural, and historical context, gender practices are dynamic and changing as abundant evidence reveals. Fourth, for the same reason, masculinities are not only an individual experience but rather they are defined and reshaped collectively and sustained through institutions ranging from rather informal face-to-face interactions to organizational settings such as the military. The latter is an outstanding example of hierarchy and hegemony as a key concept that Connell identifies and that relates to social relations as well as the position of cultural authority (Dutro, 2002). The last theme that Connell denotes as a key conclusion of current research is the idea of men’s bodies as “arenas for the making of gender patterns,” (Connell, 200, p. 12), expressed in various ways such as sports, body culture, and violence.

A majority of the new research on masculinity has originated in the field of education and literacy and been referred to as the ‘boy-turn’ (Weaver-Hightower, 2003). Furthermore, as stated by Stephens (2002a): “Masculinity only recently emerged as a more frequent and urgent theme across the whole range of narrative text types – picture
books, fiction targeting readers of all age groups, and film” (Stephens, 2002a, p. x). Current studies that have examined representations of masculinity in fiction and film aimed at young audiences have employed different methodological approaches. Quantitative studies have examined stereotypical personality traits, types of behavior, characteristics and activities of male characters, and overall findings support previous studies of gender representation. Men and boys are shown being competitive, emotionally disconnected, dominant, and aggressive. Qualitative studies, in contrast, have been able to demonstrate that limited alternative images are offered in stories and novels for children and young adults.

Overall, researchers have chosen samples of literature and media that are targeted toward the general audience of young readers and viewers. No research was found that looks specifically at narratives tailored toward adolescent boys. Particularly, no studies could be located about fiction stories in typical boys’ magazines. Narratives are an important medium in the process of self-formation and narrative fictions are primarily performative (Stephens, 2002a).

They may configure characters and events in ways structured to be meaningful and significant, but they also invite readers to inhabit those structures and treat them as models for understanding behavior in the actual world and as exemplifying desirable or undesirable behaviors (Stephens, 2002a, p. xii).

Classic examples for narratives aimed at young boys are the fiction stories in Boys’ Life magazine, the monthly publication of the Boy Scouts of America. The Boy Scouts of America (BSA) is one of the largest youth organizations in the United States and a national example of a much larger social group network of Boy Scouts that was initially established in England about a century ago. BSA is a character-building agency
that originated within a military setting with the idea that the Scout movement would
cultivate manliness in boys and young men. BSA founder Sir Robert Baden-Powell
(1931) defined this as fostering “the ideals of manliness, courage, endurance, self-
reliance, resourcefulness, self-control, sense of honour and trustworthiness” (p. 28).
While overarching goals of the international Scouting movement are essentially the same
worldwide, the American Scout movement has made slight adaptations according to
American needs.

Nowadays, as the “premier youth development organization” (News Release,
2006) in the United States, the BSA provides a year-round educational program for
community-based organizations in an effort to foster moral strength in boys and young
adults and train them in citizenship and in developing physical, mental and emotional
fitness (Meritbadge.com, 2006; BSA at a Glance, 2006).

In recent years, several controversies have attracted notice to the Boy Scouts of
America, its vision and ideals. Primarily these concerns have pertained to membership
issues including inflated membership numbers and above all membership criteria that
exclude females as well as homosexuals from becoming members of the Boy Scouts of
America. These trends, in addition to the remarkable media interest, public concern and
controversy that questions about boys and men have received lately (Connell, 2000)
provide the background for the present study.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

Building upon a review of existing literature about conceptualizations and
constructions of gender and masculinity, this study explores the textual representations of
American values of masculinity in contemporary fiction stories of *Boys’ Life* magazine. The analysis is guided primarily by one organization’s definition of masculinity: the Boy Scouts of America and its formulation of values of masculinity in the Scout Law. The Boy Scouts of America as one of the nation’s leading youth organizations is the publisher of the monthly magazine *Boys’ Life*.

Several theories and related research suggest that adolescents who are still in their formative years are particularly susceptible to influences of their social environment in general and mass media in particular. Limited representations of masculinity that offer few or no alternatives as to what it means to be male can potentially affect children’s and young adults’ self-concept and sense of identity. Therefore, it seems important to gain insight to and a better understanding of the various ways in which gender is currently constructed and represented in present-day publications aimed at youngsters.

*Boys’ Life* magazine was chosen because it is a well-established monthly publication and the flagship of the Boy Scouts of America, a major boys’ organization. As a character-building agency it is deeply rooted in American culture and has played an important role in shaping several generations of boys and teenagers. Themes and features of the BSA are reflected in *Boys’ Life* magazine although it is designated as a general-interest magazine by BSA (Fact Sheet, n.d.). Given the recent developments in membership issues of the BSA, questions about values of masculinity and ways in which they are reflected are of particular relevance and importance. The present study is an attempt to shed light on these specific issues while at the same time contributing to a broader understanding of constructions of masculinity.
1.3 Implications of the Study

Fox (1993) denotes that “[t]exts are important influences that shape us by reflecting the politics and values of our society” (p. 656). This is true also with regards to traditional gender stereotypes that still persist in contemporary children’s literature (Louie, 2001). It is an important element of society that exerts influence on young minds. Belinda Louie (2001) emphasized the great effort involved for anyone who is trying to explore and challenge well-established cultural norms associated with gender-related aspects because the questioning of values and attitudes regarding gender roles can potentially threaten an individual’s identity and worldview. Therefore, people exhibit the tendency to ignore or neglect any attempt that may cause disturbance to their core identity. Yet, Louie argues, it is crucial to understand and challenge these barriers and difficulties that prevent people from living beyond gender-based expectations of society.

In order to initiate a change it is important to challenge the perpetuation of gender stereotypes in literature aimed at young readers and in those creating it. Various researchers (Fox 1993; Ernst, 1995; St. Pierre, 1999; Bean & Harper, 2007) have called upon those who are considered agents of change, namely teachers, authors, illustrators, publishers, educators, and parents to reduce gender prejudices by deconstructing representations of traditional sex role stereotypes and offering alternative portrayals of femininity and masculinity.

By providing an insightful analysis regarding how masculinity and associated values are reflected in contemporary fiction stories for boys the present study hopes to provide an important contribution to the existing body of knowledge. In addition, results can be of value in particular to anyone composing literature for adolescents and anyone
directly involved in work with and education of children and teenagers. They are important facilitators with the ability to help young minds to examine critically ideas and values that are represented in the media.

Thus, the implications of this study are important and relevant for two general groups of people: those who produce and disseminate literature for children and teenagers such as authors, illustrators, publishers and editors, and those who use literature together with young readers including teachers, librarians, and parents. Publishers and editors, on the one hand, have the ability to develop an active network of authors to encourage alternative and diverse representations of masculinity. Authors themselves, on the other, can be made aware of the gendered aspects within their writing that may reinforce antiquated and detrimental stereotypes of men and boys.

At the same time, the findings of studies such as this one may help by making others who directly interact and share literature with youth more cognizant of gender issues, first and foremost librarians, teachers, and parents. While in the current study the particular area of interest is fiction stories for boys, an argument made by Ernst (1995) about children’s literature in general holds true as well: “An awareness of books that offer girls and boys strong and diverse images can expand their potential rather than limiting options” (p. 75).

1.4 Methodology

To explore the ways in which values of masculinity are constructed and expressed in fiction content for teenage boys, this study uses the definition of values of masculinity formulated in the Scout Law by one of the leading youth organizations, the Boy Scouts of
America, and explores how these values are reflected in the fiction stories of its monthly publication, *Boys’ Life* magazine. This study applies a qualitative approach of attentive close reading and thematic coding using the values of the Scout Law as themes to be coded for. This methodological approach was chosen for the following two reasons.

First, using a qualitative approach of close reading and thematic coding allows understanding textual media content such as these narratives as a meaningful whole and interpreting the individual themes or values with reference to their context (Larsen, 1991; Jensen, 1991). Rather than breaking the text down into quantifiable units, the research goal is to capture manifest, or explicit, and latent, or implicit, meanings of the values (Larsen, 2002). Therefore, the idea is to discover obvious as well as subtle messages about values of masculinity that are conveyed in the narratives.

Second, the overarching idea is not to generalize, but rather to gain an insightful understanding of the different meanings of the values, how these meanings are constructed and how they relate to prevalent notions of masculinity. Exploring values of masculinity in fiction through a qualitative approach seems appropriate because texts are articulations of cultural representations and social relations and identities (Luke, 1995). The meaning of these articulations may vary or change depending on the time, the circumstances, or the individual interpreting them as noted by Taylor (1994). This acknowledges the fact that human individuals are different and “that things mean different things to different people” (Taylor, 1994, p. 266). Therefore, it seems that revealing the meanings and making sense out of them is possible only through the researcher’s roles as the human interpretive subject (Jensen, 2002).
1.5 Organization of the Study

To address the overall research question of how American values of masculinity are portrayed in the fictions stories of *Boys’ Life* magazine, the present study is divided into five chapters. The first chapter gave an introduction to the study and outlined its relevance as well as the reasons for conducting it. The second chapter develops the background for the study by reviewing existing literature and research in relation to the overarching research question of the study. This includes a review of literature related to concepts and representations of gender and masculinity and discussing materials and literature related in particular to the Boy Scouts of America and the publication *Boys’ Life* magazine. Chapter 3 explains in detail the methodological approach that was chosen for the study. The fourth chapter presents the study results; Chapter 5 includes a discussion of the findings and potential implications as well as a discussion of limitations and suggestions for further research.
2 Literature Review

2.1 Influence of Mediated Gender Images

Studies of gender portrayals are based on the underlying assumption that the media, among other sources and experiences within the socialization environment, exert a strong educational influence by providing an understanding of society’s definitions of masculinity and femininity (Ward, Hansbrough, & Walker, 2005). Bean and Harper (2007) argue that narrow and rigid organizations of gender related concepts, particularly with regard to notions of masculinity, can have devastating effects on anyone who feels incapable to enact this fixed frame of gender and sex-role norms.

Drawing on different theoretical frameworks of gender development including social learning theories (e.g., Bussey & Bandura, 1999) cognitive theories (Kohlberg, 1966; Bem, 1981) and social psychological theories of gender (e.g., Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000), several researchers have sought a better understanding of the extent to which media contribute as an important factor in the social development of their audiences.

Typically, television has been deemed the most important medium (Lippa, 2005; Ward et al., 2005) due to its pervasive nature in everyday culture. Thus, many studies have focused on televised gender representations and its potential cognitive and behavioral effects. For example, Calvert, Kotler, Zehnder, and Shockey (2003) found support for a gender-schematic processing model when examining children’s written reports about their favorite educational and informational television programs. The study supports the notion that kids’ memories of such television programs are often gender...
stereotyped and offers surprising insight in terms of program preferences based on lead characters. Yet, data does not support prevailing industry beliefs that boys will not watch programs with female leads (Jordan, 1996 as cited in Calvert et al., 2003). Instead, the authors hypothesize that audience interest as well as character perceptions and preference seem to be more heavily influenced by their actions than by their gender.

In an experimental study about the effect of movie portrayals on audience attitudes about sexual orientation and nontraditional families, Mazur and Emmers-Sommer (2002) found that more favorable attitudes toward nontraditionalism can be generated by films that depict nontraditional family settings, homosexuality and gay parenting as opposed to commonly accepted, traditional nuclear families.

Overall, studies about the effects of gender representation in televised media assume that viewers learn about reality through mass media depictions, especially visual images. Bandura (2002) emphasized that “a vast amount of information about human values, styles of thinking, and behavior patterns is gained from extensive modeling in the symbolic environment of the mass media” (p. 126).

However, researchers also acknowledge the powerful effects that even the written word alone can bear. Diekman and Murnen (2004) point out in their study about gender equality in nonsexist children’s books: “Even though stories may take place in chocolate factories or academies of wizardry, literary adventures educate children about what is expected and valued in the real world” (p. 373). Thus in recent years more academics have devoted their attention to a closer examination of textual representations of masculinity and femininity and the effects on perceptions, attitudes, and behavior of their audiences.
Research has shown that even adult readers incorporate fictional information to a certain extent into real-world knowledge and that narratives oriented toward adults have the ability to penetrate into their readers’ judgments, beliefs, and attitudes even though parts of the stories are palpably fiction-based (Gerrig & Prentice, 1991; Prentice, Gerrig, & Bailis, 1997; Diekman, McDonald, & Gardner, 2000). It can be assumed that this effect is likely to be even more pronounced in children and teenagers. Diekman and Murnen (2004) argue that children have limited cognitive skills to understand and evaluate real-world implications and to effectively dissent information or differentiate between fiction and reality. Ward et al. (2005) note that, in addition, gender learning continues as children enter adolescence when gender knowledge becomes more refined and the salience of gender role norms intensify.

Various experimental studies – conducted in recent years and as early as in the mid-seventies – have successfully demonstrated how stories can change youngsters’ gender-related attitudes and beliefs depending on whether the stories featured stereotypical or egalitarian characters, roles, and activities (Flerx, Fidler, & Rogers, 1976; Scott, 1986; Berg-Cross & Berg-Cross, 1978; Trepanier-Street & Romatowski, 1999). Based on an examination of the influence of selected literature on children’s gender attitudes and thinking regarding occupational roles, Trepanier-Street and Romatowski (1999) recommend that the use of non-stereotypic children’s literature and book-related activities can positively change children’s gender attitudes in general and their attitudes about gender appropriate occupational roles in particular.

Overall, theoretical considerations of gender socialization in combination with findings of studies about media effects suggest that mediated gender portrayals including
textual representations of masculinity and femininity can have a powerful effect in teaching adolescents about desirable values and gender roles. Based on this knowledge, the following sections review the literature that has been published and the studies that have been conducted regarding conceptualizations and constructions of gender in general and masculinity in particular, especially as it relates to media and literary representations aimed at youngsters.

2.2 Social Construction and Representation of Gender

Definitions and Conceptualizations of Gender

One source defines gender as: “Non-technically, a synonym for sex. More specifically, especially in feminist psychology, the behavioral, social and cultural attributes associated with sex” ([Gender], A Dictionary of Psychology, 2006).

Brannon (2002) explains that in past research on the differences between men and women has often referred to using the term sex differences, which is related to the concepts of male and female. It is important to mention, however, that some researchers argue rightly that this dichotomy is not sufficient because it does not account for the many variations of intersexuality in individuals who are born with both male and female traits and characteristics (e.g., Fausto-Sterling, 1993 & 2000). Fausto-Sterling (1993) remarks that this deep commitment of Western culture to the idea of only two sexes is also reflected in its language allowing only for an exclusive denomination as either he or she which entails a variety of social and legal issues including laws about marriage, family, and human intimacy. Fausto-Sterling further contends that such a binary categorization is in defiance of nature because “biologically speaking, there are many
gradations running from female to male; and depending on how one calls the shots, one can argue that along that spectrum lie at least five sexes\textsuperscript{1} – and perhaps even more” (p. 21).

Going along with the “idealized, Platonic, biological world” (Fausto-Sterling, 2000, p. 19) and the generally accepted notion of a dichotomous sex differentiation, it can be stated that, overall, the concepts of male and female are easy to comprehend since both are based on the idea of biological differences. Yet, the term sex differences has been used to a great extent and with varying meaning ranging from chromosomal configuration and reproductive physiology to secondary sex characteristics and behaviors or attributes that are typically associated respectively with each one (Brannon, 2002).

The alternative term gender has been proposed by Rhoda Unger (1979) and is described as a term that relates to the traits and kinds of behavior that are considered typical of women or men. Therefore, gender has little to do with actual biological differences but rather serves as a social label. As such, it includes the characteristics that are culturally ascribed and deemed appropriate according to a person’s biological sex (Brannon, 2002).

Hofstede (1998), who conducted a comprehensive study on cultural dimensions across the subsidiaries of a large multinational corporation in 40 countries, identified Masculinity/Femininity as one important dimension upon which cultures vary in general and with regards to the division of gender roles and gender role socialization in

\textsuperscript{1} Fausto-Sterling (1993) refers to three major subgroups of intersexual individuals: the so-called true hermaphrodites who the author refers to as herms and who possess one testis and one ovary, the male pseudohermaphrodites who the author refers to as merms and who have testes and no ovaries but some aspects of female genitalia; and the female pseudohermaphrodites (ferms) who have ovaries and no testes but some aspects of the male genitalia.
particular. According to Hofstede (1998) “[m]asculinity stands for a society in which men are supposed to be assertive, tough, and focused on material success; women are supposed to be more modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life” (p. 6). In contrast, within a feminine society, expectations for both men and women can be described as being modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life (Hofstede, 1998). Hofstede derived his conclusions based on an analysis of individual’s ratings of the importance of certain work related goals by gender. Results have repeatedly shown that men find ego goals (e.g., advancement, earnings, training) more important whereas women stress social goals (e.g., friendly atmosphere, cooperation) to a greater extent (Hofstede, 1984 & 1998). Hofstede (1998) further denotes that in contrast to biological differences which are universal, social differences are specific to each society and he points out that his dimension is bipolar because the analysis and the differences it helps to explain are based on a country level not an individual level. Differences thus, do not explain psychological but rather anthropoloical facts about a national society. “An individual can be both masculine and feminine at the same time, but what I found is that a country culture is either predominantly one or predominantly the other” (Hofstede, 1998, p. 19). Hofstede’s work and analysis also suggest that notions of gender roles and self-concepts are shaped by the social environment and that “socialization processes are culturally constructed” (Hofstede, 1998, p. 80).

Other researchers, too, have emphasized the idea of a social construction of gender while acknowledging its close association with biological differences. Sherif (1982), for example, defines gender as “a scheme for social categorization of individuals, and every known human society has some gender scheme. Every gender scheme
recognizes biological differences while also creating social differentiations” (Sherif, 1982, p. 376). Sherif further constitutes that gender allows for unequivocal distinction due to the fact that “[g]ender categories are mutually exclusive, in the sense that social membership in one precludes membership in others” (p.376).

Yet another definition of gender has been provided by Spence and Helmreich (1978) who label gender as “the degree to which individuals are aware of and accept their biological sex gender identification” (p. 12). In contrast to the previous definitions, this one emphasizes the idea of an individual’s gender-related self-concept as opposed to perceptions of the individual by others.

Despite the seemingly obvious and logical differentiation between sex and gender, literature and research in the social sciences have used the terms interchangeably and thus, created considerable confusion as pointed out by Gentile (1993). He introduces additional terminology including biologically sex-linked, gender-linked, sex- and gender-linked, as well as sex-correlated. Gentile developed this terminology based on a review of social sciences literature and the ways in which sex and gender have been used. Several of the terms that Gentile proposed include the idea of a causal link between biological and social differences. This essential assumption has caused other academics to strongly reject his definitions (Deaux, 1993; Unger & Crawford, 1993). They argue that there is not enough knowledge about the causality of various sex-linked phenomena in order to clearly distinguish between social and biological characteristics. Therefore, social science researchers and psychologists have tried to distinguish between biological and social differences using the concept of sex and gender (Brannon, 2002).
Unlike the term *sex* that refers to *male* and *female*, the broader and more inclusive term of *gender* refers to the concepts of masculinity and femininity (Kilmartin, 2003). According to Freimuth and Hornstein (1982), this conceptualization into two traditional, dichotomous categories is based on the assumption that biological differences are paralleled by analogical differences on a psychological level. “Thus, the traditional assumption has been that just as individuals are biologically either male or female, psychologically, they are either masculine or feminine” (Freimuth & Hornstein, 1982, p. 516).

In a similar manner, the first measurement scales and techniques that psychologists have developed and used until the 1970s, have reflected the dichotomous thinking in terms of gender. One of the first measurement tests to be developed and used was the Lewis Terman and Catherine Cox Miles’ (1936 as cited in Lewin, 1984a) Attitude Interest Analysis Survey with 456 items that yielded masculinity-femininity scores on a single dimension with strong masculinity on one end and strong femininity on the other. It is interesting to note that scores were increasingly positive toward the masculine side and increasingly negative toward the feminine side. While this test has been heavily criticized and considered invalid for measuring nothing other than the distinction between men and women, it influenced subsequent measurement tests and scales such as the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) in 1940 (Brannon, 2002). The latter was also a unipolar model and developed in an attempt to measure homosexual tendencies. This scale is not further discussed at this point due to its many flaws, the most concussive being the fact that the femininity dimension was validated on a criterion group of only 13 homosexual men (Lewin, 1984b).
Another one-dimensional approach, the Parsons-Bales MF Paradigm, was based on the idea of conceptualizing masculinity and femininity in terms of instrumental (masculine) and expressive (feminine) traits (Lewin, 1984b). Based on an analysis of families around the world, the researchers concluded that men fulfill the role of autonomous- and achievement-oriented leaders while women are seen in a nurturing and supportive role (Brannon, 2002). Brim and Koch tried to test this paradigm to define masculinity and femininity based on an analysis of 384 five- and six-year olds (Lewin, 1984b). The researchers assessed 58 dependent variables using personality trait ratings by teachers and classified 31 kinds of behavior as either expressive or instrumental. Table 1 summarizes the specific traits that were associated with each gender.

Again, it seems worth mentioning that the list of feminine (expressive) traits is comprised of a lot more negative formulations of personality traits and kinds of behavior that describe what is not considered feminine as opposed to what is regarded feminine.

Subsequent testing of the traits, however, yielded surprising results, particularly among girls with brothers who appeared “‘to be masculine to a greater degree than do any of the males themselves’ (…)[while at the same time] ‘all the girls seem to be more feminine than the boys are masculine; indeed the major characteristics of the boys is to be anti-feminine, not masculine’” (Brim, 1958, p. 13 as cited in Lewin, 1984b, p. 196).

Even though various unipolar or one-dimensional models of masculinity and femininity had limited validity and experiments demonstrated that masculine and feminine traits were present in both sexes, this approach of measuring them was popular until the 1970s (Brannon, 2002).
### Table 1 Instrumental and Expressive Traits According to the Parsons-Bales Paradigm

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instrumental (Masculine) Traits</th>
<th>Expressive (Feminine) Traits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Tenacity</td>
<td>• Not angry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Aggressiveness</td>
<td>• Not quarrelsome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Curiosity</td>
<td>• Not revengeful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ambition</td>
<td>• Not teasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Planfulness</td>
<td>• Not extrapunitive (not angry at others)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Not dawdling or procrastinating</td>
<td>• Not insisting on rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Responsibleness</td>
<td>• No exhibitionism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Originality</td>
<td>• Not uncooperative with group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Competitiveness</td>
<td>• Affectionate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Not wavering in decisions</td>
<td>• Obedient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Self-confidence</td>
<td>• Not upset by defeat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Responds to sympathy and approval from adults</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Not jealous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Speedy recovery from emotional disturbance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Cheerful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Kind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Friendly to adults and to children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Not negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Not tattling</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Lewin, 1984b
In response, more progressive conceptualizations of gender were proposed in the 1970s and 1980s. Most well-known is Sandra Lipsitz Bem’s (1981) Sex Role Inventory that includes the concept of androgyny, taking into account that individuals of both sexes can exhibit stereotypical feminine as well as masculine traits. Thus, Bem’s construct is based on a two-dimensional approach and individuals can score high or low on each scale, one for masculinity and the other for femininity. The BSRI includes 60 items that individuals rate on a 7-point Likert scale according to how well each trait or characteristic applies to themselves. The items are divided into 20 stereotypical masculine traits, 20 traditionally feminine personality traits, as well as 20 items that serve as fillers and as a measure of social desirability response. Individuals that score high of the masculine scale and low on the feminine scale are logically considered to occupy a masculine sex role, whereas individuals that score high on the femininity scale and low on the masculinity scale are considered feminine. Those who score high on both scales are labeled “androgynous” and those who score low on both are labeled “undifferentiated” (Bem, 1981, p. 9).

While such psychological concepts of gender are a lot more progressive than some of the earlier measures, they still rely on essentially the same feminine and masculine sex role stereotypes that have initially been identified and only assign a new label to males and females that do not fit into the existing categories.

Sex role stereotypes, according to Pleck (1981), can be defined as “widely shared descriptive beliefs about what the sexes actually are” (p. 11). Pleck further defines sex role norms as “widely shared prescriptive beliefs about what the sexes ideally should be” (Pleck, 1981, p. 11). Therefore, sex roles as the overarching concept can be identified as
being comprised of a set of traits, characteristics and behavior that is commonly considered typical (stereotypes) or desirable (norms) of males or females. In addition to these concepts that refer to societal ideas of gender, Pleck introduces two other concepts, *sex typing* and *sex role identity*, that take into account the individual's point of view, or a person’s self-image. Thus, sex typing “refers to the actual characteristics of a particular individual along sex role related dimensions (....) [and] is a first-person characteristic (‘I am ...’)” and “[s]ex role identity is a hypothetical psychological structure by which, it is thought, an individual psychologically ‘validates’ or ‘affirms’ his or her sex group” (Pleck, 1981, pp. 11-12).

Some researchers favor the idea of individual perceptions of gender-related characteristics to allow for more flexibility as opposed to rigid frameworks that have been used to develop tests of masculinity and femininity (MF tests), regardless of whether they were based on a unidimensional or a bipolar approach. Since past MF tests have not been convincing in terms of validity, Lewin (1984b) proposes to conceptualize masculinity and femininity as “the gender-relevant aspects of a person’s self-concept or self-image” (pp. 199-200). The author rejects existing MF schemas and self-report MF tests for reflecting obsolete core values of Victorian sex role schema. Terms such as *expressive* or *instrumental* seem to be “euphemisms for male dominance and female subordination” (Lewin, 1984b, p.198). In addition, Lewin cites interesting research that, using traditional Victorian MF schema, has shown that high scores of masculinity in males, are positively correlated with anxiety, proneness to guilt, neuroticism and low self-acceptance and self-assurance, whereas less sex typing was correlated with higher degrees of creativity and intelligence in both sexes (Magnus, 1980 as cited in Lewin...
Lewin (1984) concludes: “Sixty years of MF testing have primarily demonstrated what femininity and masculinity are not; they are not two sets of interests and traits” (p. 200).

Based on this review of definitions and conceptualizations of gender, the following section investigates the various ways in which the representation of gender in the media, particularly in literature, has been studied.

**Mediated Portrayals and Representations of Gender**

Research on gender bias became popular in the early 1970s as a result of the women’s movement (Louie, 2001). The focus for the following literature review was on identifying studies that have researched the representation of gender in literature aimed at children and teenagers. Particular emphasis was placed on the textual representation of gender in children’s literature. Studies that looked at gender portrayals and images in fictional adult literature were included as well because they were evaluated as another important frame of reference for the current study. In addition, studies of gender representation in non-textual media that is fiction-based, for example, video games or cartoons, were reviewed.

Research has employed various methodological approaches. However, a majority of previous studies has been based on quantitative content analysis. Clark (2002) explains this phenomenon with a scholarly training that has almost exclusive been dedicated to positivist, statistical methodologies that have instilled the “belief that the fastest way to be taken seriously is through the presentation of systematic counts” (p. 290). In addition,
Clark notes that “[t]he pressures to quantify, thereby to generalize, in the social sciences have been extraordinary” (Clark, 2002, p. 290).

Quantitative studies have measured gender representation in two different ways. These are studies of visual representations and studies of textual representation of gender. Most often, the reports included counts and ratios of the number of female to male characters of children, adults, humans, or animals in either titles, central roles, or illustrations (e.g., Collins, Ingoldsby, & Dellmann, 1984; Gooden & Gooden, 2001; Kortenhaus & Demarest, 1993; Grauerholz & Pescosolido, 1989).

In addition, several other studies have examined gender differences based on the prevalence and frequency of other variables including physical appearance and activities (Jackson & Gee, 2005; Children Now Report, 2001); the use of household and production artifacts (Crabb & Bielawski, 1994); settings, activities, roles and occupations (Hamilton, Anderson, Broaddus, & Young, 2006; Peirce, 1997); feminine and masculine personality traits according to the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI) (Witt, 1997); dependence and occupational status (Peirce, 1993); characters’ use of emotional language (Tepper, & Cassidy, 1999); segregated work and family roles, status inequality, gender segregation, traditional idealizations and unequal representation (Diekman & Murnen, 2004).

In this context, methodology and important findings of these and other studies and literature are reviewed and discussed in more detail, with particular regard to the literature that deals with the textual representation of gender, before looking specifically at conceptualizations and representations of masculinity in the subsequent section.

The first group of studies reviewed regarding gender portrayals in children’s literature has primarily focused on the quantitative representation of male and female
characters. Collins, Ingoldsby, and Dellmann (1984) provide a follow-up assessment of a study that was conducted over a decade earlier by Weitzman, Eifler, Hokada, and Ross (1972) with the goal to evaluate sex-role stereotyping in young children’s literature. Collins et al. propose that changes toward more equality have occurred during that time, which seems plausible given the fact that the 1970s witnessed tremendous changes in gender roles due to the rise of the women’s movement. The authors report results from a content analysis of 16 Caldecott\textsuperscript{2} picture books and runners-up that received the award between 1979 and 1982. The variables under investigation were 17 factors including the number and ratio of female to male characters in titles, central roles, and pictures as well as role function, indoor/outdoor activities, major theme, types of occupation, and women in traditional and nontraditional roles.

Results indicate three major findings. First there was a substantial decrease of gender differences compared to the Weitzman study that is reflected by more equality in terms of the ratio of male and female characters. Second, women in central roles but not in other roles are shown in nontraditional characteristics. The third and most interesting finding is the fact that when analyzed by the author’s sex, female writers’ stories appear more sexist than those of male authors.

Similar results of more evenly distributed gender depictions regarding female and male characters in central roles, titles, and pictures are reported in a later study by Kortenhaus and Demarest (1993). The content analysis of 125 randomly selected, non-award picture books published between 1940 and 1980 further indicates that roles and

\textsuperscript{2} “The Caldecott Medal was named in honor of nineteenth-century English illustrator Randolph Caldecott. It is awarded annually by the Association for Library Service to Children, a division of the American Library Association, to the artist of the most distinguished American picture book for children.” (American Library Association ALA, 2006)
activities of characters have changed in more subtle ways with each gender being portrayed in nontraditional activities and roles. Overall, however, boys are still characterized far more often as instrumental and independent as opposed to girls who appear more often than not as passive, dependent and nurturing.

Yet another study by Gooden and Gooden (2001) confirms these tendencies toward a slight decrease of gender stereotypes but highlights that stereotypes, particularly of females, are still significant and that males still dominate children’s literature. Results are based on a content analysis of 83 Notable Books for Children3 from 1995 through 1999. The primary focus of the analysis in the study is on counts of males and females in humans or animal, main characters, titles, and illustrations. While female representation has greatly improved since the 1970s and nontraditional characteristics and roles have emerged for both males and females, the study concludes that gender stereotypes are still prevalent in children’s literature.

Grauerholz and Pescosolido (1989) have explored trends over time in the presence and centrality of males and females in American children’s literature. An impressive sample of 2,216 books out of the Children’s Catalog4 was drawn from the time frame of 1900 through 1984. Variables examined include gender in titles, gender and type (adult, human, and child, animal, or other) in central role character, and gender of author. The overarching finding of the study is that the imbalance in the depiction of gender varied during the referenced period of time. Trends in visibility and centrality of

3 Notable Books for Children is a designation provided by the American Library Association’s website providing teachers, librarians, and parents outstanding quality books for young children (Gooden & Gooden, 2001)

4 According to the authors of the study one of the most extensive listings of available children’s books (Grauerholz & Pescosolido, 1989).
female characters followed an inverted U-shaped curve with earlier and later decades showing more balanced representations in terms of the number of males and females in titles and central roles. In stories involving solely adults or animal characters, males became more prominent over time.

Another group of studies using quantitative content analysis have a stronger focus on other variables such as activities and physical appearance. Jackson and Gee (2005) investigated the availability of diverse representations of men, women, and children in a sample of 100 early school readers used in New Zealand throughout five decades from 1950 through 2000. Both visuals and texts are examined. Physical appearance is measured in terms of posture, gesture, clothing, and adornment while activities of adults and children include tasks, games and recreational pursuits. The authors assess that little change has occurred over time and that traditional femininity and masculinity continue to be reinforced. Particularly with regards to boys, they find that ideals of traditional masculinity such as the adventurer, the sportsman, and the game player are reflected.

This general notion of masculinity is supported in findings of the Children Now report (2001) about gender portrayals in video games. The authors content analyze the 10 top-selling games created for each of the six available video game consoles. Males dominate accounting for the majority of player-controlled characters as well as the majority of characters overall and they predominantly depict competitors as opposed to female characters are more likely to be participants, bystanders or props. In addition, visuals of males and females are often exaggerated showing hyper-muscularized men and hyper-sexualized women. Males often exhibit highly aggressive behavior, are more likely
than females to be perpetrators of violence without the use of weapons, and seem more likely to be unaffected by violence against them.

Visuals also play a crucial role in Crabb and Bielawski’s (1994) analysis of illustrations in 220 Caldecott award and honors books published between 1937 and 1989. The researchers study the use of material culture – household, personal, and production artifacts – by gender. As hypothesized, the authors find evidence that there is no change over time in the proportions of females using household and production artifacts and that more female characters than males are shown using household artifacts. To their surprise though, they find increasing proportions of males using household artifacts. The authors speculate that this may be accounted for by changes in illustrators’ perceptions regarding activities of males in the household but not regarding the types of artifacts appropriate for women.

Gender differences become not only apparent in visual representations, but also in verbal expressions, either explicitly or implicitly through the character in the story or the narrator. Tepper and Cassidy (1999) explore this idea more closely in an analysis of the use of emotional language in a sample of 196 books that were identified earlier in a survey as being read by young audiences. Emotional words that are expressed, described, or implied are assigned to 11 emotional word categories including interest/excitement, enjoyment/joy, surprise/astonishment, anger, sadness, disgust/contempt, shyness, guilt/conscience/morality, shame, like/love. Once again, males prove to be dominant in overall presentation but contrary to the expectation males and females are associated with equal amounts of emotional language and no differences are found in the types of emotional language used for either one.
Witt (1997) determines how males and females are portrayed by analyzing counts of male and female characters written about, in illustrations, biographies and authors’ gender using a sample of 16 third-grade basal readers. In addition she looks specifically at the prevalence of personality traits according to the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI). According to the analysis, the only area in which females outnumber males is authorship. Contrary to an earlier study of Collins, Ingoldsby, and Dellmann (1984), the researcher finds that female authors are more likely to present a balanced view in terms of proportions of males and females as well as in terms of the personality traits that each character exhibits. Individuals represented possess both masculine and feminine traits. In contrast, male authors almost exclusively portray males and typical masculine experience and rarely present androgynous males.

A second study that applies the BSRI and a range of additional variables is Diekman and Murnen’s (2004) content analysis of books that were previously evaluated by researchers as being sexist or nonsexist. The authors also look for evidence of gender segregation, the traditional feminine ideal, unequal representation, social role and status. This study seems particularly interesting given the fact that this is the only known study of gender representation in books that were already identified as being sexist or nonsexist. Thus, a direct comparison would allow for better understanding of the differences in gender biased and egalitarian literature. Unfortunately though, the authors have to conclude that even designated nonsexist books provide very rigid and narrow views of gender equality. Nontraditional representation occurs only in female characters but not in males. While women are occasionally portrayed to have adopted male-
stereotypic roles and characteristics to some extent, representations of male characters still remain as stereotypic as known from previous studies.

The most recent research of gender representation in children’s literature that was reviewed for the present study is Hamilton, Anderson, Broaddus, and Young’s (2006) content analysis of 200 books comprised of the top-selling books of the year 2001 and a 7-year sample of Caldecott award-winning books (1995 – 2001). Building on previous studies and the wide range of variables under investigation, the researchers assess gender bias based on visual and textual gender portrayals of male and female human and animal characters as well as depicted activities, settings, and occupations. They state that sexism continues to exist not only with regards to the proportions of males and females but also in terms of stereotypical activities, settings, and occupations with females being shown more often indoors, nurturing, and performing non-paid work. Few differences are found between Caldecott and top-selling books. The authors evaluate that picture books reinforce the idea of boys and men being more important and interesting than girls and women. Unfortunately, such a premature statement disregards the question of potential detrimental effects that traditional masculine ideals of power and dominance can have on boys and men who themselves feel unwilling or incapable to conform to gendered norms of society.

Two studies located during the review of the literature seem of particular interest for the purpose of the present study. Both pertain to the representation of gender specifically in fiction stories of magazines. In 1997, Peirce (1997) conducted a content analysis of 125 randomly selected fiction stories of seven national women’s magazines published throughout the first half of the 1990s. Guided by the assumption that gender-
role expectations are socially constructed and transmitted by various societal forces including the media, Peirce examines a long list of characteristics and roles of the main character in each story. Variables include attributes (e.g., age, marital status, education), occupation (requiring high or low education, commanding high or low salary), and dependence. Dependence is measured using the variables of occupation and problem solving (by the main character or by someone else). Results indicate that the majority of main characters tend to be attractive, single, white, middle-class Americans who are younger than 45 and live in the city, has either no child or up to two and is college-educated. While most of the characters have jobs or careers, occupations tend to be stereotypically assigned by gender. Most notably in the analysis is the fact that less than half of the female main characters are able to solve their own problems, implying dependency on others “as the norm and not the exception” (Peirce, 1997, p. 590).

Overall, Peirce concludes, stereotypical representations of the past are continually reinforced. While other research has suggested a move away from romance as the goal and the problem, this idea is still predominant particularly in two magazines, *Good Housekeeping* and *Cosmopolitan*. In contrast, personal fulfillment is not truly demonstrated.

A second study conducted earlier by the same author (Peirce, 1993) deals with socialization messages in 104 fiction stories of the teenage-girl magazines *Teen* and *Seventeen*. The two concepts here are, again, occupational status and dependence. Peirce justifies the use of these construct with their prominence in women’s magazine research and their importance in gender role socialization. A list of stereotypical, non-stereotypical, and neutral occupations was obtained through ratings of occupations as
typically feminine, typically masculine, or neutral by 30 undergraduate journalism students. Dependence is measured by two variables: dependence on others for identity or survival as reflected in problem solving by the main character or by others and dependence in terms of conflicts (boyfriend, family, or friend).

Findings reveal that very few of the stories offer nontraditional socialization messages for teenage girls. In more than half of the stories the female main character depended on someone else for solving of her own problems and about half of the conflicts are about relationships with boys. In a similar manner, occupational roles tend to reinforce exiting stereotypes of females. The author therefore calls for more balanced, nontraditional messages in fiction stories to represent to teenage girls “that there are options, that women are not confined to a few limited roles, and that while there are still occupations dominated by one gender or the other, there are few occupations that are the exclusive province of only half the population” (Peirce, 1993, p. 67). With regards to this study, it is suggested that statements such as this should hold true for both sexes.

The previous studies have all focused on actual characters or individuals, their gender, behavior, roles, and attributes. Other academics, for example Stephens (1996), have suggested investigating gender from a different, more qualitative perspective using narrative discourse and story elements. Stephens tries to explore examples of works in which the writer self-consciously considers gender-issues and recognizes that these are linked to the literature genre. The author analyzes examples from four different works for concepts such as the framing situation (e.g., the operation of cause-and-effect and the movement toward closure); the representation of relations between characters, actions, and outcomes (point of view, focalization); effects of intertextuality and the subject
position that is constructed for implied readers. Stephens argues that this better corresponds to the notion that reading and understanding a text is a result of both the actual discourse within it as well as prior knowledge and schemata the reader has acquired and through interactions within society and uses when processing the information given. The author defines schemata according to Rumelhart (1980, p. 34 as cited in Stephens, 1996) as “the concepts which underlie objects, situations, events, sequences of events, actions, sequences of actions, character types, patterns of behavior, participant interactions and narrative closure” (p. 17). Therefore, it is not sufficient to look only at the gender of story participants, what they like and do, and what happens to them. In conclusion, Stephens finds that the four books demonstrate varying degrees of being concerned with positive models for female and male readers of children’s literature and that potential problems arise if the attempt is made to modify conventional gender roles but no appropriate narrative discourse strategies are employed that allow for recognizable versions of the society we know.

Based on similar ideas about the importance of narrative elements and techniques, Luke (1996) offers a theoretical perspective reading gender semiotically. While her discussion is primarily based on semiotic analysis of audio-visual texts, the basic ideas of semiotics can be equally well applied to other forms of narrative content because according to the author the two main concepts of semiotics are: “1) all meaning is structured in opposition [e.g., male versus female], and 2) the sign always signifies something else” (Luke, 1996, p. 180). In this vein, certain narrative elements such as the plot, the character(s), the language, or the setting can mirror femininity and masculinity. For example, femininity with regards to plot and language can be reflected in open-ended
and multiple plots oriented at problem solving, as well as through the use of passive voice, supportive and questioning language, conversation and dialogue. In contrast, masculinity can be constructed by the use of closed and singular plots aimed problem-resolution as well as by assertive and authoritative language in active voice as well as monologues and commands. Table 2 summarizes the differences in narrative elements for representing masculinity and femininity.

**Summary of Representations of Gender in the Media**

Most studies that have been conducted regarding the representation of gender differences over the last decades, have originated in literacy and educational research and focused on quantitative content analysis. Table 3 summarizes key findings for each study reviewed.

Overall approaches of previous studies indicate that there is a broad range of aspects that can be looked at when studying gender portrayals, beginning with the overall decision of whether to study visual or textual representations.

**Table 2 Narrative Elements That Signify Meaning in Terms of Masculinity and Femininity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Feminine</th>
<th>Masculine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Plot</strong></td>
<td>Open-ended &amp; multiple plots; Problem-solving</td>
<td>Closed and singular plots; Problem-resolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Character</strong></td>
<td>Multiple characters; Relationality, social network</td>
<td>Single character; Goal-oriented action hero</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language</strong></td>
<td>Dialogue, conversation Supportive &amp; questioning Passive voice</td>
<td>Monologue, commands; Assertive &amp; authoritative; Active voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Setting</strong></td>
<td>Inside</td>
<td>Outside</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 Summary of Mediated Gender Representations (in chronological order)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Variables Measured</th>
<th>Key Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Collins, Ingoldsby, & Dellmann | 1984 | Content analysis: follow-up of an earlier study conducted by Weitzman, Eifler, Hokada, & Ross (1972) | 16 Caldecott picture books and runners-up from 1979-1982               | Males and females in titles, central roles, and pictures                                                      | • Male and female differences have decreased substantially toward more sexual equality compared to the Weitzman et al. (1972) study  
• Women in central roles appear to take on nontraditional characteristics  
• Female authors appear to be more sexist than male authors                                                                 |
| Grauerholz & Pescosolido     | 1989 | Content analysis                            | 2,216 books published in the U.S. from 1900 – 1984 and listed in the *Children’s Catalog* (American Library Association) | Males and females in the title; gender and type (adult, child, human, animal, other) of central role character; gender of author | • Imbalance in depiction of gender varies through the century  
• Trend in visibility and centrality of females followed an inverted U-shaped curve with earlier and later decades showing more balance in number of males and females in titles  
• In stories involving only adults or animal characters, males have become more prominent over time                                                                 |
| Kortenhaus & Demarest        | 1993 | Content analysis                            | 125 nonaward picture books and 25 Caldecott winners or runners-up published from 1940 – 1980 | Males and females in titles, central roles, pictures; Male and female animals; Major activities of central character | • More even distribution of depiction of females and males when comparing to previous studies  
• Roles played have changed in a more subtle way  
• Overall, boys still characterized far more often as instrumental and independent vs. girls being portrayed more passive, dependent and nurturing                                                                 |
Table 3 continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Variables Measured</th>
<th>Key Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peirce</td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Content analysis</td>
<td>104 fiction stories in Teen and Seventeen magazines from 1987 to 1991</td>
<td>Gender by dependence and by occupational status</td>
<td>• Few of the stories offer nontraditional socialization messages for teenage girls: in more than half the main character does not actively and independently solve her own problems; almost half of the conflicts about relationships with boys; stereotypical occupational portrays</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Crabb & Bielawski | 1994 | Content analysis| 220 Caldecott award and honors books published between 1937 – 1989      | Male and female characters in illustrations using artifacts (household, personal, production) | • More female characters using household artifacts and more male characters using nondomestic production artifacts  
  • No change over time in proportions of females using household and production artifacts  
  • Unexpectedly, increasing proportions of male characters using household artifacts over time |
  • Problems still arise when authors attempt to modify conventional gender roles within recognizable versions of society and do not employ appropriate narrative discourse strategies  
  • Two of the novels demonstrate self-reflexive awareness of some ways in which genres can be radically gendered but do not offer solutions |
Table 3 continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Variables Measured</th>
<th>Key Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Witt      | 1997 | Content Analysis | 16 third-grade-level basal readers from six publishers | Counts of all male and female characters written about; Individual counts of children, adults, illustrations, biographies, and authors by gender; Personality traits (BSRI) | • Male characters outnumber females  
• Authorship only area in which females outnumber males  
• Female authors more likely to evenly represent male and female characters and to present a balanced view of each individual character possessing both feminine and masculine traits  
• Male authors focus almost exclusively on portrayal of males and masculine experience and rarely present androgynous males |
| Peirce    | 1997 | Content analysis | Random sample of 125 stories with female main characters from seven national women’s magazines (*Ladies’ Home Journal, Good Housekeeping, Cosmopolitan, McCall’s, Mademoiselle*) From 1990 - 1995 | Roles; attributes, occupations of main character | • Most main characters are attractive, single, white Americans younger than 45, living in the city, no child or up to two, middle class, college-educated, having careers or jobs  
• Less than half are able to solve their own problems  
• Occupations are stereotypically assigned by gender  
• Traditional representations as found in the past |
### Table 3 continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Variables Measured</th>
<th>Key Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Tepper & Cassidy   | 1999 | Content Analysis              | 196 books identified by Cassidy et al. (in press) in a survey of children’s book reading | Gender prevalence in titles, pictures, and central roles; 11 emotions (verbally expressed or implied) | - Males had higher prevalence of overall representation  
- Contrary to expectations, males and females associated with equal amounts of emotional language  
- No differences in types of emotional words of male/female characters |
| Gooden & Gooden    | 2001 | Content analysis: update of LaDow’s (1976) study | 83 Notable Children’s Books (American Library Association) from 1995-1999 | Male and female humans and animals in main characters, illustrations, and titles       | - Prevalence of gender stereotypes has decreased slightly but stereotypes of females still significant and males still dominate children’s literature  
- Contrary to expectation, males appear alone more often than females in illustrations  
- Emergence of nontraditional characteristics and roles for both males and females |
| Children Now Report| 2001 | Document analysis             | Total of 60 video games: the 10 top-selling games created for each of six video game consoles available in the U.S. | Male and female populations overall, in specific roles (player-controlled, competitors, bystanders/props), violent behavior, physical appearance | - Females account for only a minority of characters in video games and less likely to be player-controlled  
- Male characters predominantly competitors, female player-controlled characters more likely to be participants  
- Male characters often hyper-muscularized and females hyper-sexualized (often accentuated by clothing)  
- Males highly aggressive and more likely to perpetrate violence without the use of weapons; males more likely to be unaffected by violence |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Variables Measured</th>
<th>Key Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Diekman & Murnen                 | 2004 | Content Analysis     | 20 books randomly selected mid-elementary-level novels classified as sexist (10) or nonsexist (10) (compiled by the authors) | Personality characteristics (BSRI); social roles; status; gender segregation; traditional feminine ideal; unequal representation; open-ended questions | • Even nonsexist books provide narrow vision of gender equality  
• Nonsexist books more likely to portray female characters with male-stereotypic characteristics and roles, but both types of books similarly showed female-stereotypic personalities, domestic chores, and leisure activities  
• Male characters in nonsexist books are not portrayed having adopted aspects of the feminine gender role |
| Jackson & Gee                    | 2005 | Content analysis     | 100 early school readers used in New Zealand schools across five decades from 1950 – 2000 | Physical appearance (posture, gesture, clothing, adornment); activities of adults and children (tasks, games, recreational pursuits) | • Relatively little change across time regarding diverse representation of men, women, and children: reinforcement of traditional femininity (nurturing) and masculinity (active: paid work, outdoor activities)  
• Boys reflect ideals of traditional masculinity: adventurers, sportmen, game players  
• Representation of girls more complex and even contradictory but markers of traditional femininity (long hair, dresses, posture) remain |
| Hamilton, Anderson, Broaddus, & Young | 2006 | Content analysis     | 200 top selling books from 2001 & a 7-year sample of 30 Caldecott award-winning books 1995-2001 | Males & females in visuals and texts as humans, animals, or other (main characters, titles, etc.); activities & settings; occupations | • Male characters outnumber females  
• Sexism continues to persist: Stereotypical activities & settings (nurturing, indoors), and occupations (nonpaid) still prevalent in representation of females  
• Few differences between Caldecott award books and other books |
Despite this variety in the variables that have been examined, the majority of studies have focused on simple counts of males and females in pictures and various roles including titles, main characters, and authorship. In addition, with the exception of Stephen’s (1996) study, researchers have generally relied on predefined concepts to examine gender portrayals and draw conclusions regarding the potential impact. This neglects the more subtle ways in which gender can be constructed and negotiated. Overall results, it has been suggested that, while slight changes toward more egalitarian representations have become visible over time, traditional stereotypes continue to be reinforced, particularly in terms of representation of males. Rarely, has research found that males are associated, at least to some degree, with nontraditional activities. The only exception to this general development is the study conducted by Crabb and Bielawski (1994). More often, the change, if any, has occurred in representations of women and girls who, over time, have exhibited greater tendencies for more diverse, nontraditional roles (e.g., Collins, Ingoldsby, & Dellmann, 1984; Diekman & Murnen, 2004) or even contradictory portrayals (e.g., Jackson & Gee, 2005).

The fact that many studies have limited their discussion of findings to the effects that gender representations have on girls and women indicates that there is a great need for closer and critical examination of representations of masculinity in media aimed at children and teenagers, especially if it is aimed particularly at the boys as the target group. Unrealistic, stereotypic, and distorted portrayals can have equally detrimental effects on adolescent boys and men.
The next step in this study is to review previous studies that investigated the ways in which masculinity in particular has been conceptualized and how it has been constructed in media and particularly literary texts aimed at children and teenagers.

### 2.3 Social Construction and Representation of Masculinity

The previous section has focused on a review of the literature about representations of gender in general. It has identified important findings regarding gendered aspects in the media and in literature such as social and professional roles, activities, types of behavior, personality traits, and attributes. The ‘boy turn’ (Weaver-Hightower, 2003) in gender research and literacy education has produced a number of studies that examine in particular reconfigurations of masculinity in literature and film aimed at youth. Before reviewing selected studies, this section introduces various definitions and conceptualization that have been offered for the term “masculinity”.

**Definitions and Conceptualizations of Masculinity**

The rise of women’s and men’s movements over the past decades (Wood, 2003) and the critical gaze at gender representations has produced many written works on definitions and conceptualizations of masculinity. Berger, Wallis, and Watson (1995) comment:

Masculinity, the asymmetrical pendant to the more critically investigated femininity, is a vexed term, variously inflected, multiply defined, not limited to straightforward descriptions of maleness. (...) the category of “masculinity” should be seen as always ambivalent, always complicated, always dependent on the exigencies of personal and institutional power. (pp. 2-3).
Thus, no unifying explanation can be offered. However, this section gathers selected definitions and concepts to provide a basis and better understanding for the subsequent discussion of constructions of masculinity in literature and the media.

Several researchers have pointed out the inherent social relation as the principal dimension in which the concept is organized, that is, that masculinity only exists in contrast with femininity (e.g., Connell, 2000 and 2005). In explaining the underlying reasons for this phenomenon, Connell (2000) emphasizes the cultural component of notions of masculinity:

A strong cultural opposition between masculine and feminine is characteristic of patriarchal gender orders, commonly expressed in culture as dichotomies and negations. Hegemonic masculinity is thus often defined negatively, as the opposite of femininity. Subordinated masculinities are symbolically assimilated to femininity (e.g. abuse of ‘sissies’, ‘nancy boys’) (p. 31).

Thus, one way of explaining masculinity is by proscriptive norms (Kilmartin, 2000). Proscriptive norms are descriptions of what a man is not in terms of characteristics or activities and kinds of behavior a man or a boy does not exhibit, for example, crying, expressing feelings other than anger, performing “women’s work”, backing down from confrontations and conflicts, asking for help, or getting emotionally or physically too close to other men or boys (Kilmartin, 2000). In contrast, masculinity can also be described in terms of traits and attributes a ‘real man’ is generally expected to have. Among other traits, Kilmartin (2000) mentions being strong, tough, hardworking, aggressive, dominant, and heterosexual. Stereotypical personality traits are also an essential part of Bem’s (1981) Sex Role Inventory which was introduced in the previous section about conceptualizations of gender. Initially, the original form included 20
adjectives indicative of traditional masculinity (e.g., assertive, dominant, independent etc.). As a refinement, the short form of the BSRI includes only 10 items of the initial pool of 20 adjectives. The other ten items were discarded after further statistical analysis because they yielded the lowest item-total correlations (Bem, 1981). Table 4 represents all attributes of the short and the long form of the BSRI in alphabetical order. Because masculinity is often defined as a relational construct, the list of feminine personality traits is provided in the table as well as a frame of reference.

Often, men are also seen as fulfilling stereotypical roles such as the athlete, the father, the professional, the working man, the husband, the buddy, the jet-set playboy, or the great leader, the football player, the Don Juan, or the strong, simple working man (Kilmartin, 2000; Brannon, 1985). Brannon (1985) argues in his essay about American male sex roles that there are essentially four overarching themes underlying and uniting the various mainstream images. The first theme can be summarized under the term antifemininity and refers to the idea that men and boys are supposed to avoid anything that could be considered feminine, whether it is certain traits and characteristics, hobbies or interests, particularly anything that creates the impression of expressing feelings or vulnerability. Brannon (1985) calls this the “No Sissy Stuff dimension” (p. 306). The second dimension pertains to the ideals of status, achievement and success, especially in terms of having those recognized and admired by the social environment. Brannon refers to it as “The Big Wheel dimension” (p. 306).
### Table 4 Masculine and Feminine Personality Traits of the Bem Sex Role Inventory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masculinity</th>
<th>Femininity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Short Form Items</strong></td>
<td><strong>Short Form Items</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggressive</td>
<td>Gentle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assertive</td>
<td>Tender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defends own beliefs</td>
<td>Compassionate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominant</td>
<td>Warm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forceful</td>
<td>Sympathetic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has leadership abilities</td>
<td>Sensitive to the needs of others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>Eager to soothe hurt feelings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong personality</td>
<td>Understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willing to take a stand</td>
<td>Affectionate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willing to take risks</td>
<td>Loves children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Long Form Items</strong></td>
<td><strong>Long Form Items</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-reliant</td>
<td>Cheerful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individualistic</td>
<td>Does not use harsh language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masculine</td>
<td>Loyal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-sufficient</td>
<td>Feminine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambitious</td>
<td>Gullible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acts as a leader</td>
<td>Yielding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athletic</td>
<td>Soft-spoken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makes decisions easily</td>
<td>Flatterable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competitive</td>
<td>Childlike</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analytical</td>
<td>Shy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Bem, 1981
Third is the dimension that Brannon calls “The Sturdy Oak, or the Male Machine” (p. 306) which primarily relates to male determination and toughness, of independence and self-reliance leaving no doubt about physical and mental strength. Lastly, the fourth theme is based on the idea of male adventurouslyse, competitiveness, and aggressiveness to the point of using violence, vividly described by Brannon as the “Give ‘Em Hell dimension” (p. 306).

In addition to the sturdy oak that Brannon has identified, Wood (2003) adds two other stereotypes that the author considers to be predominant within institutional settings: fighters and breadwinners. The stereotype of men and boys as fighters can be explained in literal terms referring to the “brave warriors who go to battle” (Wood, 2003, p. 233) or metaphorically referring to competitiveness in business and winning at all costs whether it be “on Wall Street or in the courtroom” (p. 233). This stereotype is just as deeply rooted in culture as is the second one of men as breadwinners. Just as men took on the role of the hunter during the early days of human existence, they have continued to provide food and shelter for their families as the primary or exclusive wage earner (Wood, 2003), particularly since the era of the Industrial Revolution.

Brannon’s (1985) and Wood’s (2003) conceptualizations of masculinity can be defined as a combination of essentialist and normative definitions according to Connell’s (2005) distinction of definitions. Essentialist definitions, on the one hand, choose a particular feature resembling the core of masculinity and “hang an account of men’s lives on that” (Connell, 2005, p. 68). Normative definitions, on the other, treat masculinity as social expectations of what a man ought to be like (Connell, 2005). Norms, as explained earlier in this section, can be prescriptive, what men or boys should be or be like, and
proscriptive, what they should not be (Kilmartin, 2000). In addition, there are definitions that Connell (2005) calls positivist definitions and that Kilmartin (2000) labels descriptive stereotypes. Both refer to factual definitions and statements of what men actually are (Connell, 2005).

Descriptive stereotypes and normative definitions, according to Kilmartin (2000), can be expressed on three different levels: the cognitive, the affective, and the behavioral level. An example for a descriptive stereotype on the cognitive level would be the statement that “men are emotionally distant” (Kilmartin, 2000, p. 23). The same descriptive stereotype could be expressed on the affective level as “feeling frustrated in the company of [emotionally] distant men” and on the behavioral level as “demanding that the man come closer emotionally” (Kilmartin, 2000, p. 23).

Drawing on most recent conceptualizations, Bean and Harper (2007) describe the ideas of masculine theory, a framework that challenges norms of traditional masculine identity with the following major components:

- Masculinity relates to performative social practices (i.e., acted out based on cultural norms and contexts; e.g., playing football) and to the body and what bodies matter (e.g., who has power in a particular social milieu; e.g., jocks, geeks and so on)
- Masculinity is understood to be relational (e.g., it has been organized against what it means to be a girl; what it means to be gay)
- Versions of masculinity can be hegemonic (i.e., particular boys exert power over others through gendered social capital; e.g., athletic performance)
- Masculinity has a fixed set of attributes for boys to define themselves (e.g., styles of dress)

(Bean & Harper, 2007, p. 14)
The previous discussion of the various concepts and definitions of masculinity serves as a background for the following section that reviews studies about constructions of masculinity in media that is aimed at children and young adults.

Constructions of Masculinity in Media Aimed at Young Audiences

Research on gender representations as it relates to portrayals of masculinity and reflections of men and boys in particular, has been of little interest until about the 1980s. As pointed out by Evans and Davies (2000): “In most studies published prior to 1980, male characterizations were not viewed as an area worthy of comment beyond noticing that depictions of men and boys overshadowed that of women and girls” (p. 257).

An exception to this overall trend is a study conducted by Frasher and Walker (1972). Even though the study does not in particular look at portrayals of masculinity it was still included in this review because it speaks in more detail about depicted roles and activities of male characters. The authors’ quantitative content analysis of 734 early reading textbooks measures counts of female and male characters, roles within family settings and occupations, as well as relationships and activities. With regards to depictions of boys and men it is found that when boys and girls are featured together, boys persistently take on traditional roles of dominance and authority with girls acceding leadership to them. While men are shown in a much broader range of occupations compared to women, they are depicted in a very narrow range of other activities. For example, no boy is ever portrayed sewing or picking flowers. If shown in quiet activities, the representation pertains to watching television, or reading. The researchers also state, that in comparison to girls, boys exhibit a higher degree of positive-striving qualities such
as leadership, independence, initiative and curiosity, assertiveness, perseverance, bravery, and problem-solving capabilities. Fathers are more visible than they used to be and there are instances in which the father is presented as nurturing and offering emotional support to his children. Overall though, his role in the family is still strongly traditional. The authors conclude that further research is needed in terms of sex role expectations and models.

Almost three decades later, Evans and Davies (2000) published a content analysis of 97 fiction stories found in 13 different elementary school reading books published by two different companies. Building on a previous study by Vaughn-Roberson, Tompkins, Hitchcock, and Oldham (1989) and drawing on the Bem Sex Role Inventory for stereotypical personality traits, the authors sought to answer three research questions: 1) Are males represented in nontraditional ways possessing both masculine and feminine traits?, 2) Are there any differences among the two publishers with regards to how each one portrays males in the textbooks?, and 3) Is there a variation in the portrayal of masculine and feminine traits in males when analyzed by grade?

Results demonstrate that even though industry guidelines exist regarding gender-related issues, males are still predominantly portrayed in stereotypical personality traits. An overwhelming proportion of male characters appear aggressive, argumentative, and competitive. While no differences are found between the two publishing companies of the readers, findings indicate that the most stereotypical portrayals of both males and females become obvious in 3rd grade readers.

A third and most recent quantitative study, conducted by Kelly and Smith (2006) and commissioned by the See Jane Program at Dads & Daughters, analyzes the
construction of masculinity in audio-visual media. The sample of 4,249 movie characters was obtained from the top box-office 101 G-rated\(^5\) live-action and animated films released between 1990 and the beginning of 2004. The researchers closely examine prevalence of gender and race, family roles and relationships, as well as physically aggressive behavior and report alarming patterns. Not only do male characters dominate casts and stories, but also are they shown as less involved in relationships and parenting and exhibit greater tendencies for physically aggressive behavior compared to female characters. The authors summarize these findings as portrayals of males being dominant, disconnected, and dangerous.

Most disturbing is the fact that while male characters of color are shown significantly less often than white characters, when they do appear on screen they are portrayed significantly more often as aggressive and disconnected. This suggests a new component of racial aspects that has not come to the foreground in previous studies of gender portrayals.

Overall, the authors come to the conclusion that Hollywood as a whole provides limiting and harmful stereotypes of men and boys. This statement seems justified given that there are no differences in portrayals of males among the 20 different film distribution companies that had produced the movies under investigation.

\(^5\) G-rated means all ages are admitted. “This is a film which contains nothing in theme, language, nudity and sex, violence, etc. that would, in the view of the Rating Board, be offensive to parents whose younger children view the film. The G rating is not a certificate of approval nor does it signify a children’s film. Some snippets of language may go beyond polite conversation but they are common everyday expressions. No stronger words are present in G-rated films. The violence is at a minimum. Nudity and sex scenes are not present, nor is there any drug use content.” (Motion Picture Association of America MPAA, 2005)
While the previously discussed studies are based on quantitative content analysis, the following two employed a qualitative approach in the analysis of children and young adult literature.

Woolsey (2001) explores conceptions of mature and adolescent masculinity in contemporary historical fiction for children focusing on a subset of 10 winners of the Scott O’Dell Historical Fiction Award. Based on a review of the literature, in particular the writings of anthropologist Arnold van Gennep, the author explains the different stages in a man’s life and the three phases of human “life crises” that have been found across various cultures: separation, transition, and, incorporation. The first phase, separation, “is the essential first step on the path to manhood” (Woolsey, 2001, p. 115), followed by the transition phase, a “period spent in seclusion, often in sex-segregated groups, and in this time boys are tutored in the ways of men” (p. 115). In a final stage, the incorporation, “initiates” enter the world of the adults of the “tribe” and are accepted by the community “as individuals with a new identity” (p. 115) under the assumption that they now fulfill adult roles. While the terminology may seem odd or antiquated, Woolsey cites examples of researchers who have identified similar threefold patterns in contemporary society.

Findings of the analysis reveal that most of the stories follow the classic heroic pattern and that in all but one of the stories the boys have not yet reached manhood but have made considerable progress toward mature masculinity. This is most clearly expressed in the struggles that young boys are facing in trying to achieve the fulfillment

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6 “In 1982, Scott O'Dell established The Scott O'Dell Award for Historical Fiction. The annual award of $5,000 goes to a meritorious book published in the previous year for children or young adults. Scott O'Dell established this award to encourage other writers--particularly new authors--to focus on historical fiction. He hoped in this way to increase the interest of young readers in the historical background that has helped to shape their country and their world.” (Hall, 2007)
of new responsibilities. These may include chores around the home, providing food or
shelter, or earning a big share of the family income. Taking on these new roles, the boys
have gained some degree of independence in dealing not only with challenges in
everyday life but also with long-term personal issues and problems of larger social
impact. Woolsey (2001) continues: “And all of these boys make progress toward taming
the beast within, whether that involves uncovering the dangers of false and unrealistic
dreams, dealing with guilt, fear and shame, or struggling with selfishness and pride, and
learning to accept and help others” (Woolsey, 2001, p. 124). Most striking is the fact that
the novels illustrate that mature masculinity involves a balance between independence
and interdependence with family and community members. Guided by a male mentor

these boys learn that a true man is not simply a loner … Thus, as they make
their way toward mature masculinity, they choose to reach out to this community
in loyalty and solidarity, having understood their need for others and having
overcome the fear of asking and receiving help (p. 124).

The second and most recent qualitative study by Bean and Harper (2007)
investigates the nature and performance of masculinity as reflected in three young adult
novels that were published within the last eight years. Interestingly, one of the novels
does not feature an actual male protagonist but a female protagonist disguised as a boy.
The 11-year old girl Parvana has to do so in order to be allowed to enter the public food
market during the time of the Taliban rule in Afghanistan.

Drawing on emerging theory in the field of masculinity studies, the authors wish
to explore in detail the nature, deployment and consequences of traditional, heterosexual
masculinity by examining content and stylistic choices of the texts. Therefore, they
decide to conduct a social semiotic analysis of selected instances in the novel with a
particular focus on font shifts, alterations in time and space constraints, and the use of multiple voices to signal shifts in meaning.

According to the authors’ findings, the three novels offer more diverse and complex reproductions of boys’ lives and directly address the effects of enforced hegemonic masculinity. Private spaces, especially, provide opportunity for masculinity to be constructed outside of gendered norms and expectations. Bean and Harper (2007) contend that these instances of “small inroads into doing masculinity differently are still just window dressing that needs careful deconstruction” (p. 27). Yet, they argue, even this “relatively small number of pages devoted to alternative representations of masculinity outside the norms of tough-guy poses and violence are important” (Bean & Harper, 2007, p. 27).

In conclusion, the researchers point out that the construction of masculinity must include the construction in relation to femininity, as well as other aspects with the potential to create social difference such as age, class, or ethnicity. More importantly though, theory and findings indicate a need for transformative pedagogy and that the pure existence of nontraditional portrayals in literature is not sufficient. Agents of change, such as teachers or parents, need to actively engage young readers in discussions about literature devoted to boys’ interests because such resources remain “empty drums without a pedagogy of critique” (Bean & Harper, 2007, p. 27).

Summary of Portrayals of Masculinity

While it has long been advocated that gender representations may detrimentally affect young audiences’ self-concept and their notions of appropriate and inappropriate
gender roles, focus in research on gender equity has been limited to concerns about women and girls and their representation. Contrary to this, the studies discussed previously in this section have devoted attention to the various constructions of masculinity in the media and made important contributions to an emerging field of research.

Overall, quantitative studies about portrayals of masculinity correspond with the findings of studies about representations of gender in general. The studies, summarized in Table 5 have demonstrated that boys and men are shown in stereotypical and limited ways in terms of their characteristics, types of behavior, occupations, and activities.

Male characters are shown in their traditional role of dominance, competitiveness, aggressiveness, and emotional disconnectedness. In contrast, studies that have employed qualitative approaches have found more complex reproductions of masculinity including subtle but significant areas that allow for alternative performances of boyhood and manhood. In fact, some young adult novels even illustrate mature masculinity as not being a loner and realizing the necessary balance of independence and interdependence with the social environment, particularly with the family and loved ones. Other narratives have explicitly addressed the concept of traditional masculinity and demonstrated that it is simple performance that can be carried out by anyone. Yet, there is still a lack of portrayals of alternative masculinity in the public sphere.
Table 5 Summary of Portrayals and Constructions of Masculinity in Media for Children and Young Adults (in chronological order)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Concepts/Variables</th>
<th>Key Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Frasher & Walker | 1972 | Quantitative content analysis   | 734 stories in early reading textbooks from four major basal reading series | Counts of male and female main characters, roles (occupations, in the family), relationships, activities (quiet, active) | • Boys consistently assume traditional roles of dominance and authority when featured together with girls  
• Men are shown in a much greater variety of occupations than women  
• Boys are shown in a narrower range of activities than girls – quiet activities: reading or watching TV, never sewing or picking flowers etc.  
• Boys exhibit a higher degree of positive-striving qualities: leadership, independence, initiative, curiosity, assertiveness, perseverance, bravery, logical thinking, problem-solving ability but also higher degree of aggressiveness |
| Evans & Davies   | 2000 | Quantitative content analysis   | 97 fiction stories in 13 elementary school reading books (1st, 3rd, 5th grade) from two publishers (1997): Macmillan McGraw Hill basal series Spotlight on Literacy Silver Burdett Ginn series Literature Works | Number of male and female characters; 16 personality traits according to BSRI (8 feminine, 8 masculine; traits by gender and publisher) | • Despite publisher’s guidelines and Title IX, males are still primarily portrayed stereotypically  
• Male characters are overwhelmingly aggressive, argumentative, and competitive  
• Most stereotypical portrayals of males and females in 3rd grade readers  
• No indication that males are portrayed differently in the two series |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Concepts / Variables</th>
<th>Key Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Woolsey</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Qualitative content analysis</td>
<td>10 Scott O’Dell award winning books</td>
<td>Gender of author; time and geographical setting of stories; patterns in the concept of “coming of age” and images of mature masculinity including three stages: separation, transition, and incorporation</td>
<td>• Stories follow a classic heroic pattern: with one exception all boys in the stories have not yet reached manhood but have made considerable progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Portrayed in the struggles of young boys in achieving fulfillment of responsibilities (e.g., chores around the home, providing food/shelter, taking a job to earn family income)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Boys have gained independence not only in dealing everyday lives but also in addressing long-term personal issues and solving larger societal problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• All boys make progress in “taming the beast within (p. 124)”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Mature masculinity involves self-discovery and self-acceptance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Most striking: novels demonstrate that mature masculinity involves balancing independence and interdependence with family and community members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• True man is not a loner</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Other men serves as guides or mentors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• At the end of the story the protagonist stands poised for the beginning of a new phase</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5 continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Concepts /Variables</th>
<th>Key Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Kelly & Smith | 2006 | Quantitative document analysis               | top box-office grossing 101 G-rated films (20 different distribution companies) films released between January 31, 1990 and January 31, 2004 as measure by Nielsen Inc. Film Source data Total characters analyzed: 4,249 in both animated and live-action films | Gender; race; family roles and relationships; physically aggressive behavior            | • disturbing patterns in G-rated films: male characters dominate casts and stories, are less involved in relationships and parenting, are more physically aggressive than female characters (dominant, disconnected, dangerous)  
• male characters of color appear significantly less often than white males but are portrayed significantly more often as aggressive and disconnected  
• Hollywood provides limiting and damaging stereotypes: no differences among distribution companies |
| Bean & Harper    | 2007 | Qualitative content analysis: Social semiotic analysis | Three young adult novels: *Fighting Ruben Wolfe* (Zusak, 2000); *Monster* (Myers, 1999); *The Breadwinner* (Ellis, 2000); | Nature, deployment, and consequences of traditional, heterosexual masculinity(ies) evident in content and stylistic details of the novels particularly: (a) font shifts; (b) alterations in time and space constraints; (c) the use of multiple voices to signal shifts in meaning | • Novels offered more complex reproduction of boys’ lives  
• addressed the effects of compelled hegemonic masculinity  
• in one novel with a female protagonist, gender becomes a mere performance that can be done by anyone  
• lack of portrayals of alternative masculinity in public sphere  
• small but important private spaces where masculinity could be constructed outside normative publicly sanctioned ways of being male in the world |
The qualitative studies reviewed in this section only exemplify a growing field of qualitative work that has been conducted in recent years with regards to fictive representations and narrative reconfigurations of masculinity. Stephens (2002a) has compiled an impressive collection assembling a broad spectrum of authors who have written theoretically grounded essays and criticism of junior literature that deal with the various forms of being male. These works as well as the studies introduced acknowledge the important contribution that fiction for young audiences can make in shaping their understanding of gender appropriate performance and social relations between men and women.

When reviewing all of the qualitative and quantitative studies that have been conducted about gender representations, it becomes apparent that the majority of them have investigated literature or media aimed at young audiences in general, even studies about representations of masculinity in particular. Few if any studies have looked at literary texts that are tailored particularly at adolescent boys. No studies could be found on studies that deal particularly with fiction stories in magazines aimed at male youth. Therefore, it seems appropriate to investigate constructions of masculinity in contemporary fiction stories in *Boys’ Life* magazine, the monthly publication of the Boy Scouts of America. The organization has a considerable history in building manly character in boys and young men that is discussed in detail in the following section.
3 Methodology

To determine how values of masculinity are expressed in contemporary fiction stories aimed at adolescent boys this study analyzes a sample of recently published fiction stories in Boys’ Life magazine. This chapter serves two purposes. First, it provides a detailed background about the historical origins and underlying ideas of the Boy Scouts of America as the organization that publishes Boys’ Life magazine. This is important because it is a common assumption in media studies that textual media output is a vehicle of cultural forms and historical worldviews (Jensen, 2002). Therefore, a context needs to be provided in which to discuss the relevance and meaning of the analysis. Second, this chapter explains the methodological approach that was chosen including the sampling procedure and the analytical process that were applied.

3.1 Historical and Ideological Background of the Scouting Movement

Boy Scouts of America

As the “premier youth development organization” (News Release, 2006) in the United States, the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) provides a year-round educational program for community-based organizations with the goals of building character and moral strength in boys and young adults, as well as training their responsibilities in citizenship and developing their physical, mental and emotional fitness (Meritbadge.com, 2006; BSA at a Glance, 2006).

The historical origins of the scouting movement. The Boy Scouts of America represents only a small part of a much bigger social group network. The international
Boy Scout Movement is the most well-known example among large youth organizations that have been used by states or different national minority groups in an effort to promote nationalism (Scheidlinger, 1948).

The underlying idea is not surprising, given the fact that the earliest forms of scouting were established within a military setting at the turn of the 20th century. British Army officer Robert Stephenson Smyth Baden-Powell, who was serving as a lieutenant stationed in India, discovered that, while competent in drill, the soldiers of his regiment were lacking essential skills in first aid and knowledge about living in the open and basic means of survival (History of Cub Scouting, 2005). This prompted Baden-Powell to organize special Scout training courses in first aid, map making, and observation. He summarized his new training system in a small handbook with the title *Aids to Scouting*, a compendium with ideas for training British soldiers and, as such, entirely military in character (Peterson, 1984).

During the Boer War in 1900, Baden-Powell applied his system to a uniformed cadet corps of boys serving as messengers, lookouts, and orderlies (Peterson, 1984). The troop’s excellent performance nurtured Baden-Powell’s idea to promote scouting training even in times of peace. Upon return to England, Baden-Powell was surprised to find that his initial handbook was already being used by schoolteachers and started developing a tentative scheme for the Boy Scout Movement and its principles (Scheidlinger, 1948). Having received enthusiastic approbation by leaders of the boys’ welfare movements of the Church, the State, The Army, and the Navy, the official program was launched in 1906 and generated the formation of new scout groups all over England (Scheidlinger, 1948). Meanwhile, founding father Baden-Powell wrote and published the first official
Boy Scout manual *Scouting for Boys* in 1908 as a basis for all scouting institutions
(Peterson, 1984). Baden-Powell (1931) defined scouting as

a natural evolution of many ideas reduced to a system, the main point about it
being to recognize the basic needs of the nation and to have an elastic system
wherethrough to encourage the individual future citizen to develop in himself the
qualities that are wanted. (p.26)

The qualities that Baden-Powell was hoping to cultivate in the boys were “the
ideals of manliness, endurance, resourcefulness, self-control, sense of honor, and
trustfulness” (Scheidlinger, 1948, p.740). In addition to manliness, self-reliance, and
reliability, Baden-Powell, (1931) also wanted to achieve field efficiency all of which
“were largely lacking in lads coming on to the Army from the average school” (p. 22). He
was hoping to achieve these educational objectives by going “back to nature” and placing
a strong emphasis on outdoor activities such as camping and hiking in order to “restore to
the British nation its moral and physical robustness and its virility” (Baden-Powell, 1931,
pp. 52-53). To create interest and enthusiasm in the youths, he promoted wearing
uniforms and awarding merits and badges as symbols for social recognition and
incentives for past and future actions.

According to one author, the ideals reflected by the British Boy Scout Association
as well as the leadership skills of its founder contributed to the growth of the movement
and accorded the Scouting Movement respect by government agencies, the press and
even the Royal family who showed interest in scouting activities (Scheidlinger, 1948). In
turn, the same actors have helped in associating the Boy Scouts with the expression of
national interests. The Scouting for Boys manual was disseminated to other countries
within a matter of several months and soon after the program was formed in England it
was adopted by other countries (Peterson, 1984). Among the first nations to initiate scouting were Chile, Canada, South Africa, Germany, France, and Sweden (Scheidlinger, 1948). By late spring of 1910, it had made its appearance in the United States of America (Peterson, 1984).

The rise of the Boy Scouts of America. Inspired by British founder Robert S. S. Baden-Powell, William D. Boyce formally incorporated the Boy Scouts program in America in 1910 (France, 2001). President Taft became the organizations Honorary President (Scheidlinger, 1948). Initially, Boyce only owned the name “Boy Scouts of America” but there was no established organization and he was unclear about how to recruit members until he received help from three men of the Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA), namely Edgar M. Robinson, Dr. L. L. Doggett and J. A. Van Dis (Peterson, 1984). The YMCA, as the oldest major character-building agency for boys, started offering religious and social activities to urban white-collar workers in the 1850s (MacLeod, 1982). Thus, having close to 60 years of experience in boys’ work, the YMCA was in a good position to help the Boy Scouts of America. With its help the BSA was rapidly gaining momentum and by 1916 was considered an accepted community institution that had even received a federal charter (Hantover, 1998).

The YMCA and the BSA both were hoping to not only get boys off the streets by keeping them busy but also to instill in them ideals of social responsibility (MacLeod, 1982). President and BSA Chief Scout Citizen Theodore Roosevelt (1913 as cited in Peterson, 1984) formulated these qualities later on as follows:

Through Boys’ Life I want to send this message, not only to the Boy Scouts, but to all the boys of America. The prime lesson that the Boy Scout movement is teaching is the lesson that manliness in its most vigorous form can be and ought to
be accompanied by unselfish consideration for the rights and interests of others. Indeed I can go a little further. I wish that I could make the especial appeal to the American boy to remember that unless he thinks of others he cannot fit himself to do the best work in any great emergency. (p. 49)

MacLeod (1982) accents that in the half century after the Civil War Americans witnessed tremendous societal changes including growing urbanization, the decline of farming and the proliferation of white-collar jobs. Shifting lifestyles, work and family settings contributed to changing young people’s frame of reference (MacLeod, 1982). Adults feared moral and physical deterioration and the loss of social control over ‘adolescents,’ a term that has rarely been used prior to 1890 but became increasingly popular among those who felt compelled to take action (MacLeod, 1982).

The sudden rise of Scouting at the turn of the century, its rapid national acceptance as well as the fact that organizations other than the BSA tried to claim the Scouting name suggest that its message appealed to adults as a response to widespread concerns about the nation’s moral future (Hantover, 1998). In particular, many were concerned about about the manly character of middle-class boys and young men (France, 2001). Traditional notions of masculinity were threatened by “salaried dependence, soft living, and changing sex roles” (MacLeod, 1982, p. 5).

Hantover (1998) describes how the changes in the sphere of work, “the central institutional anchorage of masculinity” (p.102), in particular, posed one of the greatest threats to traditional definitions of manliness by restricting men’s opportunities for performing acts of masculinity. Industrialization and bureaucratization deprived men of the opportunity to own a business themselves, take risks, and be independent. Contributing to the perceived threat of feminizing forces was the changing role of
women. Not only did motherhood become professionalized and sanctified, but also did women increasingly enter into labor force. With the growth of public high school grew the number of female students. Education seemed to nurture rather feminine traits of passivity and dependency (Hantover, 1998).

Hantover further notes that in response gender became more salient in social life in an attempt to compensate for the perceived loss that caused male anxiety. Muscularity in particular and the physical and assertive side of the male ideal in general were accentuated in American leisure activities as much as they were in literature and cultural heroes. MacLeod (1982) summarizes the way of thinking: “A popular anodyne was to fantasize escape into an energetic, all-male world, through western novels, sports, or camping out” (p.6).

Given this social environment, it is not surprising that Scouting proved extremely successful at the time. Its outdoor program offered both boys and men opportunities to prove their masculinity by becoming either Scoutmasters or members. In addition, leading members of the organization explicitly addressed sex-role concerns. In an article in Good Housekeeping Magazine, Burgess (1914) appealed to mothers to convince them to “understand boy nature” and “the simple virtue of masculine superiority” (p. 3) as well as “a boy’s divine right to ‘worship’ a hero [Scoutmaster] and belong to a ‘gang’” (Burgess, 1914, p. 4). According to the author, mothers ought to recognize that “[t]he boy has become a citizen of the world, a world in which petticoats are scorned and an attempt at petticoat rule is resented” (Burgess, 1914, p. 3).
Dan Beard (1912), National Scout Commissioner of the newly formed organization, emphasized that “boys seek excitement and danger; boys love adventure; boys demand heroes with red blood who have performed picturesque feats” (p. 449).

Edgar M. Robinson (as cited in MacLeod, 1982), the YMCA leader who supported the work of the BSA in its beginning, condemned “the boy who has been . . . so carefully wrapped up in the ‘pink cotton wool’ of an overindulgent home [that] he is more effeminate than his sister…” (p. 6). Burgess (1914) emphasized the main ideas of the BSA as a movement that

is becoming universally known for what it is – an organized effort to make big men of little boys, to make them sound in body, sound in character, sound in mental and moral development . . . to aid in the development of that master creation, high-principled, clean and clear-thinking, independent manhood. (Burgess, 1914, p. 12)

Yet, MacLeod (1982) denotes, masculinity was much more of an issue for adult men than it was for the boys themselves who “saw manhood at least as much in terms of age as sex role; they wanted the status, amusements, and autonomy which they associated with growing older” (p. 11). Thus, younger boys turning twelve had a strong desire to join the Scout program as one way of gaining more independence from home and drove out older boys of age 14 or 15. According to MacLeod (1982), between 47 and 65% of Scouts of each year between 1915 and 1925 did not reregister the following year for various reasons but above all because of distraction by other interests, hobbies, or because of dissatisfaction with the troop, its leader or younger boys in the troop. While age patterns in membership remained remarkably stable for several decades, the organization as a whole did not show to be losing ground.
Qualities and characteristics of a ‘real’ Boy Scout. The goal of the Boy Scouts of America is to teach young boys socially desirable values and to cultivate various qualities and characteristics that are expected of men of all ages. The values of the American Boy Scout movement are expressed in the Scout Oath and the Scout Law (Mission Statement, scouting.org, 2006) and have not been changed since early after the inception of the Boy Scouts of America. At that time, BSA had made some changes to the initial principles and traits formulated in England as the “Scout Promise” and the “Scout Law” to adapt them to American needs. The initial Scout Law was comprised of nine attributes and the BSA added three more laws, namely bravery, cleanliness, and reverence (Scheidlinger, 1948).

Scout Oath and Scout Law call for a socially, morally, and religiously responsible individuals while emphasizing traditionally masculine traits such as strength and courage. Figures 1 represents the American Scout Oath and Scout Law and Figure 2 the original British version of the Scout Promise and the Scout Law. Table 6 explains in detail the meaning of each individual attribute in the American Scout Law.
### Scout Oath

On my honor I will do my best
To do my duty to God and my country
and to obey the Scout Law;
To help other people at all times;
To keep myself physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight.

### Scout Law

A Scout is:

- Trustworthy
- Loyal
- Helpful
- Friendly
- Courteous
- Kind
- Obedient
- Cheerful
- Thrifty
- Brave*
- Clean*
- Reverent*

* These values were not part of the British Scout Law.

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**Figure 1**

**American Scout Oath and Scout Law** *(Source: scouting.org, 2006)*

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**The British Scout Promise**

I promise, on my honor, to do my duty to God and the King, to help other people at all times, and to obey the Scout Law

### The British Scout Law

1. A Scout’s honour is to be trusted.
2. A Scout is loyal.
3. A Scout’s duty is to be useful and to help others.
4. A Scout is a friend to all and a brother to every other Scout.
5. A Scout is courteous.
6. A Scout is a friend to animals.
7. A Scout obeys orders.
8. A Scout smiles and whistles in all difficulties.
9. A Scout is thrifty.
10. A Scout is clean in thought, word and deed.

---

**Figure 2**

**British Scout Promise and Scout Law** *(Source: Baden-Powell, 1931, pp. 19-20)*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Law</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. A scout is trustworthy.</td>
<td>A scout’s honor is to be trusted. If he were to violate his honor by telling a lie, or by cheating, or by not doing exactly a given task, when trusted on his honor, he may be directed to hand over his scout badge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. A scout is loyal.</td>
<td>He is loyal to all to whom loyalty is due: his Scout leader, his home, and parents and country.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. A Scout is helpful.</td>
<td>He must be prepared at any time to save life, help injured persons, and share the home duties. He must do at least one good turn to somebody every day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. A scout is friendly.</td>
<td>He is a friend to all and a brother to every other Scout.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. A scout is courteous.</td>
<td>He is polite to all, especially to women, children, old people, and the weak and helpless. He must not take pay for being helpful or courteous.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. A scout is kind.</td>
<td>He is a friend to animals. He will not kill nor hurt any living creature needlessly, but will strive to save and protect all harmless life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. A scout is obedient.</td>
<td>He obeys his parents, scout master, patrol leader, and all other duly constituted authorities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. A scout is cheerful.</td>
<td>He smiles whenever he can. His obedience to orders is prompt and cheery. He never shirks nor grumbles at hardships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. A scout is thrifty.</td>
<td>He does not wantonly destroy property. He works faithfully, wastes nothing, and makes the best use of his opportunities. He saves his money so that he may pay his own way, be generous to those in need, and helpful to worthy objects. He may work for pay but must not receive tips for courtesies or good turns.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. A scout is brave.</td>
<td>He has the courage to face danger in spite of fear and has to stand up for the right against the coaxings of friends or the jeers or threats of enemies, and defeat does not down him.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. A scout is clean.</td>
<td>He keeps clean in body and thought, stands for clean speech, clean sport, clean habits, and travels with a clean crowd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. A scout is reverent.</td>
<td>He is reverent toward God. He is faithful in his religious duties and respects the conviction of others in matters of custom and religion.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Boy Scouts of America (1911, p. 15 & 16)
In 1912, soon after the BSA was founded, it published an authoritative statement in *Leslie’s Weekly* to educate the general public about the aims and ideals of the Boy Scout movement in America including the formally written Scouth Oath and Scout Law. The very first thing that James E. West (1912), Chief Executive of the Boy Scouts of America over three decades clarifies in his article is that “[t]he real Boy Scout is not a ‘sissi’” (p. 448). West (1912) continues to describe undesirable and desirable qualities as follows:

He is not a hothouse plant, like little Lord Fauntleroy. There is nothing “milk and water” about him; he is not afraid of the dark. He does not do bad things because he is afraid of being decent. Instead of being a puny, dull or bookish lad, who dreams and does nothing he is full of life, energy, enthusiasm, bubbling over with fun, full of ideas as to what he wants to do and he knows how he wants to do it. He has many ideals and many heroes. He is not hitched to his mother’s apron-strings. While he adores his mother and would do anything to save her from suffering or discomfort, he is self-reliant, sturdy, and full of vim. He is just that sort of boy that his father is proud to own as his son… (p. 448).

In this vein, the Scouting movement did not only train boys in masculine virtues, but also gratified the need for masculine identity among young adult men in white-collar positions by providing a “sphere of masculine validation” (Hantover, 1998, p. 105) with opportunities to perform traditional male roles and masculine activities. The energetic, all-male world that the Scouting outdoor program promised, also appealed to clerks, teachers, and clergymen who became Scoutmasters to prove their masculinity (MacLeod, 1982). Hantover (1998) explains that “[a]t the core of the image of the ideal scoutmaster was assertive manliness” (p. 106). The *Handbook for Scoutmasters* (Boy Scouts of America, 1947) described a scoutmaster as an enthusiastic, energetic, and perseverant man who “shall be chosen because of good moral character” (p. 26) and who personifies
the ideals and the vision of the Scouting program: “What you [the Scoutmaster] are
speaks so loud that I cannot hear what you say!” (p. 30).

The Mission and Vision Statement of the Boy Scouts of America continue to
reinforce the idea of building character and are published on the official website:

**Mission Statement**
The mission of the Boy Scouts of America is to prepare young people to
make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the
values of the Scout Oath and Law.

**Vision Statement:**
The Boy Scouts of America is the nation's foremost youth program of
ccharacter development and values-based leadership training.

In the future Scouting will continue to

- Offer young people responsible fun and adventure;
- Instill in young people lifetime values and develop in them ethical
ccharacter as expressed in the Scout Oath and Law;
- Train young people in citizenship, service, and leadership;
- Serve America's communities and families with its quality, values-based
program

(scouting.org, 2006)

**Recent membership issues of BSA.** The Boy Scouts of America has been an
integral part of American culture. Among its former scouts are 66 senators, 205
congressmen and 11 of the 12 astronauts who walked on the moon. At the end of 2005,
BSA had a total youth membership of 2,938,698 with a total of 1,146,130 adult
volunteers in 122,582 Scout units (Year in Review, 2005).

Even though BSA is still America’s largest youth organization, its membership
has seen a continuous decline in recent years which is, in part, due to several
controversies that have revolved around exclusionary membership criteria, discriminatory practices and inflated membership numbers (France, 2001; Roig-Franzia, 2005).

According to its own sources, over the last 30 years BSA has been involved in more than 30 lawsuits that have been attacking its values (BSA National Council, 2006). Litigation pertains primarily to membership criteria that require Scouts “to believe in God, be male, and not to be openly homosexual” (BSA National Council, 2006).

One of the most prominent cases involved the Boy Scouts of America vs. Dale, 530 U.S. 640 (2000 as cited by BSA National Council, 2006). In the summer of 2000, the Supreme Court ruled that the Boy Scouts of America as a private organization is entitled to bar homosexual members from its program (Simpson, 2000). The case was brought to the Supreme Court by James Dale who was dismissed as a Scout master of the Matawan, New Jersey, troop in 1990 after a newspaper article had revealed the fact that he was gay (CNN, 2000). The organization justified its position by arguing that homosexuality is at odds with BSA’s values. In relation to court cases that have involved homsexual men, the BSA National Council (2006) justifies its stance regarding its membership policies in relation to volunteer adult leadership and youth leadership as follows:

Boy Scouts of America believes that homosexual conduct is inconsistent with the obligations in the Scout Oath and Law to be morally straight and clean in thought, word, and deed. Scouting’s moral position with respect to homosexual conduct accords with the moral positions of many millions of Americans and with religious denominations to which a majority of Americans belong. Because of these views concerning the morality of homosexual conduct, Boy Scouts of America believes that a known or avowed homosexual is not an appropriate role model of the Scout Oath and Law for adolescent boys. (....) Most boys join Scouting when they are 10 or 11 years old. As they continue in the program, all Scouts are expected to take leadership positions. In the unlikely event that an older boy were to hold himself out as homosexual, he would not be able to continue in a youth leadership position.
In a similar vein, BSA explains its exclusion of girls as members of the Cub and Boy Scouting programs with the argument that they “were designed to meet the emotional, psychological, physical, and other needs of boys between the ages of 8 and 14” and that “[b]oys of this age range seek out and enjoy group activities with other boys” (BSA National Council, 2006).

These developments have caused a strong divide within the organization and its members in terms of approval and disapproval of the court rulings and BSA’s position (France, 2000). In addition, BSA’s stance of emphasizing its status as a private organization to justify its excluding membership standards has raised serious questions about the organization’s relationships with public and governmental agencies with non-discrimination policies that have traditionally supported and funded BSA (France, 2001). BSA has come under attack for its double standards of presenting itself as a private group on the hand, and receiving considerable funding from public sources such as taxes on the other (Taylor, 1995).

The controversial discussion has been fueled further by suspicions of inflated membership numbers. BSA has been accused of creating fictitious units and padding enrollment in order to receive funds from donor groups, charities and the government (Roig-Franzia, 2005; Alabama inquiry into Scout’s rolls, 2005).

In light of such incidents, it seems legitimate to question the veracity of the organization’s overarching mission “to prepare young people to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes” (scouting.org, 2006). It further raises questions about the underlying philosophy and values of the Scouts and the ways in which they are reflected in its publications and communication materials.)
Boys’ Life magazine – The official publication of BSA. As the official magazine of the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) published twelve times a year, Boys’ Life celebrated its 95th anniversary in 2006. First introduced by publisher George R. Barton on March 1, 1911 as the “Boys’ and Boy Scouts magazine” (Fact Sheet, n.d.), it has reached more than 1 million subscribers every month since 1955 (News Release, 2001; Magazine Publishers of America, 2003). Nearly all of its subscribers are boys (99.5%), most of them Scouts (95.7%) whose median age is 12 years (Media Kit, 2007). Including its pass-along audience, Boys’ Life reaches about 5,863,000 readers per issue (Mark Clements Research, 2003 as cited in Media Kit, 2007).

While the publication features a variety of topics such as science, news, nature, history, sports, comics, and fiction, it has a strong focus on nature and the outdoors as well as scouting related activities. Yet, it considers itself a general-interest magazine committed to promoting literacy by delivering entertainment, education and information to boys of all ages (News Release, 2006; Fact Sheet, n.d.).

To meet the different reading levels of its target audience, Boys’ Life has, over the last seven years, been published in three separate, age-specific demographic editions in correspondence with the related, age-specific programs that BSA offers. The first edition for members of the Tiger Cubs and the Cub Scouts program is aimed at boys between the ages of 6 through 8 years. The second edition for Cub Scouts and Webelos Scouts is tailored to boys between the ages of 8 to 10 years and the third edition is produced for all Boy Scouts of 11 years and up as well as all other Boys’ Life subscribers. While all three editions share the same cover and about 70 to 75% of the editorial coverage, each edition has between 16 and 20 pages that are specifically designed to suit the age of its readers.
(Fact Sheet, 2006). This analysis used only narratives published in the third edition that is to be sent to Boy Scouts who are 11 years or older as well as all other Boys’ Life subscribers.

Initially, founder and publisher George R. Barton had intended Boys’ Life as a magazine for boys and scouts of different youth organizations but, shortly after its introduction in 1912, it became the official publication of BSA. As such Boys’ Life has since reflected the program themes and features and has thereby fulfilled the vision of the Boy Scouts of America (Media Kit, 2007; Fact Sheet, 2006).

### 3.2 Sample and Unit of Analysis

For this study a sample of all fiction narratives of the most recent five-year period of Boys’ Life magazine was used for the purpose of investigating portrayals of masculinity in contemporary magazine fiction for adolescent boys. The sample of Boys’ Life fiction stories was considered appropriate for three reasons. First, as discussed in detail in the literature review, studies have shown that fictional media content and narratives can have a powerful effect on readers’ beliefs and attitudes, regardless of their age. Second, the sample seems to represent prototypical cases for the study of portrayals of masculinity in fiction stories aimed at boys and male adolescents. According to Jensen (2002), this selection procedure of sampling cases can be described as theoretical sampling, one of three common types of qualitative sampling to generate meaningful units of analysis. Third, the sample seems of particular interest in light of the long history of the magazine and its publishing organization as well as the recent controversies about the Boy Scouts of America.
Fiction narratives are a specific form of media content with certain distinct features and underlying structural elements. All fiction is based on a conflict or problem as the root of the dramatic situation which, in turn, is the basis for all storytelling (Turco, 1999). Turco (1999) contends that, in the first place, it is the human conflict of the leading character that readers are interested in. The protagonist should arouse feelings of empathy or sympathy in the reader and a state of identification of the reader with the character, even if it is an animal displaying human characteristics.

For the sample, all fiction stories from the most recent five-year period of Boys’ Life magazine from January 2002 through December 2006 were included. In order to be included, narratives had to be designated as “fiction” stories either in the magazine’s table of content or on the starting page of the individual story. A total of 60 magazine issues yielded a sample of 56 fiction stories. In general, each issue of Boys’ Life includes one fiction story. Some issues, however, did not include any stories (11 issues) while in some cases (2 issues) there was more than one story. The July 2004 issue included a total of 6 fiction stories and was promoted as a “super-charged-fiction reading issue” (p. 3) with “shocking tales” (p. 1). The May 2004 issue included a total of three fiction stories promoted under the theme of “tales of the truly weird” (p. 26). Overall, the length of each story ranged between two and seven pages including illustrations. In order to be included in the sample, the narrative had to be specifically designated as “fiction” either on the first page of the story or in the front index of the magazine.

The unit of analysis in this study was the set of 12 values defined in the Scout Law (Boy Scouts of America, 1911). The goal of this study was to identify how these values are reflected in the ‘what’ (story or content) and ‘how’ of narratives (Chatman,
1978; Larsen, 2002) to gain insight to the multifaceted ways in which masculinity is constructed and negotiated within and throughout the various narratives in Boys’ Life magazine. This analysis allowed for a fuller understanding of how Scouting values and their portrayal relate to prevalent notions of masculinity.

3.3 Methodological Approach and Analytical Process

Luke (1995) refers to texts as moments that, through the use of language and other sign systems, articulate cultural representations as well as social relations and identities. Larsen (2002) further remarks that the underlying assumption for the study of particular works “is that they are thought to be significant carriers of cultural values and insights, or that they provide important and valuable aesthetic experiences” (p. 120). It is for these very reasons that researchers have conducted content analysis to discover and reveal the values and meanings that are constructed through words.

As became evident from the review of the literature, much previous research has focused on quantitative content analysis. Quantitative content analysis has allowed researchers to study patterns, trends, and changes in media representations of gender, the relationship between what is presented textually and how it matches reality, and the effects that media representations can have on audiences (Larsen, 2002). This corresponds with the humanistic perspective of conceptualizing contents as both an expression of a particular subjectivity and as the representation of a particular context (Jensen, 1991). However, relying only on systematic and efficient methodologies researchers have tried to uncover meaning by breaking texts down into quantifiable units of analysis. This has neglected the fact that each unit or element that constitutes a text has
to be understood with reference to its context and the text as a meaningful whole (Larsen, 1991, Jensen, 1991). Therefore, Kracauer (1953) argues that quantitative analysis should be considered as only as a supplement to qualitative approaches of analysis. Kracauer (1953) further contends that the inherent lack of ascertained accuracy and validity should not be considered a flaw because subjective interpretation is indispensable in the analysis for the following reasons:

Documents which are not simply agglomerations of facts participate in the process of living, and every word in them vibrates with the intentions in which they originate and simultaneously foreshadows the indefinite effects they may produce. Their content is no longer their content if it is detached from the texture of intimations to which it belongs and taken literally; it exists only with and within this texture – a still fragmentary manifestation of life, which depends upon response to evolve its properties. Most communications are not so much fixed entities as ambivalent challenges. They challenge the reader or the analyst to absorb them and react to them. Only in approaching these whole with his own whole being will the analyst be able both to discover and determine their meaning – or one of their meanings – and thus help them to fulfill themselves. (Kracauer, 1953, pp. 641-642)

The overall research goal of this study is to explore how American values of masculinity are constructed and reflected in contemporary fiction stories of Boys’ Life magazine. The study is guided by the definition of values of masculinity formulated by the Boy Scouts of America, one of the nation’s leading youth organizations and publisher of Boys’ Life magazine. In this study, generalization is not the goal, but rather the goal is to gain an insightful understanding of how meaning in relation to masculinity is portrayed and how it relates to the vision and ideals of the Boy Scouts of America and common notions of masculinity in society. Therefore, and for the reasons mentioned earlier, a qualitative content analysis was considered appropriate for this study. Similar research that has examined adolescent fiction for somewhat different concepts has described the
goal of its qualitative analysis as “‘listening’ to themes of oppression and resistance [such as racism, ageism, and (hetero)sexism] and to nuances of expression, rather than ‘looking for’ empirical, countable evidence to support one hypothesis or another” (Clark, 2002, p. 287). Being open to particular details and contexts of the stories seems to be most promising in naturalistic, qualitative studies (Clark, 2002). The goal for this study then is to listen to the theme of values of masculinity as they are expressed in the values of the Boy Scouts of America.

Jensen (2002) describes qualitative research as a heterogeneous area that, nonetheless, has at least three distinctive features that most current research shares. First, it is the idea that everything that is created and experienced is meaningful. Thus, qualitative research attempts to understand how meaning is embedded in social action, what the connection is between meaning and action, and how the media generate meaning. The second feature Jensen discusses is the approach of qualitative research by studying meaning within naturalistic contexts which refers to the researcher’s lengthy immersion into the culture of a research object in order to grasp a full understanding of it. The third feature is related to the researcher’s role as the human interpretive subject. Unlike quantitative research in which interpretation is exercised in delegated and sequential form, qualitative research relies on the researcher as an ongoing interpreter of “meaning in action” (Jensen, 2002, p. 236). This feature acknowledges the fact that humans are different and “that things mean different things to different people” (Taylor, 1994, p. 266). Therefore, qualitative research, according to Taylor (1994), can be defined as “any systematic investigation that attempts to understand the meaning that things have for individuals from their own perspectives” (p. 266).
This study, too, assumes that meanings of masculinity are created and reflected in the fiction stories of *Boys’ Life* and the aim is to develop a thorough understanding of what masculinity means in these stories and how this meaning is established. Notions of masculinity, like notions of gender in general, are said to be strongly influenced by cultural aspects as explained earlier in this study. Thus the meanings of masculinity created in these stories can be assumed to be strongly influenced by American culture and values. The researcher as the interpretive subject of this study is a native German. This may reveal particularly interesting insights because various aspects of meaning that may be taken for granted by an American individual may be perceived more strongly by an individual of a different cultural background.

According to Larsen (1991), the goal for the researcher in conducting a qualitative content analysis of text documents is to reveal and “bring out the whole range of possible meanings, not least the ‘hidden’ message of the text” (p. 122). Thus, rather than only scanning the text for the presence or absence of fixed, pre-defined categories, the idea in this study is to interpret these concepts with regards to their context in order to include the more subtle ways in which masculinity is constructed.

Taylor (1994) describes the scanning of data in qualitative research as the search for specific instances and how they relate to broader concepts. Just as meaning is different from one individual to another, Taylor argues that meaning may change with time, in light of different circumstances and settings or as individuals themselves change. Thus, meaning is not static but subject to continuous interpretation and refinement. During the process of data coding is therefore necessary to be flexible when trying to make sense of data as it is being collected. Conclusions should not be made prematurely.
but instead the researcher should aim to think in terms of working hypotheses. Going back and forth between data collection and interpretation, the researcher needs to test and refine different possible explanations until information gained becomes redundant (Taylor, 1994).

According to Jensen (2002) a common qualitative approach in media research is thematic coding which means the loosely inductive categorization of data with reference to various concepts or themes by comparing, contrasting, and abstracting the constitutive elements of meaning. “It is the very occurrence of a particular theme or frame in a context of communication which is of primary interest to qualitative research” (Jensen, 2002, p. 247).

Using the inductive approach of thematic coding, this study investigated the values of masculinity defined in the Scout Law by conducting a qualitative textual analysis, a procedure that relies heavily on “attentive ‘close reading’” (Larsen, 2002, p. 120). This tradition of close reading is practiced by the Anglo-American school of New Criticism and its French counterpart, the explication du texte, and it examines a text as a whole, as well as certain parts of it in more detail with the aim of capturing both its manifest and its latent meaning(s) (Larsen, 2002). The idea of a text’s manifest and latent meaning has also been referred to as its natural and its ideological meaning and as its denotation and connotation (Barthes, 1977; Larsen, 1991). Denotation can be defined as the literal meaning and connotation as the value that is added to the literal meaning (Bertrand & Hughes, 2005). The study and theory of narration is called narratology (Turco, 1999) or narratologie according to the French who have coined the term (Chatman, 1978). In this study, two basic approaches of narratology have been deemed
most useful for the textual analysis of explicit and implicit meanings of values: Chatman’s (1978) division of narratives into story and discourse and Turco’s (1999) analysis of narratives according to basic structural elements of fiction.

According to Chatman (1978), a narrative has two parts. The first part is the ‘what’ in a narrative and refers to its actual story or ‘histoire’ which includes the content or chain of events (actions, happenings) and the existents (characters, setting). The second part is the ‘how’ of a narrative, its discourse or expression which relates to the means by which the story is developed and communicated.

One aspect of how the story is communicated is the way in which the narrative is presented to its readers. A narrative can be directly presented, with the underlying idea of showing and witnessing, or mediated through a narrator, by telling. Turco (1999) refers to narratorhood as a narrative’s voice which, among others, includes considerations of viewpoint (author-narrated vs. character-narrated) and person (first person, second person, or third person). For this study, taking into consideration these aspects of narration or voice helped revealing the more subtle ways in which values can be reflected by literary means.

The study of narratives, according to Turco (1999) also includes a structural analysis of the basic elements of fiction. For the purpose of this study about portrayals of values, the basic elements of theme and character were evaluated as most important. Turco (1999) defines the theme as “the thread of idea that underlies the story” (p. 53). In terms of the character as an element in narratives, the most important one is the main character, also called the protagonist or hero/heroine. The protagonist can be brought to life and characterized in terms of traits and personality features, as well as actions and
reactions, and through dialogue. Thus, when reading and analyzing the fiction stories in terms of portrayals of values, close attention was paid in particular to both the theme and the main character.

The process of close reading of the narratives underwent essentially four stages. During the first step of analysis, all narratives were read for an overall understanding of the content, subject, and protagonist or main character of each narrative. For this initial reading of narratives a template was developed to code the narratives individually for the following components: the magazine issue in which each narrative was published (year and month); the title and author of each fiction story as well as the short synopsis that was provided along with every fiction story in the magazine; the protagonist including name, gender, and age depending on how much information was provided within the respective narrative. This overview of the narratives is provided in Table 7 in the Appendix.

During the second reading of the narratives, the content of each fiction story was summarized, including major aspects of story’s subject, main events, actions, and happenings as well as minor characters in terms of name, age, gender, and relation to the protagonist depending on the information provided explicitly and implicitly in the narrative. Examples for three narratives can be found in the Appendix in Table 8.

During the third reading of all narratives, the goal was to identify and document values and themes that became apparent through close reading and how these are reflected or constructed, for example, through descriptions, actions, or conversations of characters, the underlying narrative theme, the dramatic conflict and the conflict resolution. At this stage in the research process, no particular attention was paid to any
specific concepts. Rather, the idea was to be as open as possible to fully understand the stories by gaining a rich and deep insight into underlying ideas and ideologies that emerged from close reading and may be portrayed in more or less obvious ways.

Examples for three narratives can be found in the Appendix in Table 9.

In a next step and based on the previous readings, the 12 values of the Scout Law were collapsed into categories of six. This additional step was considered appropriate because several values seemed not clearly distinguishable from one another in terms of meaning or definition, for example, the value of being friendly and the value of being courteous. In addition, some of the values were evaluated as thematically similar insofar as they represent social values meaning values in relation to other individuals or groups of individuals, whether it is humans or animals. Thus, one category combined seven of the values of the Scout Law including being loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, cheerful, and obedient. The Scout Law (Boy Scouts of America, 1911, pp. 15-16) defines these seven values as follows7: (1) loyalty is defined in relation to “all to whom loyalty is due: his [the Boy Scout’s] Scout leader, his home, and parents and country;” (2) helpfulness means being concerned about others and prepared at all times to save someone else’s life, help injured people, and attending to chores at home; (3) friendliness is defined as being a friend to everyone and “a brother to every other Scout;” (4) courteousness means being polite to everyone, but in particular to women, children, elderly people, and those who are weak or helpless; (5) kindness means being a friend to all animals and not hurting or killing an animal needlessly, but to protect living creatures; (6) obedience is defined in relation to “parents, scout master, patrol leader, and all other

7 Numbers are only assigned to each value for the purpose of clarity and may not match the numbers assigned according to the Scout Law.
duly constituted authorities;” (7) *cheerfulness* means smiling whenever possible, looking for the bright side of things, trying to make others happy, and nother grumbling at hardships.

The other five values were kept individually for the analysis of the narratives because the only aspect they all have in common is that they represent values in relation to oneself, statements of characteristics about the individual. Otherwise, they were found to be thematically distinct in terms of their definition and meaning. The Scout Law (Boy Scouts of America, 1911, pp. 15-16) defines them as follows: *trustworthiness* is defined as not infringing one’s honour by lying, cheating, or not doing a task exactly as given; *bravery* means to have “the courage to face danger in spite of fear and (…) to stand up for the right against the coaxings of friends or the jeers or threats of enemies, and defeat does not down him [the Scout];” *thriftiness* means that a Scout “does not wantonly destroy property [but that he] works faithfully, wastes nothing and makes the best use of his opportunities [and that] he saves his money so that he may pay his own way, be generous to those in need, and helpful to worthy objects;” *cleanliness* is defined in relation to clean speech, sport, and habits and “travel[ing] with a clean crowd;” reverence is defined in relation to God and being faithfuil in one’s own religious duties as well as respecting the conviction of others.

During the fourth and final stage of close reading, the goal was to identify how the meaning of the six value categories are conveyed in terms of overall prevalence of the values in each fiction story as well as across narratives. Thereby, thematic coding was conducted to identify specific, explicit (natural) and implicit (ideological) references both in the underlying theme of the stories as well as in specific instances throughout the
stories. Results of this stage of the analysis are documented in Table 10 in the Appendix. The respective references to values were then examined further to discover in detail the ways and means by which they are communicated. During this process of textual analysis, special attention was paid to how they relate to the different components of the narratives as identified by Chatman (1978) and Turco (1999), namely the story (subject and theme, setting, conflict and resolution, characters and actions) and the discourse of the narrative (the means of communication) with a particular focus on the narrative voice.
4 Results

Chapter 3 explained the methodological approach and how each individual fiction story of the sample of 56 narratives was coded and analyzed in relation to values of masculinity. This chapter presents the results from the analysis of the stories. The analysis was guided by the overarching research goal to explore the various ways in which masculinity is constructed through the textual representation of values defined in the Scout Law by the Boy Scouts of America. Another aspect to be taken into account was how these portrayals relate to prevalent notions and conceptualizations of masculinity.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section provides a broad overview of the similarities and differences in the variety of contemporary narratives in Boys’ Life magazine. Section 4.2 presents the findings regarding portrayals of values of masculinity according to the different value categories. Overall findings are discussed and further illustrated through specific narratives that serve as examples. In section 4.3, the major findings of the study are summarized.

4.1 Overview of Boys’ Life Fiction Stories

Each one of the stories that were analyzed in the sample is between two and six pages long including illustrations. Illustrations, however, were not included as part of the analysis.

Of the 56 narratives, the majority of fiction stories (44 narratives) are based on realistic settings, characters, events, and happenings, even though the actual stories are
contrived. Of those narratives that are reality-based, 14 stories can be classified as historical fiction. Historical fiction in the context of this study is defined as stories that portray either historical events or the spirit and social conditions of a past period of time as indicated by descriptions of the setting and characterization of figures in the narratives. Half of the historical fiction (7 narratives) portray situations and characters during times of war and battle, for example, the War of Independence (e.g., “The Tiny Patriot” by G. C. Wisler, February 2006; “American Brothers” by T. Fleming, March 2005; “A Secret Patriot” by T. Fleming, November 2004), the Civil War (e.g., “Chancellorsville” by G. C. Wisler, June 2005; “The Truce” by G. C. Wisler, September, 2003), or the Second World War (e.g., “D-Day” by G. C. Wisler, June 2004). Other historical fiction that is not war related, deals, for example, with slavery (“North to Freedom” by G. C. Wisler, February 2002), gold mining (“The King of Mazy May” by J. London, March 2006), or life within an Indian tribe (“Cries-at-Moon of the Kitikiti’sh” by G. Dudney, August 2004).

A series of other, reality-based narratives that do not represent historical but rather contemporary fiction (39 stories), portray situations and characters within the context of sports including typical American games such as football (e.g., “Gotta be the Shoes” by J. W. Bennett, July 2004), baseball (e.g., “Getting Even” by J. M. Janik, April 2003; “Grooved” by J. M. Janik, June 2002), or basketball (e.g., “Second String” by C. Deuker, January 2005) as well as outdoor sports and activities such as surfing (e.g., “What are friends for?” by G. Salisbury, February 2003), skiing (e.g., “Fall Line” by M. C. Wartski, December 2005), mountain biking (“Deadly Detour” by M. C. Wartski, April 2005), hiking and camping (“Old Champ” by M. C. Wartski, October 2002), or horseback riding (“My Cousin Bronc” by W. J. Buchanan, May 2005).
A small number of the analyzed narratives (3 fiction stories) illustrate futuristic settings in which events take place not on earth but either on the moon (“Moonwalk” by B. Bova, November 2002), on Mars (“Downslope” by J. Stanchfield, March 2002), or on a fictitious planet called Aletha Three (“Beyond the Next Ridge” by J. Stanchfield, June 2003). While the settings do not represent reality, the characters and the conflicts that these characters face are, for the most part, realistic.

In addition, there are fiction narratives that have realistic settings but unreal characters (“Speck, the Special Sardine” by W. Saroyan, June 2006) or realistic characters but unreal events and happenings (“The Terrible Big Wind in Abilene” by W. B. Morris, October, 2006). Yet another group of narratives, a total of seven stories, are based on make-believe and seem to blend reality with fictitious or imaginary elements that make the story appear dream-like, for example, “The Terror of the Amazon” (by D. Lubar, September 2004), “The Billion Legger” (by D. Lubar, July 2004), “The Doryman” (by I. Lawrence, October 2003), and “The Things in Adam’s Bedroom” (by J. L. Messina, January 2003).

The setting is non-urban in more than half (33 stories) of all the narratives, urban in 22 of the narratives and both urban and non-urban in one fiction story (“Speck, the Special Sardine” by W. Saroyan, June 2006). In the latter, Speck the male sardine decides that he does not want to be a sardine anymore and leaves the sea to live and work in the city. Thus, part of the story takes place in a non-urban and the other one in an urban setting.

The majority of all analyzed fiction stories, a total of 44, are narrated in the third person and the remaining 12 narratives have a first-person narrator. In all except for two
of the 56 analyzed narratives, the protagonist is male and either a teenage or a pre-
teenage boy between the age of nine and 19 years. While in 22 narratives no specific age
is given, several clues within the stories including settings and activities suggest that the
main characters are at least school age. Of the remaining two stories, one features a male
animal with human-like features and characteristics (“Speck, the Special Sardine” by W.
Saroyan, June 2006) and the other one features no single main character or protagonist
that is in the focus of the story (“The Terrible Big Wind in Abilene” by W. B. Morris,
October 2006). Several narratives contain clues that the male protagonists are separated
from one or both parents, with eight of the fiction stories specifically indicating that one
or both parents have died. In addition, it became apparent over the course of the analysis
that many of the minor characters in each fiction story are male as well.

In summary, the fiction stories are primarily realistic depictions of non-urban
settings and the experiences of male protagonists between the age of 9 and 19 years
narrated in the third person.

4.2 Values of Masculinity in Boys’ Life Fiction Narratives

The values of masculinity as formulated by the Boy Scouts of America in the
Scout Law are expressed in all but one of the analyzed narratives (“The Billion Legger”
by D. Lubar, July 2004). Overall, the value category that is found to be expressed most
often (44 narratives) across the different fiction stories was the category that comprises
values in relation to others (loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, cheerful, and
obedient). It is important to note, however, that this category combines a total of seven of
the twelve values of the Scout Law, whereas the other five categories each represent only
a single value of the Scout Law. Of the other five value categories, the two categories that are expressed most often are being trustworthy and being brave. Each one of these values is present in 34 analyzed narratives. The value that was found to be reflected second most often of the five individual values is thriftiness (27 narratives). The remaining two categories, the values of cleanliness and reverence, were found to be portrayed much less often in contrast to the other value categories. The value of cleanliness is reflected in eight of the narratives and the value of reverence is implied in only a single story. This clearly indicates that overall certain virtues of the Scout Law – values that, according to the Boy Scouts of America, reflect ideals of masculinity – are more prevalent in the narratives than others. This and further aspects are discussed in the conclusion chapter.

First, however, the following sections present how the different value categories are reflected in the sample of narratives. For each value or value category, specific examples illustrate how meaning is constructed in relation to these values and in relation to the concept of masculinity.

Values in Relation to Others: Loyalty, Helpfulness, Friendliness, Courteousness, Kindness, Cheerfulness, and Obedience

A total of 44 fiction narratives in the sample portrayed values in relation to others, either a single value or different values in combination. The values assigned to this category represent values in relation to other individuals or groups of individuals, whether humans or animals. They include being loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, and cheerful. The Scout Law (Boy Scouts of America, 1911, pp. 15-16; Boy Scout Oath, n.d.) defines the different values as follows: (1) loyalty means being true to
the family, Scout leaders, parents, friends, and country; (2) helpfulness means being concerned about others and prepared at all times to save someone’s life, help injured people, and share chores at home; (3) friendliness means being a friend to everyone and a brother to all other Scouts; (4) courteousness means being polite to everyone, particularly to women, children, elderly people, and those who are weak or helpless; (5) kindness means being a friend to all animals and not to hurt or kill any needlessly, but instead to protect living creatures; (6) obedience means sticking to the rules of parents, Scout masters and leaders, and other duly constituted authorities; (7) cheerfulness means smiling whenever possible, looking for the bright side of things, never grumbling at hardships, and trying to make others happy. The following selected examples were found to portray the various values most clearly through a variety of different contexts.

The first sample narrative chosen for this category is an illustration for the reflection of the values of being helpful, friendly, courteous, and cheerful. The historical fiction story “North to Freedom” (by G. C. Wisler, February 2002) deals with the subject of bondage before the start of the Civil War and the attempts of slaves to escape on the Underground Railroad. It narrates the risky but successful escape of two teenage brothers, protagonist Jacob and his younger brother Ezra, who have been kept as slaves in the South. On their dangerous journey to freedom, the two boys encounter generous allies who act courageously and selflessly by taking on risks themselves, not for pay but for the purpose of doing what they perceive as good and right. The story sets in right before the boys are about to go on the run by depicting their conversation about their anxiety of what may happen if they get caught and their questioning of whether they are doing the right thing. It has obviously been a long and carefully planned escape because they talk
about the rules they have established to guide their actions. When they start running, they can hear howling dogs, the shouting threats of men, and the firing of guns until they get far enough away to hide before they continue their journey on the next day. Jacob remembers the events that took place back at where they were kept slaves and the times when his family was still united. Since then his mother has died and his father sold to another slave owner before he escaped with Ben, another slave who used to be like an older brother to Jacob. Ben taught Jacob the rules for escape and a drinking gourd song as a secret code to guide their way and help them identifying people who are their friends and whom they can trust. The first friend that Jacob and Ezra meet on their way is a gray-haired woman who carries them in a wagon across the Tennessee River and hands them a paper which takes them past the sheriff. When they reach the Ohio River they encounter Sam, a skinny white boy who does not only carry flour, molasses, and tobacco in a wagon across the river, but at the same time helps slaves cross the bridge to freedom. Jacob is surprised to hear Sam explaining that he and his grandfather do this on a regular basis: “Grandpa and I run a wagon over and back three days a week. Usually our passengers have to wait awhile. You’re lucky.” Sam carries Jacob and Ezra in the deep bed of his wagon and easily manages to get by the Sheriff without any problems. Despite the risks that he has to fear himself carrying such a ‘load’, the boy “whistled a pleasant tune as if to cheer his secret cargo. He chewed the end of a straw and conversed with anyone who happened by.” Having arrived on the other side of the river Sam helps Ezra and Jacob getting out of the narrow compartment in the wagon and “a pleasant woman dressed in black greet[s] them with a smile and a dipper of water.” When
Jacob asks about the remaining way to Princeton where his father is awaiting them the woman and Sam explain not to worry.

“Not far, child,” the woman said. “Not far at all.” “No, the hard part’s past,” Sam agreed. “We have a lot of friends on this side of the river.” Jacob liked the way the boy said we. He and Ezra would see their father soon. And then they truly would be free. (p. 29)

The values of helpfulness, friendliness, courteousness, and cheerfulness are portrayed in the actions of other people. It is the generosity that the protagonist and his brother receive from them that help to convey the meaning of these values.

The second narrative chosen to represent the value of *kindness* in this the category is “Cries-at-Moon of the Kitikiti’sh” (by G. Dudney, August 2004), a story about a 12-year old Indian boy of the Kitikiti’sh tribe who discovers that courage and hunting skills are not the only things that matter. Cries-at-Moon, the protagonist of the story, has not yet been able to make his dad proud like his younger brother River who is only 11 years of age. In contrast to River, Cries-at-Moon does not carry “a name of pride (p. 40),” he has always seemed to be less courageous and strong, and has not yet taken his first buffalo like River. While his father has shown pride “marching River from lodge to lodge presenting his son (p. 40),” Cries-at-Moon is convinced that his father has been “looking at him with disapproval (p. 40)” and he dearly hopes to be able to prove himself during the next buffalo hunt. Yet, when given the chance, the boy remembers how he witnessed his uncle being killed by a huge bull and feels overwhelmed and impaired by his fears.

When a herd of buffalo approaches

Cries-at-Moon saw the first buffalo dash over the horizon toward them. Then more dark shapes swarmed into view. Fear caught him like a coyote snatching up a rabbit. (…) River turned and ran after the fleeing buffalo, shouting for Cries-at-
Moon to follow. The frantic noise of the rushing buffalo passed into the distance. Cries-at-Moon hadn’t moved. He sat amazed by the courage his brother had shown. If only he had such courage! (p. 41)

Lost in this thought, Cries-at-Moon collects his arrows and searches for his brother, when he hears grunting noises and finds the injured buffalo, an old bull whose front leg is broken from having fallen from a bank. The boy slowly approaches the animal, instinctively sensing its pain and fear.

He moved closer and found that his own fear had left him. He walked up and placed a hand on the animal’s broad shoulder. With a kick of its good leg, the buffalo might have broken him in half, but Cries-at-Moon did not think of this. He whispered to the buffalo. “Quiet, Old One,” he said. “You’ve had bad luck here, but you’ve also had a long life, haven’t you?” Cries-at-Moon met the gaze of the buffalo’s dark brown eye. It seemed as if he and the animal were old friends. The boy closed his eyes. In his mind he was a buffalo running beside the old bull. He saw the grass sweeping by underneath him. He felt the warm sun on his shoulders. (p. 41)

Cries-at-Moon’s touch and talk seems to have calmed the bull down, but Cries-at-Moon feels that the buffalo wants to die, so he thrusts his knife in it as hard as he can:

“Warm blood poured from the wound over Cries-at-Moon’s hand. The light soon left the buffalo’s eye. Its head rested on the ground. Cries-at-Moon wept to see his friend die” (p. 41).

It is this very emotional interaction between the boy and the buffalo, the thoughts and feelings that the boy experiences and that seem to unite animal and human, which demonstrate a turning point in this narrative and help to construct the value of kindness to animals.

Tastes-the-Wind, the leader of the tribe, is amazed when Cries-at-Moon explains the he only did what his friend wanted and that, to him, it was as if the bull spoke to him
and he understood. Finally, Cries-at-Moon also gets the recognition that he has not yet received from his own father. Tastes-the-Wind wants the boy to tell him more about his understanding of the animals’ language and Cries-at-Moon tells about what he has learned from the animals:

“When the coyotes howl at night, I know they are lonely. They are searching for each other. They yelp with joy when they find each other. I know some of them by name. I understand the birds when they sing and the crickets when they chirp. This morning I heard a bullfrog speak to us as we passed by. He asked about his mate. I never told anyone about understanding when the animals speak. I thought it was silly. I thought others would laugh.” (p. 41)

In this case, the reader learns about the value of kindness and the notion of being close to animals through direct speech of the protagonist. Further, it is implied, that social acceptance is an important consideration for the boy when making the decision of whether or not to tell anyone about his ability that he himself does not perceive to be a desirable one within his social environment.

This fiction story seems particularly interesting, given that it directly addresses two of the Scout values as seemingly contradictory: being brave versus being kind in relation to animals. Without devaluing the virtue of being brave, the conflict is resolved by suggesting that everyone has special skills and abilities. In the case of Cries-at-Moon, it is his unique capability of connecting with and understanding animals as expressed in direct speech by Tastes-the-Wind:

“This is a wonderful gift you have. Tonight we will sit together, and tell stories of today’s hunt. Your story will be one of them. Perhaps you can become a storyteller and fill our hearts with the wisdom you learn from the animals. (...) Your father will be very proud.” (p. 41)
These remarks by the leader of the tribe indicate that kindness is a precious characteristic to have, even though Cries-at-Moon has been concerned that it may not correspond with common expectations of a brave young boy or man among his tribe. Thus, it seems that this narrative attempts to construct masculinity in alternative ways to what is generally accepted. At the same time though, the idea of social acceptance prevails, even though it is conveyed that this ultimate goal can be reached by alternative means. Another value within this category of values that is referenced briefly in this story is obedience to authorities when leader Tastes-the-Wind signals the father of Cries-at-Moon to keep silent so he can he about what the boy has to tell: “His [Cries-at-Moon’s] father began to speak, but Tastes-the-Wind held up his hand. ‘It is decided.’ So Tastes-the-Wind and Cries-at-Moon walked off together (p. 41).”

A third narrative selected to represent the values of cheerfulness, helpfulness, and loyalty within this category of values is “10,000 cookies” (by G. C. Wisler, December 2004), a contemporary fiction story about 13-year old Jeremy Wright whose older brother Ben (19 years) is far away to serve as a soldier in Iraq. It is the Christmas season and Jeremy feels that it is going to be dreary without his brother. Jeremy shows little understanding for Ben’s decision to go to Iraq in the first place and to stay there even for the holidays: “Isn’t there some hardship thing you can claim this year (p. 34)?” Jeremy feels disappointed because he has a very close relationship to his brother, especially since their dad died when Jeremy was only six years old, but he “had not been able to put his feelings into words (p. 34).” When putting up the Christmas tree and getting out the decorations, his friend Darren encourages Jeremy to cheer up. Later when Jeremy is
grumbling and complaining, his mother who has come home tired from work gets upset with him and the two get involved in an argument:

“Jeremy Daniel Wright!” she said, raising her voice. “Isn’t it about time for you to grow up? When Ben was 12, he was painting curb numbers and trimming shrubs to earn money and looking after you at the same time. How do you think he feels, guarding that airport thousands of miles away from where he wants to be? He’s lonely and probably scared. What are you doing to make him feel better?” “He’s got his friends,” Jeremy argued. “That’s not the same as family,” Mrs. Wright said. “You can’t believe he’d rather be there.” “He said he could come home,” Jeremy said. “He’s staying because his friends are staying. Says he owes them. What about me?” “He’s done plenty for you, young man! Ben’s doing his duty. He’s there so you can be safe here. I’m amazed you can’t see that!” (p. 34)

This conversation between the protagonist and his mother illustrates the meaning of loyalty to family and country, helpfulness in terms of sharing the home duties, and the importance of cheerfulness in terms of being happy instead of muttering and complaining about hardship. Jeremy’s mother does not show an understanding for Jeremy’s feelings but expresses dislike for his selfishness and she is reproachful because Jeremy does not seem to be willing to contribute to family life by being supportive and helpful like his brother used to be when he was at home. The reader further learns about the value of cheerfulness through an email that Jeremy has received from his brother Ben who reports having survived an attack unhurt. His words seem light-hearted and funny: “I can take the rockets and bombs,’ Ben wrote. ‘But I’m getting sick of the food. I’m sure that Meal Ready to Eat violates advertising codes.’ Jeremy laughed for the first time that week (p. 36).” It is at this particular point in the narrative, that the protagonist realizes ways of doing something for others and his brother in the first place: baking sugar cookies and sending them over to his brother. When he tells others about his idea he encounters a lot of enthusiasm with several people wanting to help and encouraging him to try and send
more cookies over as a treat for other soldiers as well. What begins as an idea to treat someone special with a small surprise turns into a large-scale cookie-baking event in which the community and Jeremy’s whole school contribute. The incredible amount of 100,000 cookies even attracts local news coverage and Jeremy has to give an interview to the reporters. Jeremy still cannot help but miss his brother. Yet, he seems to look at it in a much more positive way. Rather than complaining and grumbling, he laughs and seems much more high-spirited. His initial selfish expectations have turned into a hope that he will not have to celebrate without his brother again in the following year. This suggests that it is alright to be sad or to miss someone, but that it is also important not to feel overwhelmed by such feelings and to look for ways in which one can contribute and make things more bearable by bringing joy to others.

Yet another narrative chosen for this category reflects the values of being cheerful and loyal in relation to sports and the team. “Second String” (by C. Deuker, January 2005), a contemporary fiction story, features 8th-grader Clint as the protagonist who learns to accept his role on his basketball team and about the difference that attitude makes. Clint is well aware of the fact that he is not a basketball start but he seems content with his current role on the team: “This was my year to be a starter. Not a star, but a starter. Shooting guard is what they call my position (p. 28).” Clint speaks highly of other team members who are better than him and have earned the position they are in, for example, Mojo who

has a knack for making baskets. He can dribble past a defender and score on a driving lay-in, or he can stop on a dime, rise into the air and swish a jump shot from 20 feet away. The guy is going to be all-world someday – I don’t play the same game he does. But I had my role figured out. I’d make good passes and set
good screens. When you’re not real fast and can’t jump real high, being on the court is the main thing. (p. 28)

The way in which Clint comments on his own and on other team members’ abilities give the reader the impression that he does not complain about the way things are but, instead, looks for the bright side of things and tries to make the best out of the given situation. This demonstration of cheerfulness seems particularly credible because the story is narrated in first person giving the reader an insight to the protagonist’s thoughts and feelings. However, things change when Clint’s coach introduces a new team member, Ivan Rossovsky, a Russian boy who barely speaks any English. Clint soon perceives Ivan as an immediate rival because he is somewhat faster, jumps a little higher, and his shots are slightly better, too. Also, Clint feels resentful for not getting sufficient recognition from his coach in contrast to Ivan. Clint juggles with feelings of anger and pretended indifference, but expressions of anger and indifference are rather subtle and the reader is only able to detect these through careful reading. The following two comments that Clint makes in his mind illustrate this point: “By the end of practice, my throat was tight and my heart was pounding (p. 28).” and “So what if Rossovsky could run a little faster and jump a little higher? I was a smart player. Coach Barrett had said so (p. 28).” Clint refers to the Russian boy as Rossovsky, not as Ivan, which also show his unwillingness to identify with the new player. Clint does not openly express his anger and resentment toward his coach when taken out of the game by him and replaced by Ivan: “My head was swimming as I sat down next to Coach. ‘Way to go, Clint,’ he [coach] said. ‘You did fine.’ ‘Thanks,’ I muttered. What I wanted to say was: Then why did you yank me? (p. 28).” Over the course of the story, Clint’s negative feelings start
getting the upper hand; feelings of cheerfulness have vanished completely, especially when even the best player on the team seems to have confederated with the new guy and does not show an understanding for Clint’s situation:

Rossovsky sat next to Mojo, a silly grin on his face, not understanding anything. At the next practice, Coach moved Rossovsky to first string. That sucked the life out of me. I couldn’t get myself to hustle, and Rossovsky ate me alive all through practice. Afterward, I walked home with Mojo. “Can you believe how lucky we are to have Ivan?” he said. “Not so lucky for me,” I answered. “What do you mean?” “I mean I’m not going to play any more.” “You’ll play.” He paused. “Anyway, the important thing is the team, Clint. We could win the city title.” (p. 29)

This conversation between Mojo and Clint introduces the value of loyalty in this narrative uttered by Mojo who appeals to the idea of team spirit. Clint cannot be convinced though as reflected by his thoughts and behavior during practice and games. Finally, Mojo, the best player on the team, suggests to Clint that he turn in his uniform because he does not even try anymore to give his best and be part of the team. At first, Clint seriously considers doing just that. His anger has built up and is directed toward everyone – Mojo, Coach Barret, and Rossovsky – when he realizes how much basketball and the team mean to him and the importance of loyalty and cohesion within the team. And he realizes that his own attitude has led to his situation.

But then I started thinking about basketball. I like the game. I like being on a team. I thought of the guys singing away on the bus. I thought how loud the locker room was before and after practice. We had a good team. Everybody was pulling together. Everybody but me. (…) I wouldn’t quit (p. 30).

Clint seems to find back his initial cheerful attitude and even though he still dislikes not being on the court, he accepts the coach’s decisions and tries to give his very best whenever he is given the opportunity to play. During the arbitrative game for the city
title, Clint’s enthusiasm helps the team to win and Mojo acknowledges Clint’s contribution to the team: “‘You won it for us, you know’” (p. 31). Clint knows though that he actually did not win the game but he realizes how important he was nonetheless: “(…) I didn’t win it. But I could have lost it for us, if I’d quit. I could have lost it for us. Maybe that’s the thing about being on a team. Everybody matters – even the second stringers. It all counts (p. 31).”

In this narrative, cheerfulness and loyalty become strongly visible as values in relation to others. As in many other fiction stories, acting in accordance with the values is portrayed as socially desirable because it gets rewarded on both a group level, as demonstrated by winning the city title for the team, as well as on an individual level by getting individual recognition from others such as other team members or the coach.

The fifth and final narrative chosen to represent this category of values is “American Brothers” (by T. Fleming, March 2005), a historical fiction story about an Indian and a white teenage boy who “join forces to help form a new nation (p. 31)” during the revolutionary war against England. The story portrays four of the seven values within this category: **loyalty, cheerfulness, friendliness, and obedience**. Two values were of particular interest and thus are discussed in detail, one because of its dominance with regards to the underlying theme of the story (friendliness), the other one because it is presented in its opposite meaning (disobedience).

Running Wolf, a 12-year old Indian boy, is the main character of the story. Because of his special skill of speaking and understanding the white man’s language, he is allowed to join his uncle Bold Antelope and his 47 warriors of the Oneida Nation in the common battle with the American army against the British. The initial encounter with the
American army is somewhat disappointing for Running Wolf because he hears the men speaking about the warriors of his tribe as “filthy savages (p. 32).” The first reference to the value of friendliness occurs when Running Wolf wonders whether “any of these white men were friends (p. 32)” and all of a sudden a white, red-haired drummer boy of his age introduces himself to Running Wolf as Tom Travers. The two boys get engaged in a conversation in which both approach and learn about each other:

“Why do your people insult our warriors?” Running Wolf asked. “They have come many miles to fight beside you.” “A lot of our men had fathers or brothers who were killed by Indians in another war in Canada, a long time ago.” “But those Indians were not Oneida’s,” Running Wolf said. “The Oneidas have never warred on Americans.” “It’s all the same to them,” the drummer boy said. “They don’t like any Indians.” Running Wolf told Tom Travers what might happen if the Americans insulted the Oneidas again. Was there anyone who could prevent this? “Maybe we better talk to the colonel,” Tom said. (p. 32)

Thus, the value of friendliness is portrayed in the two boys who, acting responsibly and understandingly, take on the role of intermediaries between the American army and the Oneida Nation for the sake of a common purpose. Friendliness is further implied in Colonel Daniel Morgan, the commander of the American regiment, who promises the two boys to make sure that his troops get along with the Indian warriors and who shows generosity toward the Oneidas by making sure they get plenty of food. It is not clear though, whether this kind of friendliness goes beyond the pure goal-orientation of getting along well to defeat the British, especially in light of the colonel’s hope that “the Oneidas would fight hard” (p. 32).

The value of obedience is introduced when Running Wolf is told by his uncle Bold Antelope to stay behind with Tom when the Indian warriors and the American troops set out to set up posts that would prevent the British from making surprise attacks
on them. Instead of following his uncle’s command, however, Running Wolf and Tom “too excited to sleep (p. 34)” decide to do “some scouting on their own” (p. 34) in the woods and are “enjoying themselves until a strange sound” (p. 34) is audible. The boys realize that it comes from a large troop of British soldiers marching toward the American camp and they race back to warn the others. Soon thereafter the boys find themselves in the midst of a boisterous gun fight between the two sides until Bold Antelope and his warriors are able to scare off the British with a fearsome war whoop. The value of obedience is taken up again: “When he saw Running Wolf and Tom Travers among the warriors, Bold Antelope’s eyes flashed angrily. ‘Get to the rear!’ he roared. They obeyed him without argument. Enemy bullets were whistling everywhere (p. 34).” In contrast to the first time, the boys do as they are told having grasped the severity of the situation and danger they are in. Even though the boys have disobeyed the first order of Bold Antelope, it turns out to rebound to their advantage. By warning their troops to react just in time they have helped to prevent the British raid. Thus, instead of being punished for their failure to follow a given order, the boys are praised by everyone. Also, it has given Colonel Morgan another reason to praise the Oneidas. The regiment formed a circle around Running Wolf and the warriors, and gave them three cheers. It was almost as loud as an Oneida war whoop. Bold Antelope was proud of his nephew. He put his arm around both boys and said: “Tom must come visit us in the Oneida Nation when the war is over. We will make him one of our people. He will become Running Wolf’s brother.” When Running Wolf translated these words for Tom, he smiled and said: “Running Wolf already is my brother.” (p. 34)

Friendliness is expressed by reciprocal recognition and praise between the American and the Oneidas. Further, friendliness in this narrative is not established for its
own sake but rather it seems to have been made possible only because of a common external enemy. Thus friendliness appears to be goal-oriented for the purpose of solving a task and fighting the enemy. This becomes obvious early on in the story when several men of the American regiment express their prejudices and resentment toward the Indian warriors. Only after the Oneidas have proven to be good warriors, do they receive praise. But even then it is instigated by the Colonel who, driven by the desire to achieve his goal, has been keen to cooperate with the Oneidas from the beginning. Friendliness is only portrayed as some form of public performance. With the exception of the conversation between the two boys, no indication is given elsewhere in the story that there is an honest and sincere exchange of ideas between the American army and the Oneida Nation that may lead to friendship based on better understanding for each other.

Value of Trustworthiness

A total of 34 fiction stories in the sample of 56 exhibited representations of the value of trustworthiness, the value that is listed first in the Scout Law. It is defined as not infringing one’s honor by lying, cheating, or not doing exactly a given task (Boy Scouts of America, 1911). Most dominantly, this value was expressed in relation to honesty (not telling lies) and reliability or dependability (doing a task exactly as given), with the overarching idea to live up to expectations of oneself and others. Three examples, explained in the following, were chosen to illustrate the meaning and construction of trustworthiness as a desirable masculine value according to the Boy Scouts of America.

Perhaps most strongly, the theme of proving dependability and the ability to do a task exactly as given and live up to expectations of others is reflected in the narrative
“Race against time” (by G. C. Wisler, January 2006). Two teenage brothers, Andrew (14 years) and Hunt (12 years) Cole, are the main characters and given the task to save the lives of more than 80 passengers on a train that their father is driving. The bridge over Duck River had been struck and destroyed by lighting. Fear of failure and the pressure to fulfill the task given to the Cole brothers by their grandfather and train stationmaster becomes apparent early on in the synopsis of the story: “The Cole brothers felt like failures, and saving the train and lives of its passengers seemed humanly impossible. Would this be the boys’ biggest failure ever (p. 26)?” Even though “it will take a two-legged man to make that three miles [to the bridge] (p. 28),” according to the grandfather, he commissions the boys with the enormous responsibility of bringing the train to a stop. Andy, the older one, expresses his doubts to his grandfather who, nonetheless, persists that the brothers can and have to handle the responsibility: “‘Grandpa, I can’t move that switch. It takes full-grown man.’ ‘Take Hunt. You two can manage it.’ Andy shook his head, thinking his little brother was more useless than he was – if that was possible (p. 28).” His brother Hunt reacts with similar self-doubts and feelings of worthlessness when asked to go along with Andy: “‘Since when was I any use?’ ‘Since now,’ Andy said, not believing it. (….) ‘There’s nobody else’ (p. 28)?” Andy’s lack of self-confidence seems deeply rooted in an event in the past when, being only 11 years old, he was not able to fetch a doctor in time to help his fatally ill mother while his father was gone for work. The boys have to walk as quickly as they can, hindered by bad conditions out in the darkness with rain and lightning, mud and timbers along their way. Several times they are close to giving up. At the same time, their fears and worries about the inability to live up
to others’ expectations, especially those of their grandfather and father, remain to be an important underlying theme of the brothers’ conversation and thoughts:

“There’s no light to read my watch,” Andy explained. “Anyway, I think I cracked the crystal when I fell that last time.” “Pa won’t like you breaking it.” “I just hope that’s the only reason he’s disappointed.” Andy paused. “Could be a hundred people on that train.” “Who says we are going to fail?” Andy didn’t reply. They both knew the answer: everyone. When was the last time the Cole brothers did anything right? (p. 29)

Doing their utmost and just in time, the Cole brothers are able to reach the bridge and open and close the switch which diverts the train onto the siding. Their father who does not immediately realize the situation and the danger that he has been in, seems rather angry, calling his sons young fools and asking them whether they have lost their sense (p. 29). After he is told what had happened he wraps his arms around his boys and tells them: “You did a good job tonight (p. 29).” For the first time, the Cole brothers feel like they have “come through” (p. 20). Trustworthiness is not explicitly mentioned in this narrative but portrayed in its meaning of fulfilling a task as given and, conversely, the failure to do so. Thus, the boys’ success in saving their father and the other people on the train is not just a heroic act in itself. Rather it seems as if the gravity of the situation was necessary in order to restore others’ and their own beliefs in their abilities. It solved the conflict of not being considered trustworthy.

A similarly dramatic situation in which trustworthiness is a key element of the main character’s actions is the historic fiction story “D-Day” (by G. C. Wisler, June 2004) dealing with the German invasion of the Normandy in June 1944. Protagonist Claude Duval, a 14-year old boy living in the small French village of Ste. Marie-du-Mont, is woken up in the middle of the night by his best friend Jerome asking him to go
with him and assist in cutting the telephone wires that serve the German soldiers for their communication purposes. This undertaking seems especially risky since it is well past curfew and several people who defied it in the past have been killed. Even though Claude seems reluctant in the beginning because of the danger involved, he quickly becomes aware of the significance of Jerome’s request because his friend is surprisingly serious and determined: “‘Get out here now!’ Jerome said with an urgency he’d never demonstrated before. Usually Jerome was the grinning prankster who never believed in doing anything today that could be put off until tomorrow (p. 38).” Even in response to Claude’s doubts about the job they need to take care of, Jerome insists that it has to be done anyway and encourages Claude not to waste any time.

“Come on,” Jerome said, grabbing Claude’s wrist and pulling him along. “It can’t be helped. I promised my father we would cut the wires. He has enough to worry about here in town.” There was really never a question of going alone, of course. Claude knew that. He might pretend to be upset, but he felt an obligation to help rid France of the Germans as much as anyone (p. 39).

As reflected in this example, the idea of trustworthiness is often closely related to other Scout values such as bravery, loyalty, and helpfulness. Extraordinary situations, such as war, require extraordinary behavior. Jerome’s actions make him a trustworthy boy who goes out of his usual way of getting chores done to keep the promises he made to his father and fulfill his responsibility toward his country. He cannot afford to fail and proves his trustworthiness by fulfilling the assigned task without the least delay. In similar way, Jerome can depend on his best friend Claude without doubt. Even though hesitantly, there is no doubt that Claude will do whatever it takes to help both his friend and his country as reflected in his thoughts and actions. When Jerome gets shot in his arm
while he trying to cut the telephone wires and is unable complete the job as planned, Claude jumps in to finish what his best friend has started even though he is afraid. Trustworthiness and dependability in this narrative are defined as solving a task exactly as given and is close related to the value of loyalty in relation to father, friend, and country. This meaning of trustworthiness is constructed by characters’ own words in conversation (e.g., Jerome), the expression of their thoughts (Claude), and their actions (Jerome, Claude).

A second meaning of trustworthiness according to the Scout Law is related to the idea of honesty and not cheating. This is best exemplified in “Grooved” (by J. M. Janik, June 2002), a narrative about a baseball game in which protagonist Ryan and his best friend Derrick are against each other in the competing teams. Derrick is very close to winning the league batting title competing head on with rival Jerry Carter of yet another team. Derrick half-jokingly asks Ryan to help him win the title by throwing two easy pitches because that’s all he would need. Ryan’s first reaction is indignation and uncertainty about whether his best buddy’s request actually means what Ryan thinks: cheating in the game. At the same time, however, he already looks for arguments that may justify such behavior.

“You’re kidding right?” He actually expected me to give him easy pitches? If I did, he’d smack them base hits and win his batting crown. It didn’t mean I’d have to blow the whole game, just help him out a little. That’s what friends were for, right? Derrick was my very best friend. (....) I could help my best friend clinch the trophy. All I had to do was ...what? Cheat? (p. 26)

Even though Ryan seems not quite convinced of it and it “didn’t feel right (p. 26),” he uses the ideals of friendship and relying on each other to justify a violation of the
ideals of clean sports and fair play. Ryan’s conflict seems to be intensified by two additional and contradictory considerations: his teams ranking and his father’s expectations. On the one hand, Ryan’s own team hasn’t been doing as well and places third at the moment. In addition, the game against his friend Derrick’s team will not make a difference. On the other, his father, not knowing about Derrick’s conflict, reminds his son that the important thing is not just how your team scores or how you perform personally, but that it is important to always give your best. Struggling with these conflicting thoughts, Ryan goes into the game. The first ball he throws turns out to be an easy one for Derrick, but not because Ryan intended it be easy: “I didn’t groove it on purpose. But Derrick thought I did, so why tell him the truth. I didn’t say anything at all (p. 28).” Yet, Derrick’s arrogant reaction and cocky-like bearing, “like he knew the batting title was in the bag (p. 28),” annoys Ryan: “Made my blood boil just thinking about it. It wasn’t right (p. 28).” This demonstrates the turning point of the narrative at which Ryan decides not to give in but to make the game a fair one regardless of his friendship to Derrick. With his dad and Jerry Carter, Derrick’s rival for the batting title, in the audience there is “no way [Ryan] could groove one. Not with Jerry Carter sitting right here. It wouldn’t be fair. If Derrick hated [him] for it, so be it (p. 29).” All of the following pitches that Ryan throws are of the same sort as those against any other competitor and he realizes that Derrick is so good that he actually doesn’t need easy pitches from Ryan. At the end of the game, Derrick has honorably earned his batting title through impressive hits while Ryan has given his best and stayed true to the principles of honorable, clean sport. Thus, in this narrative, the meaning of trustworthiness in the sense of not cheating is closely related to the value of cleanliness in terms of clean sports. The
importance and credibility of the value of trustworthiness is negotiated by portraying Ryan’s inner struggles. The contradictory arguments, thoughts, and considerations that he develops are emphasized by the use of first-person narration that enables the reader to gain a revealing insight by putting himself in the situation of Ryan.

Finally, the last sample narrative “My Cousin Bronc” (by W. J. Buchanan, May 2005) represents the value of trustworthiness in relation to its third meaning: being candid and not telling lies. Bobby, protagonist and narrator of the story, tells about his experiences with his cousin Adam who comes for a summer visit. Adam is the same age as Bobby (15 years) and unlike Bobby who lives on a river-bottom farm in Kentucky, Adam grew up on a cattle ranch in South Dakota. Adam prefers to be called Bronc, a nickname he acquired because all his life he has been breaking broncos on the ranch and because it is a “[l]ot cooler than Adam (p. 45).” Bobby has always wanted to have a brother and therefore is looking forward to his cousin’s visit. Bobby’s feelings toward his cousin are somewhat ambiguous. On the one hand, he admires him for his looks and appearance:

I had to admit that Bronc, sitting erect on [my horse] Cheyenne, looked the part. He was tall and lanky, with the weathered complexion of a guy who spent long hours outdoors under a western sun. His gray felt 10-gallon hat was pushed back over an unruly shock of black hair. A pleated leather hatband ornamented with turquoise gemstones encircled the sweat-soiled crown. His denim shirt, matching trousers, and rawhide boots completed a confident, even cocky, bearing. (p. 46)

On the other, even though Bobby knows not to take his cousin’s tall tales of his experience and skills too seriously, he feels somewhat belittled at times, for example, when the two boys talk about fishing:
I [Bobby] pointed downstream to where my dad and I ran our trotline. “We catch drum and catfish…mostly cats.” “Out my way it’s trout.” Bronc said. “Rainbows mostly, but I’ve landed my share of browns. We don’t hold to trotlines, though. Strictly fly fishing.” I wondered if it was a putdown, but once again I let it slide. (p. 47)

Bobby does not openly confront his cousin with his thoughts but continues to ‘play along’ (p. 48). However, he seems to remain somewhat suspicious of Bronc and his talk until the last day before Bronc’s departure. The boys are riding nearby the place of Old Man Jackson, the unfriendly neighbor who harshly ran them away from his property just a few days earlier when they entered it by mistake. The boys find Old Man Jackson thrown off one of his horses and while he is trying to catch his breath, Mr. Jackson remarks: “White devil bucked me off (....) tried to break him for days (....) Wild. Can’t be broken. No use to me or … (p. 49).” Meanwhile, Bronc has gotten on the horse and “for the next half-hour, locked in a contest of endurance and wills, horse and rider test their mettle against each other (p. 49)” until the white horse becomes “exhausted, his indomitable spirit finally broken (p. 49)” and obeys Bronc’s commands peacefully. This demonstration of bravery and strong will leaves Bobby and Old Man Jackson in awe and respect for “the young cowboy” (p. 49). Bobby reflects: “Over time, I often told the story of my cousin Bronc’s wild ride in Old Man Jackson’s corral that summer afternoon. And it’s not a tall tale. I was there (p. 49).”

In summary, the value of trustworthiness in many narratives is strongly related to other Scout virtues, particularly to the values of being helpful, brave, and loyal.
Value of Bravery

Of the 56 analyzed narratives in the sample, 34 fiction stories expressed the value of being brave. The Scout Law defined this value as “[having] the courage to face danger in spite of fear and [having] to stand up for the right against the coaxings of friends or the jeers or threats of enemies, and defeat does not down him (Boy Scouts of America, 1911, p. 16).”

The analysis of the sample revealed that bravery is seen as a substantial personality trait of true, mature manliness. It is reflected in essentially three different ways that relate to a boy or men’s ability to (1) successfully counter external forces that work against him such as threats, enemies, or harsh circumstances and situations, (2) overcome an inner conflict, and (3) stand up for what is perceived as good and right or as ethically and morally straight.

Often the various abilities that demonstrate a boy’s bravery are represented in combination for example when he learns how to overcome an inner conflict because an unforeseen and challenging situation he finds himself in or an external force that requires him to directly confront and solve his problem. Good examples for these kinds of narratives are “Rip Tide” (by M. C. Wartski, July 2006), “Deadly Detour” (by M. C. Wartski, April 2005), and “Second Best” (by M. C. Wartski, April, 2004). The first two narratives deal with boys who are able to overcome their fear of water (Rip Tide) and heights (Deadly Detour), while the third (Second Best) is concerned with a boy’s inner struggles of always placing second behind his older cousin. All of these narratives follow a similar plot and have a similar underlying theme that can be described as ‘being able to prove one’s manly courage and self-worth to oneself and to others and receiving
acknowledgment for it. The narrative chosen to exemplify this idea in more detail is “Rip Tide” (by M. C. Wartski, July 2006).

Andy Cohn, the protagonist in “Rip Tide,” used to love the water and surfing on days with tall waves and offshore winds “as much as his cousin Matt did” (p. 29) until he had a terrifying experience two summers ago in Florida. Despite being a good swimmer, Andy had almost drowned because of the strong rip tide that had carried him far offshore and left him with “a nightmare feeling” (p. 29) ever since. Not only has Andy lost his courage to go surfing but he is also afraid of telling his parents or anyone else. Whenever Andy had come close to telling his cousin about his fear “he’d held back (p. 29)” thinking that Matt would not understand anyway because Matt “loved to surf and swim (.….)
While Matt had been excited, Andy hid his growing nervousness (p. 29).” In the course of the narrative it becomes clearly obvious that anxiety and the lack of courage is not socially acceptable among boys as reflected by Matt’s reaction to Andy’s “wipeouts (p. 30)” during a trip on a fishing boat with Matt and the rest of the family when Andy ran so scared that they needed to return early: “Matt, disgusted, followed Andy. ‘I guess you got the cramp during that last wipeout,’ he said. ‘I don’t know what’s with you, man. I never figured you’d wimp out like this (p. 30).” Being back on the beach, Andy who is still not brave enough to talk about his fears and the reasons for it, experiences feelings of embarrassment and anger (p. 30) when all of a sudden he is forced to take action in order to save a young boy’s life who is about to drown in the water. Nobody else is immediately around to jump in and so it is up to him. Hesitating for a few short moments, Andy finally dives in the water without thinking. He goes through the same emotions again that he went through before when he was near drowning himself. Despite the strong
forces that are caused by the water and the boy’s anxious screams that fuel his own terror, Andy forces himself to focus, pull himself together by assuring himself repeatedly that he is a good swimmer and can work through this. At the same time, he tries to calm down the boy by speaking to him with a firm and cheerful voice (p. 30) and instructs the boy to hold on to him. When he feels that his fear is catching up with him, Andy feels ashamed by the little boy’s bravery and grits his teeth (p. 31). He manages to get himself and the boy back to the beach safely. Meanwhile, his dad and Matt as well as the boy’s dad have raced into the water to help them. Andy receives “awestruck praise (p. 31)” from Matt and appreciation from his own and the little boy’s dad. He decides that he will never allow that fear again to “hold him prisoner (p. 31).” This narrative is only one example that demonstrates how an external situation over which the protagonist has no control forces him to confront and deal with his inner conflict as it relates to courage. Comments, thoughts, and actions exhibited by the various characters suggest that the only desirable way of being brave is to take charge, not only by being in control of the situation but also by successfully overcoming any fears and anxieties. At no point throughout the narrative does the protagonist seem to receive encouragement in one form or another that it is acceptable to talk about his fears. It further suggests that being brave in such a manner is rewarded through praise and recognition of others which is portrayed as a desirable achievement.

Another group of narratives expresses the value of being brave in relation to successfully countering external forces and enemies. Masculinity as such is constructed not only by depicting the protagonists’ heroic deeds and actions, but also by directly describing the male characters, their physical appearance and personality traits, often in
juxtaposition to the harsh circumstances under which these characters have to operate. A classic example can be found in “The King of Mazy May” (by J. London, March 2006), a story that deals with the guarding of gold-rich Klondike mining claims and was first published in *Boys’ Life* in 1911. Protagonist Walt Masters is described as

not a very large boy but there is manliness in his makeup, and he himself, although he does not know a great deal that most boys know, knows much that other boys do not know. (…) Walt has walked all the 14 years of his life in sun-tanned, moose-hide moccasins, and he can go to the Indian camps and ‘talk big’ with the men, and trade calico and beads with them for their precious furs. (…) Last of all, he has a good heart, and he is not afraid of the darkness and loneliness, of man or beast or thing. His father is a good man, strong and brave, and Walt is growing up like him. (p. 28)

It is this kind of bravery the prompts the protagonist Walt Masters to take action “in the face of threatened injustice to [his neighbor] old lame Loren Hall” (p. 29) and help protect his property from dangerous perpetrators in a lion-hearted chase in which the boy could have easily been killed. His courage and heroism are proudly awarded with the title “King of Mazy May” (p. 53) by the other gold miners of the Yukon.

This kind of bravery against enemies and external forces is also portrayed in “Brian’s Hunt” (by G. Paulsen, January 2004). Brian Robeson is a 16-year old boy who is alone in the Canadian wilderness, accompanied only by his new friend, a sled dog that Brian had nursed back to health after it was attacked by “a man-killer of a foe (p. 37).” Now Brian is hunting the bear that had inflicted these wounds to the dog and had killed Brian’s Indian friends to take revenge. Instead of describing Brian as a courageous young man who is tracking down the bear, this bravery is illustrated through a vivid description of the dramatic situation that takes place after Brian encounters the bear and the thoughts that run through his head as he is fighting the gigantic animal.
He [Brian] did not have to hunt the bear any longer. It was hunting him, it would come to him, and it would be soon, soon. Dusk now, he thought, dark in an hour, if it takes an hour. I passed here, what, three hours ago, and if he’s moving on my trail, how fast? Faster than me, certainly, he could be close, very close. In that split second he happened to be looking at the dog, saw the dog’s head turn to the left, and he dropped and turned at the same instant, heard brush crashing as he fell, brought the bow up, tried to pull the broadhead but too late, all too late. The bear was on him, rolling him, cuffing him. The bow was knocked out of his hands flying ahead, arrows spewing out of his quiver, the bear strangely silent, pushing, pounding him as he first rolled in a ball and knew that wouldn’t work, not now, not with this bear. It had come to kill him and was going to kill him (…) I’m not going to make this, Brian had time to think. He’s going to win again, he’s going to kill me. And then he heard the ripping growl of the dog and (…) there had been that second, two seconds, and (…) he grabbed a broadhead with his right hand – his left hung useless – and dove, following the arrow, into the center of the chest of the bear. He was amazed at how easily it slid in … (p. 40)

Even though at times, Brian is convinced he is not going to be able to ride this fight out alive, he never appears desperate or anxious or to be willing to give up. Even at times when it seems as if he will die during the fight, Brian valorously faces and comes to terms with the lethal threat: “the last thing he saw was an enormous wall of fur coming over him and he thought, All right, this is how it ends. This is how it all ends (p. 42).” Later on, when examining his own wounds he is surprised at not having any more serious wounds than a dislocated shoulder that snapped back into place when he tried lifting his arm. One might expect him to have lost his poise completely in light of such danger, but Brian merely comments the event with “Oh man, …(p. 42).” Despite his courage and his success of having taken revenge and having survived the combat, Brian lacks a feeling of triumph and he painfully realizes that the dead bear, “not a villain, not an evil thing (p. 42)”, does not countervail the loss of his friends. Bravery, thus, in contrast to other stories, is not rewarded in this narrative and the protagonist’s inner conflict seems to remain unsolved.
Another group of narratives portrays bravery in the sense of being and acting morally straight by standing up for what one believes to be true or right, whether this means speaking up for oneself or defending someone else, whether it be against adulation of friends or buddies (e.g., “The Samurai Hitter” by J. Janik, July 2004), or the threats of enemies (e.g., “Jump Away” by R. Saldana Jr., September 2005). Being brave sometimes also means, acting contrary to the expectations of others (e.g., “Downslope” by J. Stanchfield, March 2002) or commonly accepted norms among peer groups and friends (e.g., “What are friends for?” by G. Salisbury, February 2003).

The most interesting narrative among this set of stories appeared to be “What are friends for?” (by G. Salisbury, February 2003), because it directly addresses the conflict of deliberating about wanting to be accepted as a ‘real guy’ by friends and acting in accordance with what one perceives as right. Myca, a sixth-grader and protagonist of the story, spent time at a Hawaiian beach together with his friends Calvin and Jimmy hoping that they would be able to go surfing. Even though the waves were too high, Jimmy tried convincing the other two to give it a try. When both of them declined

Jimmy grabbed his fins. “I’m going out. You cowards can stay or come, whatever. I don’t care.” Myca said, “Don’t be stupid, Jimmy, those waves could snap you in half. Nobody else is going out.” Jimmy, Portuguese-Hawaiian and brown as a polished coconut shell, said, “You think I can’t do it?” He’ll get crushed, is what Myca thought. He wanted to beg Jimmy to stay on the beach. But guys didn’t do stuff like that. (p. 40)

While Calvin made jokes about Jimmy’s stubbornness, Myca restrained himself from doing anything else but kept thinking that he “should have tried harder to stop him … [and that he] … should have said something more” (p. 40). As expected, Jimmy soon got caught in the waves and in a heroic rescue Myca had to save his friend from
drowning. The seriousness of the situation is intensified through Myca’s thoughts about not being able to make it back safely in the “killer waves” (p. 42). However, he managed to save his friend’s and his own life. Despite the praise Myca received from the ambulance guys, some older high-school boys at the beach, and Jimmy himself who shook Myca’s hand “man-style, thumb to thumb” (p. 42), he felt dissatisfied inside: “Why had he just let Jimmy do something so dangerous? And said nothing? Why? That thought scared him. Scared him a lot. Because friends didn’t let friends down like that” (p. 42). However, toward Jimmy, Myca abided the ‘tough guy’ image by warning him “Next time you try something stupid like that, I going break your face” (p. 42). Thus, even though the protagonist learned something very important about what true friendship and courage mean, he did not learn or exhibit the ability to openly express his feelings of anxiety for his friend because this is not in conformity with traditional notions of masculine interaction.

All of the previously described fiction stories are examples for the various portrayals of the Scout value of being brave. Of the 12 virtues of the Scout Law, bravery would perhaps be considered the most traditionally masculine value and is supported through various fiction elements in the narratives. It is reflected in the narrator’s description of characters, as well as in thoughts, words, and deeds of the various characters, mainly the protagonist or antagonist. Often it is also supported by the settings of the narratives that call for firm action by brave and strong young men. In several of the narratives analyzed, courage was not simply represented as a desirable feature of a character, but was in-fact negotiated as an essential subject of the underlying conflict and helped develop the narratives’ overarching theme. Whether the protagonist learns to deal
with a personal conflict or help others, for example, by saving another character’s life, exhibiting courage seems to be a fundamental aspect of growing up to be a man and almost always gets rewarded through social recognition, mostly by boys or men who are either older or in other ways apparently superior to the protagonist. The analysis also indicated that the virtue of being brave is often closely related to the value of being helpful. The one exception to this overall impression is the story of Brian’s Hunt in which the male protagonist’s heroic efforts remain unrewarded because he does not seem to be able to make peace with the deaths of his friends and thereby solve his inner conflict. A possible explanation for this incidence could be that in this narrative the value of being brave collides with the value of being kind to animals. Killing the bear simply is an act of revenge and does not help saving someone’s life.

Even though the meaning of being brave is defined in relation to different situations in life, the overall picture of traditional masculinity prevails. While protagonists learn, for example, to act and speak in accordance with what they perceive as right and morally straight, they do not show the ability to act in accordance with their feelings and emotions by expressing them in the same way that they are experienced personally. Expressing feelings publicly, especially negative feelings such as anxiety or sadness, is not promoted and they are only acceptable to a certain extent in private and provided one keeps them in check.

Value of Thriftiness

Of all the narratives analyzed in the sample, close to half (27) of the fiction stories were found to reflect the value of being thrifty. The Scout Law (Boy Scouts of America,
defines a thrifty boy or man as somebody who “does not wantonly destroy property (....) works faithfully, wastes nothing, and makes the best use of his opportunities [and] saves his money so that he may pay his own way, be generous to those in need, and helpful to worthy ojects (p. 15).” Thus, being thrifty as defined in the Scout Law has two main aspects, one being individualistic in nature and relating primarily to the concept of self-reliance, and the other being more social in nature in terms of helping others. Thriftiness in this sense is reflected in many of the narratives as some of the following examples illustrate.

“The Truce” (by G. C. Wisler, September 2003) is a historic fiction narrative about the encounter of two teenage boys during the times of the Civil War which is coming to an end because troops on both sides are greatly decimated. Pat Miller, the 15-year old protagonist, is a replacement soldier for the North and commissioned by his Sergeant with picket duty at the Etowah River. Rather unexperienced in his new role, Pat is overwhelmed by a young rebel who later identifies himself as Ruben Polk and has come to trade tobacco for coffee or bread.

Pat felt the cold steel of a rifle barrel jab his ribs in back. “Drop the rifle, Yank.” Pat did just that. Then he slowly turned around. A red-headed fellow about his own size and age stood there dripping wet. He wore ragged trousers and had no shirt. He was barefoot. But he had a cocked musket pointed at Pat. (p. 42)

At first, each of the boys boasts about his pretended age and body height to make an impression on the other one, but eventually they start talking about why they are not at home but have become soldiers. Both of them were forced to take on the responsibility of the breadwinner because other male family members are incapable of continuing this role. Pat explains: “My pa’s taken sick (....) My brother Abner lost a foot at Gettysburg. I
got $200 bounty money for signing up. That will get the family through hard times this winter. Besides, it’s better here, than staying home with three sisters (p. 43).” Ruben talks about what brought him from his little farm in Murfreesboro, Tennessee to the battlefield: “Pa died of a fever (…) Ma moved in with her sister in Macon, and I joined the army. I’m not a very good soldier, but I’m a dandy trader (p. 43).” Pat righteously points out that despite of being a good trader, Ruben never swaps for the things that he obviously needs the most himself: shirts or shoes, especially for when it gets cold. Pat pulls out a good woolen shirt that his family sent him and

Ruben stared in wonder as Pat pulled off his own boots and tossed them over. He also offered a blanket. ‘I’ve got nothing to offer in return,’ Ruben said scowling. Well, you didn’t drag me off to prison camp. That’s something.’ The red-head rebel grinned. He offered his hand again. This time Pat shook it (p.43)

Even though, both boys own little themselves and are in a difficult situation, they do their duty, economize what they have got and act selflessly toward others: Ruben by not swapping for the things he personally needs and Pat by generously giving the stranger who is allegedly also his enemy some of the few things he owns and needs himself. Thriftiness as such is never mentioned anywhere in the narrative, but rather it becomes obvious through the boys’ insightful conversation about their personal backgrounds and their noble actions toward each other and for their families at home.

The value of thriftiness is reflected in many of the historic fiction narratives, particularly the ones dealing with war situations in which scarcity of goods and jobs predominates. A second example is the narrative “The Tiny Patriot” (by G. C. Wisler, February 2006) about the war of independence. Working faithfully and making the best use of ones opportunities is portrayed through the actions of protagonist Jonathan. At the
age of only 13, Jonathan is “barely five feet tall (p. 26)” and often underestimated by others and even his own family, especially his older brothers. However, Jonathan does not feel intimidated by other people’s remarks about his being too young and two small for doing his duty. He is convinced that there must be something for him to contribute.

As patriots fled, Jonathan made his way to the city. First he’d aided the wounded. Then he accepted a job at Mrs. Hall’s inn. He carried guests’ bags to the room upstairs. He tended their horses, polished boots, ran errands. Most of all, he listened and waited for the chance to do something (p. 26).

When his brothers are captured by the British, Jonathan is able to bring them food because of the jobs that he had accepted: “He located his brothers and offered them a bit of bread and cheese he’d taken from the kitchen. ‘You were the smart one, finding a job where there’s food,’ [his brother] Thomas said (p. 26).” Jonathan’s industriousness, self-reliance, and enthusiasm eventually enable him to liberate his brothers with the help of a confederate. Rather than hindering him, his size and age prove to be in his advantage because nobody suspects him to be a threat.

In a similar vein, thriftiness is a major subject in “The Cowboy’s Christmas Eve” (J. Schaefer, December 2006), a historical fiction story that first appeared in Boys’ Life in December 1963. While the setting in this narrative is not war related, the point of departure is essentially the same as in the previous fiction stories. Protagonist Stubby Pringle is described as a “19-year-old, 10-foot-tall, (.…) rooting, tooting, hardworking, hard-playing cowhand of the Triple X (p. 20)” who “has been taking care of himself since he was orphaned at 13 [and] has been doing man’s work since he was 15” (p. 21). He was born to poor circumstances and hard work and he is “heading for a Christmas dance at the schoolhouse in the valley (p. 21).” Even though the story is narrated in the third person,
the writing style and the expressions about the protagonist and his thoughts seem to simulate what he would say about himself in the first person.

On his way to the schoolhouse, Stubby passes by the Henderson’s place where a woman is chopping wood in the dark and cold night. Stubby knows that the Henderson family is even worse off than many others including himself. They are “always almost out of almost everything: money and food and tools and smiles and joy of living. Everything. Except maybe hope and stubborn endurance (p. 22).” Stubby tells the woman to stop chopping wood because it is “man’s work (p. 22)” and he shows little understanding when the woman explains that her husband is too sick and tired to be able to do this task. Although Stubby is out to have a good time and enjoy he decides to help the woman and do the wood chopping for her. After he has his “chore done and done right (p. 22),” Stubby is about to leave when he notices the two little kids sleeping in their bunk beds “and in one, under old quilt, curly-headed small girl and in other, under another old quilt, boy who would be waist-high, awake and standing (p. 22)” and he sees that there is no Christmas tree. The woman explains that she hasn’t had time to cut one and Stubby remarks that this is a “man’s job anyway (p. 23)” and decides to go and cut a Christmas tree for her and the kids before he has got to go. After he is done doing that he tells the woman to start decorating while he is about to leave. The woman answers that they haven’t got anything to decorate the tree with because the money went into treating her husband’s sickness. Once again, even though he wasn’t planning to stay that long, he decides to help her.

Stubby Pringle looks off at last low ridge top hiding valley and schoolhouse. “Reckon I still got a bit of time,” he says. “They’ll be whooping it mighty late.” He turns back, closing door. He moves about checking everything in sparse front
room. He asks for things, and woman jumps to get those few of them she has. He tells her what to do, and she does. He does plenty himself. With this and that, magic wonders arrive. He is Stubby Pringle, born to poverty and hard work, weaned on nothing, fed on less, raised to make do with least possible and make the most of that. Pinto beans strung on a thread brighten tree in firelight and lantern light strings of store-bought beads. Strips of one bandana, cut with shears from sewing box, bob in bows on branch ends like gay red flowers. Snippets of fleece from jacket lining sprinkled over tree glisten like fresh fall of snow. Miracles flow from strong blunt fingers through bits of old paper bags and dabs of flour paste into link chains and twisted small streamers and two jaunty little hats and two smart little boats with sails. (p. 23)

This excerpt from the narrative demonstrates most clearly how the value of thriftiness as defined by the Scout Law is portrayed in this fiction story. On the one hand, the idea of wasting nothing and making the best use of what one has is explicitly stated in the description of main character Stubby and the circumstances of his upbringing. On the other hand, scarcity and parsimony are also implicitly constructed through the use of language, primarily the omission of words such as articles and pronouns that do not directly contribute to creating meaningful content and are therefore unnecessary.

After he is done with making decorations for the tree, Stubby finds out that there will not be any presents for the kids, so he goes out to his horse and comes back with a paper parcel and a piece of pinewood and he hands the woman the package: “‘Unwrap it,’ he says. ‘There’s the makings for a right cute dress for the girl. Needle-and-threader like you can whip it up in no time. I’ll just whittle me out a little something for the boy” (p. 24). And Stubby carves a little wooden horse for the boy: “It is horse fit to carry waist-high boy to uttermost edge of eternity and back (p. 24).” Before he sets off, Stubby also leaves the woman a box of chocolate candy that he has carried in his burlap bag and her husband his fine knife that he has carried around in his own pocket. Even though he has
missed an enjoyable night at the schoolhouse, Stubby feels very content with himself for having acted so generously despite of his own situation.

He is just another of far-scattered, poorly paid, patched-clothes cowhands who inhabit these parts. Just that. And something more. He is the biggest thing there is in the whole wide roster of the human race. He is a man who has given of himself, of what little he has and is, to bring smiles and joy of living to others along his way. (p. 25)

Stubby hears sleigh bells and sees something “vague and formless but there, something big and bulky with runners like sleigh and flash of white beard whipping in wind and crack of long whip snapping” (p. 25). Shortly thereafter, Stubby hears a “long-drawn chuckle, deep deep chuckle, jolly and cheery and full of smiles and joy of living (p. 25)” While not mentioned directly, it becomes obvious to the reader that it must be Santa Clause who Stubby sees and hears and who utters with long-drawn words: “’W-e-l-l do-o-o-n-e, p-a-a-a-part-ner!’” (p. 25). Thus, self-content is just one aspect in this narrative. Recognition and acknowledgment play an important role as well, even though what Stubby experiences may just be an imaginary or unreal phenomenon.

Overall, in many stories the value of thriftiness is portrayed as being industrious and content with a given situation and making the best out of it. Thriftiness is often represented in the context of historical fiction stories in which circumstances leave characters little choice but to work hard and faithfully. Thus, the concept of self-reliance plays an important role in the definition of thriftiness. Thriftiness, however, also has a social component. Narratives reflect this idea in main characters showing generosity and good will toward others in need without expecting something in turn. As such, thriftiness is also related to the value of courteousness. The meaning of thriftiness is constructed
through description of main characters and the circumstances that they live in as well as
through their interactions with others. In addition, stories like “The Cowboy’s Christmas Eve” (December 2006) use stylistic elements to underline and convey the idea of thriftiness.

Value of Cleanliness

In the analysis of the 56 fiction stories, a total of eight stories were found to portray the value of cleanliness which the Boy Scouts of America (1911) defined as follows: “He [the Scout] keeps clean in body and thought, stands for clean speech, clean sport, clean habits, and travels with a clean crowd (p. 16).” In the narratives, the idea of cleanliness is portrayed, mainly in relation to clean sport and clean habits.

Two narratives in particular represent the theme of committing to the ideal of clean sports in terms of fair play, no matter if it is against the hardest, most unfair rival as in “Getting Even” (by J. M. Janik, April, 2003) or against the best friend as in “Grooved” (by J. M. Janik, June 2002). Both narratives, written by the same author, illustrate this value at the example of a baseball game in which each protagonist weighs the advantages and disadvantages of fair play against the desire for personal achievement and success or those of a friend. To illustrate this meaning of the value of cleanliness in more detail, the narrative “Getting Even” (by J. M. Janik, April 2003) was chosen.

In “Getting Even,” Alex is determined to take revenge for an unfair throw of the other team’s pitcher. When Jason, his own team’s pitcher, suggests to “take care of [the guy]” by giving him “a brushback” (p. 39), Alex is, at first, tempted to agree thinking: “Why not? He’d knocked me down. Why shouldn’t he get a taste of his own medicine?
After finding out that a hard and fast pitch hitting him almost in the face was not an accident but indeed intended and as the pitcher continues to play unfair, Alex is convinced that “he should pay a price, too (p. 39).” In addition, Alex is being encouraged by players of his own team to do something and not to let the pitcher who Alex describes as “clever and dirty (p. 40)” get away with it. However, Alex still seems to be waiting for a clue that would help him decide how to react. The turning point of the narrative takes place in the very moment that Alex seriously considers playing by the same unfair means.

If I let go of the bat at just the right time, I could send it straight at his legs, chopping him down like a big oak. Make him limp for a few days. Seemed fair. “Come on, Alex,” Aaron shouted. “Show him we can play just as dirty as him.” Just as dirty? Wait. Is that what I wanted? If I threw my bat, I’d be just like him. How could I let myself even consider such a stupid thing? I did not want to be like him. (p. 39)

Driven by a sudden rush of anger and strength, Alex feels like his power is being “supercharged” and, playing a fair game against his rival, he is rewarded by his first major achievement that reassures him of having made the right decision: “I dropped the bat and circled the bases, soaking in the thrill of my very first home run, ignoring the scowl of the loser on the mound. Maybe, just maybe, he’d figure out there were better ways to get even (p. 41).”

Cleanliness in the context of this narrative and the idea of fair play is constructed through the use of first-person narration providing insight to the thoughts, feelings, and considerations of the protagonist from his own point of view. It illustrates how the main character is being torn between anger and seeking revenge on the one hand, and sticking to one’s own principles of true sportsmanship on the other. This also gives the impression
that any thoughts of the protagonist are expressed unfiltered making his final decision and his actions appear more credible and his resulting triumph and success truly merited.

In its literal meaning, cleanliness, in particular clean habits, is reflected in relation to neatly organizing personal belongings and tidying up one’s room. Two fiction stories in particular, “Picking Up” (by D. Lubar, May 2004) and “The Things in Adam’s Bedroom” (by J. L. Messina, January 2003), deal with this idea as a major subject. Both narratives are also examples for blending reality with non-realistic elements that seem to originate either in a dream or in the creative mind of the main character as explained in more detail for each story individually in the following paragraphs.

In “Picking Up” (by D. Lubar, May 2004), main character John is annoyed by having to clean up his room every day: “Same old chores, day in and day out. Sometimes John felt as if he might as well be a machine (p. 30).” A third-person narrator describes how John goes about cleaning up his room starting with the clothes which seems to be easiest: “He put the dirty ones in the hamper. Then he folded the clean ones. The ones that might have been clean and might have been dirty also got tossed in the hamper, just to be sure (p. 30).” Thus, what is implied through this statement is the idea that even though he does not particularly like it, when he does clean up his room and clothes, John makes sure to do it right, even if that means having some of his clothes washed twice. Next, John shelves his books and boxes the older ones to be stored downstairs. After he is done with that, his closet needs to be organized and he realizes that he does not recognize a lot of his own things: “But it didn’t matter. He knew he needed to straighten up. That was the most important thing (p. 31).” Again, the idea of cleanliness is presented as inevitable, but it is not definite whether John has been assigned to pick up, for example,
by his parents, or whether he may be driven by his own motivation to have a clean room.

Up to this point, nothing indicated that there are other people around John, his room, or the house, when all of a sudden the story shifts the focus to two other characters that seem to have come out of nowhere.

As John put the last toy in place, two boys walked into the room. “Oh good, you’re done,” the taller boy said. He turned to the other boy. “Great model,” he told him, “for stuff like picking up. But not much memory. I’m saving up for an expansion module. I figure I can get him another couple of gigabytes some day.” He reached over and touched something on John’s chest. The world went away. The world came back John started with the clothes. That was the easiest part. […] (p. 31)

John, all of a sudden, seems not to be taking an active part anymore but rather to be watching the events that happen around him. It seems as if the room actually belongs to one of the boys and not to John. The boy talks about John as if he was a machine or a robot that is switched off and on as needed as narrated from John’s perspective “The world went away. The world came back (p. 31).” Like a déjà vu, the story starts all over again repeating the exact same words and expressions that were used in the beginning. Even though narrated in third-person, this story and the way of telling it essentially illustrate how John perceives his daily chore of picking up: as something repetitive that he does mechanically rather than passionately. At the same time, the necessity of cleaning up is portrayed in a very creative way by imaginative role-taking which is typical of youngsters, in this case to make an unpleasant or boring experience more enjoyable. John’s role-taking seems related to an area of his interests and the conversation between the two imaginary boys about expansion modules and gigabytes mimics a conversation that John may have with one of his friends.
The second narrative, “The Things in Adam’s Bedroom” (by J. L. Messina, January 2003), deals with the subject of cleaning up one’s bedroom in a similar way with regards to imagination. The value of cleanliness is introduced in the very beginning of the story with the mother of protagonist Adam demanding that he cleans up his room immediately and a description of the untidiness in Adam’s bedroom:

Adam sat on his bed and kicked his shoes off. They didn’t land with a thud – they couldn’t. They landed on a big pile of clothes. The room was covered with junk, and Adam hadn’t seen his floor in a month. His mom poked her head in the door. Scattered toys prevented the door from opening more than a crack. “Goodness, I can’t see how one 12-year-old boy can make such a big mess,” she said. (p. 26)

Adam refers to the mess in his room as horticulture which is part of a science project he is doing for school to win a trophy and the programmable robot Robo. Instead of cleaning it up, Adam leaves everything the way it is and gets excited when he notices that spongy and soft mushrooms starting to grow in his bedroom:

Eureka! His plan was working! That afternoon, Adam ran all the way home. When he opened the door to his room – which barely budged – mushrooms had sprouted all over. Overjoyed he decided to add more ingredients. He emptied the content of his backpack into the clutter. Out came a half-eaten candy bar and part of the cafeteria’s lunch burrito. He added flower seeds and Super Quick-Grow Fertilizer from his mom’s garden shed. After dinner he took his leftover peas, mashed potatoes and pieces of beef and scraped it onto the floor. (p. 26)

Before going to sleep, Adam even turns up the heat in his room, so that the fungus would start to grow more quickly. When waking up, Adam is amazed by “the giant, fantastic trees, green twisting vines and huge colorful leaves (p. 26)” that obviously have grown over night in his room. But what seems impressive and fantastic in the beginning soon turns into scary scenery when Adam is unable to find his way of his own bedroom and the plants are starting to creep up on him.
Suddenly, a long stem poked out from the vines. Its vast, red bristles moved in and out like claws, and the stem bent toward Adam. It took a big bite out of his pajama bottoms. Adam screamed and fell to the ground. He wormed his way through the bushes struggling to escape. (p. 27)

Just before a humongous plant with “sticky saliva dribbling grotesquely from the red prickers” (p. 27) is about to “fasten its deadly stems around him” (p. 27), Adam is able to find the thermostat and turn on the air-conditioner and watches how the jungle begins to shrink in the cold. The next scene in the story describes Adam’s room in a sparkling condition: “Everything had been scrubbed, polished and disinfected. What remained of the giant plant sat harmlessly in a pot on his shelf” (p. 27). Adam has won the first-prize trophy for his science project. The reader learns that Adam did research and grew his own “carnivorous Drosera plant” (p. 27) and has impressed not only his teacher, but also his mom who “had even marveled that a boy could have such a clean room. Only a month ago he’d been such a pig” (p. 27). But some of Adam’s garbage has not completely disappeared: “[…] the closet bulged with debris. Well, he had to put the junk somewhere, he thought, as he stuffed the trophy in” (p. 27).

This narrative deals with the value of cleanliness in a playful and exaggerating manner. The reader gets the impression that what Adam experienced only happened in his dream or imagination. And even though unreal it seems to have been a lesson to Adam prompting him to clean up the dirt in his room. However, in some ways he seems to remain the unorderly boy that his mom used to see in him because he only put stuff away instead of actually organizing it or throwing it away.

Overall, the value of cleanliness in the fiction stories is not as prevalent as some of the other Scout Law virtues and it is only portrayed in two different meanings of the
definitions provided by the Scout Law provides: clean sport and clean habits. While the first is negotiated in a much more serious way, the latter is represented much more light-heartedly and less moralizing. While unfair play and dirty sports are portrayed as inadmissible, being a typical boy who is always a little unorganized or messy is rather amusing and may even be excused to a certain extent.

*Value of Reverence*

Only one narrative in the sample contained references to the value of reverence. Reverence is defined in the Scout Law (Boy Scouts of America, 1911) in relation to God, being faithful in one’s religious duties, and respecting others’ conviction in terms of their customs and religion. The only instance, in which a reference is made to being faithful in ones religious duties, is the narrative “The Terrible Big Wind in Abilene” (by W. B. Morris, October 2006), a made-up, imaginary story about unreal events that supposedly took place at some point in the past due to the strong prairie winds in Texas. In the introductory paragraph about the background of the story and the history of prairie winds, the narrator talks about Hastings, Nebraska:

One time 80 or maybe 110 years ago, when Hastings was real small, a new preacher and his wife came to visit a church there. After the service, folks lined up outside the church to shake the preacher’s hand and say “howdy” to his wife. The men of Hastings, being very polite, took their heads off out of respect. Just about then a really mean wind came […] (p. 30).

While this reference indicates that being faithful, going to church and paying respect to those who represent it is taken for granted, this reference does not have any particular relevance for the characters or the happenings and events throughout the narrative. With the exception of this narrative there is hardly any more or less obvious
reference to God, the church, or religious duties at all. Ironically, even in stories dealing with very religious aspects of life including holidays such as Christmas (e.g., “The Cowboy’s Christmas Eve” by J. Schaefer, December 2006), the reference to religion is rather oblique and secondary, for example, in the mentioning of angels as a decoration for the Christmas tree (“10,000 Cookies” by G. C. Wisler, December 2004). Religion, customs, and conviction in general are not negotiated as a major underlying theme or subject in any of the fiction stories.

4.3 Summary of Portrayals of Values of Masculinity

The analysis of 56 contemporary fiction stories of *Boys’ Life* magazines found that 55 narratives portrayed at least one of the values of masculinity formulated in the Scout Law of the Boy Scouts of America. Close reading identified how the values are defined and portrayed. Further, it explored explicit, obvious as well as implicit, subtle ways in which meaning is constructed with regards to the specific values as well as with regards to masculinity in general.

The Scout Law does not define one value as more important than another. Yet, certain values of the Scout Law appeared to be much more strongly emphasized in the fiction stories, for example, trustworthiness and bravery, whereas others, in particular reverence and cleanliness, were not nearly as prevalent. The category of values in relation to others including loyalty, helpfulness, friendliness, courteousness, kindness, cheerfulness, and obedience was found to be reflected in 44 fiction stories. The value of trustworthiness and the value of bravery were each found to be portrayed in 34 narratives.
The value of thriftiness was expressed in 27 stories, the value of cleanliness in eight, and the value of reverence was referenced only briefly in a single story.

Not surprisingly, in many cases, several values were not just portrayed in the same story but were actually interrelated, for example the value of trustworthiness and the value of loyalty. Interestingly, however, in some instances values represented within a single story appeared to be contradictory, for example the value of being brave and the value of being kind to animals in the fiction story “Cries-at-Moon of the Kitikiti’sh” (August 2004).

Overall, analyzing the representation of values within each story and across the different narratives allowed for an understanding of overarching notions of masculinity and how they are constructed in Boys’ Life magazine. These insights are discussed in more detail and in relation to previous research in the following chapter.
5 Conclusion

This study explored the textual representations of American values of masculinity in contemporary fiction stories of *Boys’ Life* magazine guided primarily by the values that the publishing organization of *Boys’ Life*, the Boy Scouts of America, provides in the Scout Law. The study identified various ways in which these values are reflected and how they contribute to the construction of masculinity.

The following sections discuss the findings of this study in relation to the values of the Scout Law and their portrayal as well as in relation to other values and issues that are not portrayed in the narratives. Following this discussion, implications, limitations, and suggestions for future research are presented.

5.1 Discussion

*Portrayals of Values of Masculinity of the Scout Law*

*Differences in overall portrayal of the Scout Law values.* Although this study was not quantitative in nature, it is noteworthy that certain values of the Scout Law seemed to be portrayed much more dominantly than others. The Scout Law itself does not prioritize in terms of value importance. Instead, each of the values appears to be equally meaningful and significant. Yet, this is not reflected in the representations of values in the narratives, in particular, with regards to the values of cleanliness and reverence. Those are two of the three values – the third being the value of bravery – that were added to the initial English Law (Murray, 1937). Surprisingly, however, both of these values are dealt with not nearly as often and not nearly as profoundly as some of the other values in the
fiction stories of *Boys’ Life* magazine. Reverence, in particular, seems absent almost completely in the narratives analyzed. Neither do the stories reflect the meaning of a religious life, nor do they expound the potential problems of conflicting values or conflicting religious beliefs between individuals of different persuasions. It is of interest, therefore, to find possible reasons and explanations for this discrepancy between values of the Scout Law and values portrayed.

First of all, however, it is important to note, that the three additional values, in particular the value of reverence, were not considered marginal. In fact, the Chief Scout Executive\(^8\) of the Boy Scouts of America (n.d., as cited in Murray, 1937) emphasized the religious aspect and the meaning of the value of reverence as crucial to Scouting in America:

> My judgment of the Twelfth Scout Law is that it is one of the very finest things in the whole scheme of Scouting and one of the reasons we have had such outstanding success. It is one of the reasons we have such a large percentage of boys. From my point of view the real people in America, the people that have made America from the early days, are those who have had deep religious convictions (….) I felt at that time as I feel now, that there is nothing more essential in the education of the youth in America than to give them religious instruction and I advocated that this be included in the Twelfth Scout Law, “A Scout is reverent […]” (pp. 54-55).

Because the values were established about a century ago, a possible explanation may be that a shift in values has occurred in society in general. Values that were considered important at the beginning of the 20\(^{th}\) century, may not be perceived as important anymore at the beginning of the 21\(^{st}\) century, either because perspectives have changed or because the idea behind what a value expresses has become a taken-for-

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\(^8\) Even though not specifically stated in Murray (1937), it can be assumed that Chief Scout Executive refers to James E. West, Chief Scout Executive from 1911 to 1943.
granted societal norm and does not need to be as strongly emphasized and communicated anymore as part of overall education. While the latter, taken-for-granted societal norms, may explain the limited representations of the value of cleanliness, the former, a change in perspective, can serve as a potential explanation for the lack of portrayals of the value of reverence. Since the middle of the 20th century, there has been an increasing separation of religious life and public sphere. Freedom of choice and the embrace of pluralism in terms of religion and beliefs seem to have come to dominate American society and prohibit to some extent the proclamation and display of religious faith within the public arena. Being an ethically and morally straight individual nowadays is seen as less of a religious but more of a social concern. Many societal institutions reflect and promote these ideas, especially within the educational environment of children and teenagers.

In contrast, other values of the Scout Law are referenced and negotiated in a lot more stories and in more diverse ways. The category of values that is portrayed by far most often is the category of values with a strong inherent social concern and includes the seven values of loyalty, helpfulness, friendliness, courteousness, kindness, cheerfulness, and obedience.

Growing up and becoming a man. A core idea that underlies several of the narratives and their reflection of social values is the idea of growing up and becoming a young man. Many of the young male protagonists who are often still on the cusp of childhood and adolescence find themselves in more or less exceptional situations and circumstances that require them to act adult-like and demonstrate considerable personal maturity and social responsibility. In some cases this means learning to be selfless and beginning to genuinely care for other people in the small realm of private life, for
example, in the narrative “10,000 Cookies” (by G. C. Wisler, December 2004). In other instances, it involves, for example, taking on the role of an intermediary within a larger social and historical context of war as reflected in the fiction story “American Brothers” (by T. Fleming, March 2005). In some ways these findings coincide with the insights of Woolsey’s (2001) study of Scott O’Dell award winning books stating that male protagonists experience their progress from boyhood to manhood by gaining independence in learning to deal not only with the challenges of everyday life and long-term personal issues but also by applying themselves to social matters of the larger world they are surrounded by.

Finding and accepting one’s own role within the social environment as part of growing up is another central idea that seems to unite the portrayal of values in many fiction stories. This is most obviously portrayed in Clint, the 8th-grader in “Second String” (by C. Deuker, January 2005) who comes to appreciate the importance of every single team member, even those who are a second string, and learns to subordinate his desire for personal achievement to the ideals of sportsmanship and the success of his team. Accepting one’s role is also reflected in “Cries-at-Moon of the Kitikiti’sh” (by G. Dudney, August 2004) in which the main character, an Indian boy, comes to terms with his perceived lack of manhood and courage and learns about the importance of his unique capabilities to understand and connect with animals. Interestingly, being kind to animals in this case, conflicts with being brave as a value that seems to be commonly accepted as a traditional masculine value. Thus, this fiction story can be read as an attempt to construct masculinity in an alternative way, outside of classical notions of manhood and related expectations from boys and young men. However, the acceptance of this form of
masculinity does not appear to arise from the protagonist’s own conviction but from acknowledgment and encouragement by the leader of his tribe.

_Individualistic versus social values: Personal achievement and social recognition._

Getting rewarded through individual acknowledgment and social recognition, as well as through success and personal achievement is a crucial aspect in many fiction stories, whether it takes the form of a public announcement of an achievement in the local news as in “10,000 Cookies” (by G. C. Wisler, December 2004), winning the city title for an important basketball game as in “Second String” (by C. Deuker, January 2005), or receiving praise from someone who is in some ways superior, for example, the leader of a tribe as in “Cries-at-Moon of the Kitikiti’sh” (by G. Dudney, August 2004) or a military authority as in “American Brothers” (by T. Fleming, March 2005). In some cases, acknowledgment even comes from a fantasy character: in “The Cowboy’s Christmas Eve” (by J. Schaefer, December 2006), Stubby Pringle who has done good deeds to a poor family, imagines the approving comment of Santa Clause.

Thus, even though the portrayal of values in relation to others fosters social responsibility, characters’ actions in accordance with these values seem to be guided not by intrinsic but rather by extrinsic motivations of rewards for personal achievements. Rather than doing something for its own sake without any external incentive, it is done for the sake of some form of external reward. In the rare cases in which gratification remains absent, characters seem discontent and the conflict unsolved, for example, in “Brian’s Hunt” (by G. Paulsen, January 2004) in which the killing of the bear did not lead to a feeling of triumph. The absence of a reward in this fiction story may be explained by the fact that the character acted in contradiction with the value of being kind to animals.
The protagonist killed the bear not to save his own life or because the animal was suffering, but simply to take revenge.  

Among the categories with individual values that represent characteristics relating more to the self than to others, the ones that are represented in a considerable number of fiction stories are trustworthiness and bravery, followed by thriftiness. The values of being brave and being trustworthy are found to be portrayed equally often across the narratives. Bravery as one of the three values added to the original British Scout Law as an adaptation to American conditions, is also a value that is negotiated in more depth and across a variety of different contexts. Bravery was portrayed in essentially three different meanings: successfully coping with external forces such as threats, harsh circumstances, enemies; overcoming a personal conflict; and speaking up for what is considered to be morally straight. Thus, being brave is defined in relation to different aspects of life in which characters prove not only courage but also impressive maturity and responsibility. Yet, what is missing in the narratives is a reflection of the value of bravery in terms of having the fortitude to admit and show feelings and emotions in front of others. The omission of expressions of affection, compassion, emotional sensitivity, and tenderness as traditionally feminine values leads to the construction of masculinity according to stereotypical norms and expectations. Again, the idea of social desirability prevails with the male protagonist being guided in his behavior by extrinsic rather than intrinsic motivations. The same is true for portrayals of the values of trustworthiness and thriftiness. Even though both are defined in terms of characteristics of the individual, the overarching goal behind this is to live up to expectations of others and being rewarded.
Literary expression of the Scout Law values. Overall, the portrayal of these values goes beyond explicit patterns and pure descriptions of characters, their personality, words, and actions. In order to construct meaning and credibility, values are expressed in many different and, in part, more subtle ways by resorting to a number of narrative elements and stylistic choices. One important story element identified in this study is the setting of the fiction narratives as a precondition for the dramatic situation in which protagonists find themselves. In many cases they are either separated from the safety of the home and the protection by other family members, or the protagonists themselves are forced to take on the role of being responsible for another family member. Successfully solving a conflict means proving physical and mental strength in a majority of the narratives. For the most part, the impression the reader receives is that all problems and conflicts can be solved in a positive way. This may not seem surprising or unusual for fiction stories as this makes for a much more satisfying reading experience. Yet, it could also be interpreted ideologically: acting in accordance with the values leads to good outcomes and rewards.

In terms of discourse elements, an important aspect that became obvious from this study is the narrative voice, in particular, the person in which fiction stories are narrated. The majority of stories analyzed are narrated in the third person; only a few stories are narrated in the first person. However, it seems as if the meaning and importance of some values, especially those that make statements about the self or the individual, lend themselves better to being negotiated from the protagonist’s own perspective, rather than by overt descriptions of an otherwise uninvolved narrator. This can contribute to establishing credibility, for example, for values such as trustworthiness.
In summary, this study shows the significance of doing not only mere counts of predefined concepts when analyzing the portrayal of values. Instead, these concepts need to be understood in relation to the more implicit context and a narrative as a whole needs to be interpreted as one meaningful unit of textual content. In doing so, this study revealed several more subtle cues and less overt messages about masculinity that are being conveyed through the portrayal of values in the fiction stories of Boys’ Life magazine. These messages about masculinity are, in part, also communicated through the portrayal of other values not investigated in detail in this study as well as through values that seem to be absent in the fiction stories. These are discussed briefly in the following section.

Portrayal of Other Values

The twelve values formulated in the Scout Law provided the basis for exploring portrayals and constructions of masculinity in the fiction stories of Boys’ Life magazine. Close reading of the narratives and the findings of their analysis indicate that there are a series of other values, themes, and concepts. Some of these are present in the stories, but were not further analyzed within the framework of this study, others are absent in the fiction stories, but seem to be of relevance to the group of readers that the narratives are written for. The following paragraphs briefly address some of these themes and concepts.

Some additional concepts that emerged from the readings as playing a vital role in the fiction narratives include individualism, social relations, and competition, to mention only a few. Many fiction stories express values of individualism such as self-reliance and achievement; others construct and negotiate the meaning of social relations in terms of
family ties as well as bonds of friendship. Yet another set of narratives deals with the concept of rivalry often as an important aspect of the underlying conflict and the cause of the dramatic situation. Interestingly, competition is not only portrayed between obvious opponents. Several stories deal with sibling rivalry and competition among cousins, friends, and team-mates.

Another interesting aspect is the portrayal of cultural norms of masculinity. This study explored values of masculinity according to one organization’s definition of what it means to be a boy or a man but it did not explore the construction of masculinity according to broader, dominant cultural norms. Yet, findings of this study and some of the themes that emerged from the readings indicate that, in many ways, narratives in Boys’ Life magazine convey and perpetuate classical gender-role messages discussed in the literature. Harris (1995), for example, identified some of these cultural norms in a list of 24 traditional messages of meanings of masculinity that have been communicated to boys and men through popular US media since the second half of the twentieth century. The following messages that are mentioned among others in this list are also reflected in the fiction stories of Boys’ Life:

- Adventurers: Men take risks and have adventures. They are brave and courageous.
- Be Like Your Father: Dad is your role model. Males express feelings in ways similar to their fathers.
- Be the Best You Can: Do your best. Do not accept being second. ‘I can’t’ is unacceptable.
- Breadwinner: Men provide for and protect their family members. Fathering means bringing home the bacon, not necessarily nurturing.
- Control: Men are in control of their relationships, emotions, and jobs.
- Good Samaritarian: Do good deeds and acts. Put others’ needs first. Set a good example.
- Hurdles: To be a man is to pass a series of tests. Accomplishment is central to the male style.
- Self-Reliant: Asking for help is a sign of weakness. Go it alone. Be self sufficient and do not depend on others.
- Sportsman: Men enjoy playing sports, where they learn the thrill of victory and how to compete.
- Warrior: Men take death defying risks to prove themselves and identify with war heroes.
- The Law: Do right and obey. Do not question authority.
- Tough Guy: Men do not touch, show emotions, or cry. They do not let others push them around.

(Harris, 1995, pp. 12-13)

These classical messages of masculinity are just some example for the themes that are addressed in the narratives but that were not analyzed in detail in this study. In contrast, there is a series of other issues that are not at all portrayed in the fiction stories of Boys’ Life magazine but seems relevant to the intended group of readers. For example, none of the stories in the sample deals with conflicts related to drug and alcohol abuse. Except for one (“Jump Away” by R. Saldana Jr., September 2005), none of the narratives expounds the problems of youth violence and gangs or deals with issues regarding relationships with girls. The problem of peer pressure is only partially addressed and only to a limited extent in terms of courage and achievement, but not so much in terms of fitting in, physical appearance, and popularity.

However, according to a fairly recent Gallup Youth Survey (Carroll, 2006), those are some of the issues that teenagers between the ages of 13 and 17 years identify without prompting as the most important problems facing them these days. According to the poll, the consumption of drugs, alcohol, and tobacco is perceived as the most important problem with about three in ten teenagers mentioning it. Younger teenagers between 13
and 15 years are even more likely to mention this as a primary issue than older teenagers
between 16 and 17 years. The second most important issue is peer pressure, fitting in,
appearance and looks, as well as popularity mentioned by 17% of all teenagers. This
problem is followed by sexual issues such as teen pregnancy and abortion (14%);
education (14%); ignorance and lack of youth getting involved (10%); and career, money,
economy, and future (10%). Even though these results include teenage girls as well, the
survey also points out that the differences between boys and girls with regards to the
most important issues were not statistically significant.

Education and academic achievement are only marginally addressed in the fiction
stories of the sample and so are career goals and professional values. In part, this is
reflected only by the settings and contexts portrayed in the fiction stories. There are a
number of stories narrating about historical events as well as unrealistic or unusual
adventures and circumstances. Even though the majority of narratives do depict realistic
conflicts, none of them seems to feature specifically the issues that teenage boys perceive
as the most important ones to people their age.

In addition, the predominance of non-urban story settings is at odds with U.S.
demographics. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2000), 79% of the population is
urban and only 21% rural. While fiction is never intended to be a veridical account of
reality, one may pose questions as to the reasons for this strong discrepancy. Does the
publisher of Boys’ Life magazine simply try to cling to antiquated visions and past values
of male youth culture? Or is there a deliberate attempt to create a countercultural
environment that contravenes developments within contemporary youth culture?
Regardless of the intention, the divergence between actuality and literary representation gives reason for the discussion of possible implications.

5.2 Implications

The findings of this study described in the fourth chapter and the previous discussion sections have several implications. First of all, this study shows that values of masculinity formulated in the Scout Law by the Boy Scouts of America are well-reflected in the fiction stories selected by the editors of *Boys’ Life* for publication. Many of the values and their reflection in the story do promote ideals of mature masculinity within a social context by featuring protagonists and minor characters that learn to fulfill adult-like responsibilities and roles. This helps to further the mission and vision of the Boy Scouts of America to educate and prepare boys to become responsible young men who make ethical and moral choices throughout their lives.

This study does not argue that there is a direct influence between reading the fiction and attitudes, beliefs, and judgments of readers. Yet, the communication of values and ideals in the form of narratives provides an important source of culturally and socially meaningful content. Stephens (2002b), for example, argues:

Texts for young audiences are not mere narratives, but have an orientation toward models and ideologies already present in culture and, by giving these narrative form, may reinforce them and refract them back to the culture or may propose some modification of them (p. 40).

Secondly, the study indicates a few potentially problematic aspects. For example, a comparison of the problems and conflicts negotiated in the narratives with issues and concerns that adolescent boys face these days suggests that the fiction stories offer a
limited portrayal of a real boy’s or man’s life. Certain issues seem to be neglected completely such as the problems related to drug and alcohol abuse, academic achievements, or issues related to girls and sexuality. In fact, portrayals of girls and women seem to be neglected to a great extent. Male protagonists are generally portrayed exclusively in relation to other boys or men but not in relation to women. During the review of the literature, it became clear that masculinity and femininity are to be understood as relational concepts whose meanings have been organized against one another. Thus, explicit and implicit statements about one concept inevitably also contain statements about the other. For example, the absence of portrayals of women and girls may be interpreted as an indication for the construction of hegemonic masculinity or male dominance.

Other issues such as problems related to peer pressure are only partially addressed. Overall, it seems that the variety of problems and conflicts addressed is limited. Given the problems an average teenage boy seems confronted with in his immediate social environment it is likely that he turns to other sources in a search for answers to the issues that sway him. While it is plausible that certain issues and contexts are more relevant and important in terms of lending themselves better to the ideas and vision of Scouting, there is an indication that the incorporation of these other aspects of life into fiction stories may meet with very strong reader interest. This might be a potential consideration for the Boy Scouts of America as one of the nation’s leading youth organization.

In addition, not only the problems depicted are limited but also the ways in which they are solved. Many narratives show protagonists overcoming their conflicts by
keeping their feelings in check and by acting appropriately in a given situation even if, to this point, they have not been convinced of their abilities. Thus, in each story the protagonist eventually finds the strength to overcome conflicts himself. Fiction stories do not portray protagonists receiving assistance from someone else or even just talking to someone else about problems as a way of solving their conflicts. In fact, the prejudice that men or boys do not talk about problems is reinforced by suggesting that it is socially undesirable and that the only way of overcoming them is through action. This can have potentially detrimental effects on adolescent boys by preventing them from actively seeking help such as counseling when being confronted with more severe or long-term problems.

Another problematic aspect can be seen in the portrayal of reward and social recognition for acting in accordance with the values of the Scout Law. While acknowledgment of self and others is desirable and can serve as an important motivation, the way in which it is portrayed may lead to unreal expectations. In contrast, real-life experiences can prove to be very disappointing if appreciation and tribute remain absent. Besides, from an educational perspective it seems desirable that young readers realize the importance of the values for their own sake. Acting in accordance with the values should be guided primarily by intrinsic rather than extrinsic motives. Although it is true that in many stories the protagonist realizes that he must do what he perceives as morally right, rarely if ever does he not get rewarded in one way or another for his actions and behavior.
5.3 Limitations and Further Research

One limitation of this study is that it investigated portrayals of masculinity guided primarily by the rather narrow definition of values of masculinity that the Boy Scouts of America itself provides in the Scout Law. Over the course of analysis, less attention was given to other important themes and concepts that emerged from close readings of the narratives in relation to the construction of masculinity. However, they may be crucial in order to gain a full understanding of notions of masculinity in contemporary fiction stories. Further research may either seek to explore these other themes and values in more depth or attempt to investigate specifically the portrayals of predefined traditional and non-traditional notions of masculinity.

Another limitation is the restriction of the analysis to only textual representations. Every fiction story is accompanied with a visual representation that emphasizes the content of the narrative and may even communicate additional messages that are not conveyed in the written text. They are part of the overall impression that the reader receives. Yet, they have not been incorporated in the analysis of this study.

In relation to the values of masculinity as formulated in the Scout Law, further research may also be conducted in the form of comparative studies. For example, one option is to compare the values in the Scout Laws of different national Scouting organizations and how they are reflected in communication vehicles. This might yield interesting results in terms of the meaning and importance of different values such as the value of reverence in different countries or cultures.

Another promising research project is a historical comparison of the reflection of the values of the American Scout Law in fiction stories of different time periods such as
the 1920s or the 1950s in addition to narratives published in contemporary magazines. This may lead to revealing insights in terms of how often and in which ways the different values are portrayed over time. It may, in particular, help to understand and explain the importance of the value of reverence with regards to different time periods. It would be of interest to see how major historical events and social change have an impact on cultural products such as the media as, in this case, on fiction in a teenage boys’ magazine.

5.4 Conclusion

This study revealed insights and findings from an analysis of portrayals of values of masculinity in the fiction stories of Boys’ Life magazine. As Jensen (2002) remarks, textual representations like any other form of communication content “have naturally been a central object of analysis in qualitative media studies, being the vehicles of cultural forms and historical worldviews” (p. 244). Studies like this one are important in order to gain valuable insights to the various meanings of these cultural forms and worldviews and the ways in which they are constructed and conveyed. Ultimately, these insights may make a significant contribution to less rigid constructions of the concepts of masculinity and femininity. Particularly in the field of fiction writing, this may bring out a broader range and diversity of literary works. Virginia Woolf’s (1929) thoughts express the idea of an androgynous mind very aptly: “Perhaps a mind that is purely masculine cannot create, any more than a mind that is purely feminine (....) It is fatal to be a man or a woman pure and simple; one must be woman-manly or man-womanly (pp. 171 & 181).”
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Appendix
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Pages</th>
<th>Title of the Fiction Story</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Summary as Provided in Boys' Life Magazine</th>
<th>Protagonist (age)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>December</td>
<td>20-25,</td>
<td>The Cowboy's Christmas Eve</td>
<td>Jack Schaefer</td>
<td>&quot;He is Stubby Pringle, 19-year-old, 10 foot-tall cowhand of the Triple X. And this was his night to howl. (p. 20)&quot;</td>
<td>Stubby Pringle (19)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>November</td>
<td>44-47</td>
<td>The Sun And The Clouds And The Water</td>
<td>Carl and Marian Deuker</td>
<td>&quot;Alec's grandpa proves to be his best friend. But what happens when a best friend gets hurt and everything turns hopeless? (p. 44)&quot;</td>
<td>Alec</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>October</td>
<td>28-32</td>
<td>The Terrible Big Wind in Abilene</td>
<td>William B. Morris</td>
<td>&quot;Zip, zip, zip! Cows sent flying, trains forced backward, heads blown bald - nothing is safe from the Texas terror! (p. 29)&quot;</td>
<td>No protagonist</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>July</td>
<td>28-31</td>
<td>Rip Tide</td>
<td>Maureen C. Wartski</td>
<td>&quot;Andy's fear of the surf has him believing that every wave could be his last. How can he possibly rush in and save the little boy? (p. 3)&quot;</td>
<td>Andy Cohn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2006</td>
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### Table 8 Information Coded for Upon Second Reading (examples)

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<th>Protagonist</th>
<th>Minor character(s)</th>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>March</td>
<td>26-31, 53</td>
<td>The King of Mazy May</td>
<td>Jack London</td>
<td>Walt's mother had died; his father and Walter are now doing heavy labor on Mazy May Creek; W. has no experience with the more worldly things and never talked to a girl - but he is familiar with nature and the outdoors; one day W. steals the newcomers dogs to help Loren Hall whom the newcomers want to betray; because of his heroic deed W. becomes the King of Mazy May (story from 1911)</td>
<td>Walt Masters (14 years)</td>
<td>Walt's father; Sir Hartmann; George Lukens and his brother; Loren Hall (old man), newcomers and leader and the Irish man</td>
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<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>June</td>
<td>24-29</td>
<td>Grooved</td>
<td>James M. Janik</td>
<td>Derrick asks his friend Ryan who is on the competing game to give him easy pitches during the baseball game - it is Derrick's last game and so far Jerry Carter (the rival for the title) is two hits ahead of him; game scenes commented by Ryan - struggles that he has with himself about whether to accomodate Derrick and help him win the title or not; one 'easy' shot wasn't intended to be like it was, the second was &quot;a perfect pitch. No way he'd [Derrick] hit that when looking for an easy fastball (p. 29)&quot; - Ryan had decided for the last shot that mattered that his friend would have to earn it – just like Jerry Carter did</td>
<td>Ryan</td>
<td>Ryan's best friend Derrick; Jerry Carter; Ryan's dad; Marty (catcher for Ryan)</td>
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<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Month</td>
<td>Pages</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Author</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>May</td>
<td>30-35</td>
<td>Plane Crazy</td>
<td>Walter Dean Myers</td>
<td>Gene doesn't want to participate in summer &quot;buddy&quot; camp suggested by teacher - mom makes him to; Gene and David who is bold because of a chemotherapy are put together in a group by their teacher to complete a buddy project - they are both hard-headed, question each others' competence and mimic the tough guy (Gene: &quot;David, how would you like me to come over to your house and knock you out?&quot; p. 35; &quot;...working with David - just being around him - was enough to drive me nuts&quot;, p. 35) but eventually work out a way to cooperate successfully and rebuild an airplane according to Gene's great-grandfather's model; David even makes Gene laugh; but competitiveness remains at least publicly/they don't openly become friends: &quot;I [Gene] was watching a baldheaded pain in the neck sit in the cockpit of a Health Parasol and answer questions from a Channel 2 reporter (p. 35)&quot; -&gt; David is talking about &quot;his guys&quot; having worked really hard on it &quot;but they probably could have done it faster (p. 35)&quot;</td>
<td>Gene Hutton</td>
<td>David Giles; Gene's mom; Mr. Liburd (teacher); Gene's Dad (&quot;Pop&quot;); great-grandfather Beckworth Hutton (just mentioned); “a very round woman;” some guys who played checkers in front of the bike repair; “a bunch of cranky old black dudes” at repair store</td>
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Table 9 Information Coded for Upon Third Reading (examples)

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<th>Summary</th>
<th>Protagonist</th>
<th>Minor character(s)</th>
<th>Values and Themes</th>
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| 16| 2005 | Sept  | Jump Away      | René Saldana Jr.| trial of courage: competition between Fenny and Mike; Mike (a bully) challenged Fenny and other boys to jump from Jenson's Bridge into the river; Fenny doesn't want to "pansy out"; instead he jump before Mike counts to three (as agreed); his courage doesn't change anything about Mike's rude and brutal behavior towards him though | Fenny       | Mike (opponent)   | masculinity explicitly addressed within context of a competition between boys: Easy enough, he thought. Not scary like in all those movies where the manly man hero is scaling an impossible mountainside to escape an enemy, or walking across a rotting wooden bridge, way above a rushing river... (p. 45);
comparing yourself with others (male heroes from the movies); showing you're a real man; boys who back out ("chicken out" p.45; "Who's first to pansy out?" p. 46) are considered girls - nobody wants to be a girl (Mike: "Any of you girls want to back out? It's ok, if you do. Not all of us have to be man enough.' (p. 46)); peer pressure/social desirability requires you to be brave; temporary bravery does not necessarily change hierarchies in life; bullying, |

Continued
Table 9 continued

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<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Mar</td>
<td>American Brothers</td>
<td>Thomas Fleming</td>
<td>&quot;Two boys - one Indian, one white - join forces to help form a nation. (p. 30)&quot;; Indian warriors and American army unite to defend America against the British (Revolutionary war); Running Wolf acts as a translator between the two troops; the two boys went scouting alone and discovered the British troop marching to attack their own troops; they warn the camp of American and Indian soldiers and that way help them to succeed against the English; everyone is proud of the boys and they consider themselves brothers</td>
<td>Running Wolf (Indian boy of the Oneida Nation) (12)</td>
<td>Tom Travers (red-haired white drummer boy: 12); Uncle Bold Antelope (one of the greatest warriors), American army and Gen. George Washington, Running Wolf's parents, Colonel Dan Morgan</td>
<td>national pride/patriotism; even young boys have their role in war; taking pride in being a great warrior; curiosity for politics and the &quot;big issues&quot; (of the nation); being a good student and well-educated (e.g. language); &quot;gritting your teeth&quot;; fighting spirit; dealing with burden (e.g. hunger, exhaustion); strong believe in freedom ideas and fighting for it; hierarchies; diplomacy; joining and uniting for a common purpose (Americans/Indians); excitement not anxiety in the light of war; obedience; courage; being a celebrated war hero; brotherhood; pride</td>
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<tr>
<td>#</td>
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<td>Summary</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>July</td>
<td>Rip Tide</td>
<td>Maureen C. Wartski</td>
<td>Andy and Matt are surfing; while Matt is loving and enjoying it, Andy &quot;feels sheer panic&quot; (p. 29) about the waves; Andy is too afraid to tell anyone about his fear of water and waves since he had a terrifying experience one summer in Florida - a rip tide had carried him far offshore; Andy feels he needs to keep up with his cousin who thinks Andy is wimping out; one day Andy - after some inner struggles with his fears - manages to save the life of a little boy (Doug) who was at risk of drowning - helps Andy lose his fear; Andy's dad is very proud and Matt really praises Andy's action and courage</td>
<td>Andy Cohn</td>
<td>Andy's cousin Matt, Uncle Todd, three small kids with mom and dad on the beach, Andy's dad, little boy Doug</td>
<td>overarching theme: fear and overcoming it; fear and being ashamed of it (p. 29) - &quot;Andy had been too ashamed to explain&quot;, &quot;Once or twice Andy had come close to telling Matt about his fear, but he'd held back. Matt, unafraid of anything, wouldn't understand. (p. 29)&quot;; challenge among boys - Andy getting sick spoils the fun ((Matt, p. 30); Matt is disgusted at Andy's wipeout: &quot;I don't know what's with you, man. I never figured you'd wimp out like this. (p. 30); Andy is angry and embarrassed with himself; shame (&quot;the little boy's brave stammer shamed Andy&quot;, p. 31); proving it to yourself and others; courage/bravery; pride (Dad)&quot;Matt's awstruck praise (p. 31)&quot;; helping others: dependency of someone else on you (little boy on Andy); having overcome the fear that keeps you from enjoying life: &quot; But that fear would never again hold him [Andy] prisoner. (p. 31)&quot;</td>
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### Table 10 Information Coded for Upon Fourth Reading

Abbreviations:
(2) Lo = Loyal; He = Helpful; Fr = Friendly; Co = Courteous; Ki = Kind; Ch = Cheerful; Ob = Obedient

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<td>X (polite, respectful)</td>
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### Table 10 continued

Abbreviations:
(2) Lo = Loyal; He = Helpful; Fr = Friendly; Co = Courteous; Ki = Kind; Ch = Cheerful; Ob = Obedient

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Abbreviations:
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Abbreviations:
(2) Lo = Loyal; He = Helpful; Fr = Friendly; Co = Courteous; Ki = Kind; Ch = Cheerful; Ob = Obedient

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### Table 10 continued

Abbreviations:
(2) Lo = Loyal; He = Helpful; Fr = Friendly; Co = Courteous; Ki = Kind; Ch = Cheerful; Ob = Obedient

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### Table 10 continued

Abbreviations:
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Vita

Tina Mendzigall was born in Goerlitz, Germany on August 18, 1981. She entered the University of Applied Sciences FHTW Berlin, Germany in 2002 and graduated in 2006 with a B.A. in Business Communication. She was a student of the M.A. program of Business Communication at the same university for one semester before coming to the University of Tennessee, Knoxville on a Fulbright scholarship in August 2006. Tina received her M.S. in Communication and Information with a concentration in Advertising from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville in August 2007.