Hiding in plain sight: Paratextual utterances as tools for information-related research and practice

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ABSTRACT

Through a qualitative content analysis of a purposive sample (the 2010 finalists of the Canadian Governor General's Literary Awards in both French and English), this study investigates what information can be gleaned from the book-as-object using peritext as a research tool. Using the theories of Gérard Genette, who defined the paratext, and Pierre Bourdieu, this research posits that paratextual utterances serve as an expression and tool of the cultural realm of publication and can be used for informational purposes in library and information science (LIS) research and practice. Findings indicate that the peritext is a rich source for gathering information about authorship and publishing as it reveals contextually relevant information, shares the author's informational tools, constructs the author, markets titles, and provides relevant information for specific age groups and genres. Discussion centers on the impact for libraries and the LIS community, with a focus on readers' advisory.

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1. Introduction

The physical book is well established as a means of accessing literature, as an output of scholarly publication, and, in some disciplines, as an object for study. In library and information science (LIS), the book is understood as an intrinsic part of multiple spheres: it is at the core of the publishing industry, which has strong ties with libraries; it is a key component of the reading and informational experience of readers who come in contact with it; and it holds a historically strong presence within libraries and in library culture, through physical collections and various services. The book is also often understood as a powerful, active document that contributes to a greater dialogue as a player in the formation of social, informational, and cultural dynamics.

When one considers the book-as-object, it is clear that the text is packaged or wrapped in certain conventional elements. Genette (1997) described these wrappings as paratext, further dividing it into two types: the peritext, consisting of the elements that are not the text proper but are included within the codex, and the epitext, composed of utterances surrounding the text but created and made public outside of the book-as-object. He summarized their relationship with this formula: "paratext = peritext + epitext" (p. 5).

When building a framework, the researcher can choose from an array of methods and means, the most relevant of which will then support the research process. Many of these tools can be perceived as obvious and easily integrated; others may be sitting in plain sight while the researcher remains oblivious to them, making their discovery all the more compelling. Some peritextual inclusions are already embedded in library work: for example, title pages (recto and verso) play a great role in the cataloguing process (and contain bibliographic information) and cover descriptions are often used as readers' advisory tools. Yet little has been written on the potential use of the peritext for libraries and other informational purposes. This work hence posits that the peritext is a site of interrogation that can be described as 'hiding in plain sight.' It examines the peritext to investigate what can be gleaned from the book-as-object, particularly with regards to three topics: the authors' information-sharing habits, the cultural conventions at play within the publishing industry, and the tools used to connect or discover other sources or titles. It then considers the impact of peritext for libraries and how they can use this knowledge to further service, as well as for further research.

2. Problem statement

A gap in the research of authors' informational habits was noted in the discipline of library and information science and the sub-discipline of human information behavior, in particular. Interestingly, the literature review will show that some studies have used the peritext as a tool to investigate the collaborative habits of academic authors and their activities related to publishing; however, little has been said of other categories of authors (fiction and drama writers, poets, authors of general essays, even translators). As an intrinsic and complex component of the published codex, the peritext is an ensemble of utterances that originate from the author(s) and creator(s) of the book-as-object while also serving as an expression and tool of the literary field and, more broadly, the field of cultural production; therefore, the peritext

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offers a rich, if as yet not fully explored, site for investigation regarding the informational context of authors, publishing trends and constraints, connections between titles, and, perhaps, the impact of (and for) libraries in all of these areas.

This research works to understand what the peritext communicates on behalf of author(s) and creator(s) and to ascertain its use and informational value for the various constituencies that are affected by the publication process, including information professionals. More specifically, the study was guided by the following research questions:

- What, if any, information is conveyed through the peritext?
- What, if anything, does the peritext convey of the author's informational context?
- What, if anything, does the peritext reflect of the cultural field in which the books are produced?
- How, if at all, can information professionals harness the information contained in the peritext?

This research will help further the information community's understanding of how underlying informational exchanges fuel the authorship and publishing processes, how the contact with the peritext affects the reading public, and how the information contained within theses utterances may affect librarians as service providers, particularly in those activities which either involve authors and creators or the products of their writing practice, related squarely to librarianship: books as materials, reading and writing practices, and readers' advisory (RA).

Indeed, while the readers advisory field has not claimed Genette's theories or explored the cultural implications or information behavior aspects of the peritext within the library context, it has shown an indirect but pointed interest for the peritext through the recommended examination of the book-as-object in RA activities. Moyer (2011), for example, notes that RA proponents have often suggested that professionals examine the different parts of the book—including, however, not only the paratext but also the text proper—in order to glean information to help them make supported suggestions to readers or to make connections between titles. This practice, which focuses on the "look and feel" of the book as well as on the aspects of the storytelling most likely to capture or repel readers, is therefore a known use that can be built upon using the various peritextual findings from this research.

3. Literature review

Paratexts, as cultural productions (Genette, 1997), are of interest to a variety of disciplines outside of the literary field in which they were first theorized; they have been studied from a documentation perspective (Skare, 2004), in print culture studies (Fisher, 2011; Mak, 2011), and through media studies lenses (Gray, 2010). These analyses from multiple disciplines recognize the significance of paratextual utterances and the possibility for incorporating them into research. Within LIS, paratexts have also been investigated, although not from an informational perspective and not always for the book alone—the paratext of articles or dissertations has also come under study.

In his research, Paling (2002) builds from Genette's theory to extend the idea of paratextuality to systems of classification. Although Naidoo (2007, 2008, 2011) does not explicitly brand his work as paratextual study, his textual and visual analysis of Latino and Queer children's picture books is an example of paratext incorporated into LIS research with emphasis on cultural production. The study of bibliometrics, with its focus on citation analysis, is another means in which the peritext (here, the citation) is examined and analyzed (De Bellis, 2009). Other researchers have focused on peritext in academic publishing, namely through the heavily coded conventions of dedications and acknowledgements, to understand the connections between scholars. Cronin (1995, 2005) and his collaborators (Cronin & Franks, 2006; Cronin, Shaw, & La Barre, 2003, 2004), along with Robert Gifford (1988), McCain (1991), and Salager-Meyer, Alcaraz-Ariza, Luzardo

Briceno, and Jabbour (2011) make clear the sociocognitive ties between researchers, scholars, and peers through the analysis of acknowledgements as rewards. For her part, Scrivener (2009) suggests that acknowledgements can provide useful information for librarians seeking to serve specific academic groups. Recently, the convergence of research and changes in the collection of funding acknowledgements in certain databases (Costas & van Leeuwen, 2012) has rekindled an interest in this culturally significant type of paratext (Costas & van Leeuwen, 2011; Wang & Shapira, 2011).

Other peritextual elements have been paid particular attention in research geared towards library practices. The 'envelope' of the published codex has come under investigation: Matthews and Moody's (2007) edited volume of book cover case studies hones in on the messages conveyed not only to readers but also to other players of the cultural field (publishers, marketers, etc.). This research echoes O'Connor and O'Connor's (1998) content analysis of 228 book jackets, which studied the book cover as an access point and, among other things, raised issues surrounding the removal of dust jackets as a library practice. *Blurbing*, the paratextual convention through which established authors lend their support to the published work through a short (and usually laudatory) quote was studied through statistical analysis as a revealing custom in publishing (Cronin & La Barre, 2005). These examples of peritextual analysis indicate that the peritext can indeed reveal the underlying cultural forces at play in the creation of books and marketing of collections.

4. Theoretical framework

French theorist Genette defined the paratext, as noted above, as that which is not the text proper but coexists with it to give it form (in the case at hand, through the book-as-object) and shed further meaning onto it—by providing, for example, a genesis of the work in a preface. Genette reinforces his definition and the significance of the paratext by identifying it as a conventional wrapping of the text, which does not reach the consumer in "an unadorned state, unreinforced, and unaccompanied by a certain number of verbal or other productions, such as author's name, a title, a preface, illustrations" (1997, p. 1). These conventions help to construct the object, situate the text, and position the book, culturally, communicating greater meaning to the consumer. Paratextual conventions, therefore, are not neutral, but instead serve a functional purpose—or, as this work posits, an informational one. As Genette (1997) states, paratextual utterances represent a threshold— in the French, "seuil" (pp. 2; 5)—between the text and outside world, which allows the reader to, quite literally, step inside the object at hand. They inform the reader, make the text material, and can even, as suggested by Lejeune and cited by Genette, become a "fringe" which "controls one's whole reading of the text" (Genette, 1997, p. 2). In short, paratexts are access points to the text, both from an informational and from an interpretive perspective.

The peritext, as that part of the paratext which is included in the book-as-object, is therefore not neutral by definition, but rather defined by social and cultural practices. This is best understood when one considers, as did social theorist Bourdieu, some of the inherent parameters of the literary field. Bourdieu (1996) explains how an author can use writing to circumvent the "determinations, constraints, and limits which are constitutive of social existence" (p. 27), which are determined by the rules and regulations of the groups to which a person belongs. Yet if one is to publish and achieve recognition (or commercial success), any complete or partial liberation of these social restraints through art is then accompanied by the adoption of another set of rules and constraints, imposed by the community, the producers and, ultimately, the market; for although it may seem like a "relatively autonomous universe" (p. 141), the literary field is, in fact, subsumed under the broader field of cultural production, which is itself subject to the rule of economic and political forces. This dependency is reflected in the relationship of artists with those who contribute to the collective

acts of dissemination and consecration: "critics, writers of prefaces, dealers, etc.," and, as Bourdieu specifies, "publishers" (p. 167). It is therefore imperative to look at peritextual inclusions as possible traces of the necessary connections between the "agents and institutions which actualize [the cultural order] and bring it into existence" (p. 198); such a list could, of course, include libraries, as institutions. Consequently, the definitions provided by Genette (1997) and the social and cultural grounding from Bourdieu (1996) help to position the peritext as a series of elements capable of situating the ties between writers, cultural agents (including libraries), and the constraints of the literary field, while placing the book-as-object at the forefront of the informational sphere.

5. Method

A set of award-nominated and winning books reflecting cultural distinction was chosen through the adoption of a pre-determined, existing sample: the 2010 finalists of the Governor General's Literary Awards (69 titles in total: 35 titles in English and 34 titles in French, as one title was nominated in two categories; see Appendix A) (Canada Council for the Arts, 2010a). These awards are understood to be Canada's pre-eminent national literary awards; books must adhere to a set of criteria and cannot be self-published (Canada Council for the Arts, 2012). Purposive in nature, this sample offered an authoritative list of works representing a diversity of contributors (authors, illustrators, varied publishing house size, etc.) and genres, as reflected in the seven award categories: Fiction, Non-fiction, Poetry, Drama, Children's Literature—Text, Children's Literature—Illustration, and Translation (French to English and English to French, awarded in any of the aforementioned genres). It should be noted that while the two categories geared towards a younger public bear the label "Children's Literature", they do, in fact, group both children and young adult material—a distinction which will become important as certain findings are discussed.

The researchers gained access to all 69 of the codices, through one national, two public, and two research libraries. An in-hand examination of the peritext was performed, using qualitative content analysis (see Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; White & Marsh, 2006) following the principles of grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). This flexible and naturalistic method (White & Marsh, 2006) was deemed appropriate for this exploratory work as qualitative content analysis is a "sense making effort that takes a volume of qualitative material and attempts to identify core consistencies and meanings" within (Patton, 2002, p. 453). With the research questions serving as guides (White & Marsh, 2006), the researchers conducted an analysis of all peritextual areas from the sample-list (covers, title page, title page verso, introductions, dedications, acknowledgements, genesis statements, epigraphs, notes, references, etc.) in order to see what could be gleaned from the book-as-object regarding information exchanges and cultural convention. The text proper was excluded. In some cases, decisions had to be made about what the 'text proper' involved: epigraphs, which Genette (1997) qualifies as being "at the *edge* of the work" (p. 144; italics in the original), are an example of utterances whose peritextual weight might vary (namely because of their location in relation to the text proper); in the context of this research, they were analyzed only when they appeared alone on a separate page and not, as could be the case, at the beginning of a chapter.

All relevant French language peritext was translated into English by one of the researchers, who is a published and produced (on the stage) translator. This researcher coded the French section of the data while the other researcher coded the English section of the dataset. Coding occurred inductively with the codes emerging from the dataset (White & Marsh, 2006). Once the individual sections were preliminarily coded, the researchers came together to confirm the coding of both sections for "conceptual consistency between observation and conclusion" (White & Marsh, 2006, p. 39). Subsequently, using the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), the researchers collaboratively

worked with the coding so that the codes evolved throughout the process. Throughout this process, the strategy of writing memos was used to maintain consistency between researchers and a final coding manual was developed. The final codes established through the qualitative content analysis were:

- Acknowledgement statements provided by the author or creator
- Author 'notoriety' and recognitions (i.e., awards or nominations that author or creator received)
- Biographical information (i.e., the construction of a history of the author or creator)
- Citation or copyright details (provided within the sample peritext to other written or pictorial works)
- Comparisons between author and other literary figures
- Cryptic messages (i.e., messages written for those "in the know")
- Details on the origin, genesis, or inspiration of the work
- Environmental or ecological information or disclaimers
- Interpretive guidance (i.e., translators' notes, disclaimers, warnings, etc.)
- Links to epitext of author or publisher websites
- Lists of other titles by author or creator
- Lists of other titles by publisher
- Praise presented by varied literary authorities

Credibility was maintained through peer debriefing and prolonged engagement with the dataset as the data and coding categories were discussed at regular intervals and were revisited at multiple intervals (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

6. Findings

Since all books from the sample have a publication date of 2009 or 2010 (Appendix A), they are referred to by first author surname only; furthermore, since most of the peritext is not paginated, the reader has been spared the constant repetition of the abbreviation "n. p." A clear page number is indicated when applicable.

6.1. Reflecting the context: Informing through societal or cultural constraints and expectations

The peritext reflects the authorial and publication contexts; however, and interestingly, established standards and expectations are not always consistent, even within one country or language. For instance, what acts as the expected constant of title page verso (TPV) was not always placed as TPV. Instead, the information usually contained therein (copyright, financial acknowledgement statements, cataloguing information, etc.) varied in location. This was noted in three categories from the sample: Drama (e.g., Haché; Paquet), Children's Literature—Text (e.g., Croteau; Josie), and Children's Literature—Illustration, by far the most representative of these exceptions (e.g., Croza; Flett; Noël; Page; Papineau; Steinmetz; and Stutson).

Even bibliographic information is not as standardized as one might tend to believe. Certain elements were provided in some titles yet absent from others in the same category (and same language). For example, the back matter of the children's title *Le géranium* (Josie) includes the mention "Pour enfants de 4 à 10 ans" (for children ages 4 to 10) while *Triste sort ou l'hurluberlu de Morneville* (Davidts) includes two statements regarding the age level appropriateness of the title: "Dès 6 ans" (from age 6) and "Pour les jeunes" (for young audiences). This reading level information was found in other peritextual inclusions about the title itself (Stewart) or for the collection as a whole (Robitaille).

Although the sample included translated works, the translator and the original language of these works were not always placed in a prominent area on the book-as-object; in fact, only three of the ten translated titles included this detail on the front cover. In the titles from Gallant, Hage, Heath, Quiviger, Stewart, Toews, and Tremblay,

the translators' names were not present on the front cover; often, the first mention of the cultural transfer was on the title page. This is surprising given the fact that the text could not exist in the language of reception without the work of the translator. This omission therefore places dubious value on the work having been first crafted in another language.

Conversely, other creators or contributors were given credit in the peritextual data. In six of the ten children's illustrated works, both the author and illustrator were noted on the cover. However, these practices reveal incongruences. Bridgeman was identified as an illustrator on the cover of *Uirapurú*, whereas neither author Croza's, nor illustrator James' roles were identified on the cover of the title, *I know here*. In fact, lack of rigor in credit standards was noted in a few children's titles. Author Papineau's and illustrator Egger's respective media are not mentioned on the cover of *Le journal secret de Lulu Papino*, only on its TP; the same scenario occurs in the book *Le funambule* (text by Croteau, illustrations by Bisaillon). Perhaps the most telling example, however, is the title *Le géranium*, nominated in the Children's Literature—Illustration category: while the illustrator's name figures prominently on the front cover and TP, the only mention of the text's author (Tellier) is in the back matter, where the TPV information is located; her name is absent from the front cover, back cover, and TP.

The publisher of McMurchy-Barber included a significant statement on the TPV: "Care has been taken to trace the ownership of copyright material used in this book. The author and the publisher welcome any information enabling them to rectify any references or credits in subsequent editions. J. Kirk Howard, President." This underlines both the limitations of the publisher's informational resources and the need to stand protected against liability.

Other credits, including funding acknowledgements, were provided as part of the peritext and understood to be conventional expectations in the published work. From the dataset it was observed that multiple publishers used standard funding statements, including those provided by granting agencies. Publisher Le Noroît, however, revamped the statement by integrating a wind-related metaphor linked to its wind-related name into the standard statement of thanks for financial aid (in the title by Nepveu). The overwhelming inclusion of environmental statement and logos were another example of inclusions as reflections of societal priorities.

6.2. Sharing the author's informational tools

The peritext reveals the diverse methods by which the author communicates to the reader which research sources were used—although these practices were clearly more frequent in works of non-fiction, academic output, and essays. These types of works, mainly, are discussed below (note the English Fiction data has zero indications of concrete research sources documented).

English's *Just Watch Me: The Life of Pierre Elliott Trudeau 1968–2000* was an interesting case, as it included not only a textual bibliography but also a URL to a more complete list of sources. Other authors, such as Abbott, Heath, Lavoie, McAndrew, Ouellet, and Rivard included notes as part of the peritextual matter; for some (Heath, Rivard) these were offered in lieu of a bibliography. In certain instances, the notes created an interplay between process-based comments, retrieval support, and bibliographic details: for instance, Lavoie augmented some of his notes with call numbers. His work further included the transcripts (not visual reproductions) of two historical documents, also accompanied by full archival record information. Abbott included personal annotations that shed light on her writing process, such as, "Loosely translated by Elizabeth Abbott" (p. 405)—a twist on more standard formulations, like the "nous traduisons" (our translation) used by Lavoie (pp. 531 and 536).

Another common use of cited work as peritext is the epigraph, and it presented in a completely different fashion. Rarely was full citation information provided; Rivard's work, while it contained full bibliographical

information for other works cited, provided only the author name and title for the epigraph—no publication details. Two epigraphs in two genres came close to including everything: Dubois' essay showed only the author's name after the citation, but a note at the bottom of the page gave the title, copyright and publication information (including date and place)—the page number, in short, was the only element missing; the epigraph included in *Room*, a work of fiction by Donoghue, also provided comprehensive information (with the exception of the page number and place of publication). In *Room's* case, however, these details, including translation credit and copyright permissions, were scattered in two places: the page dedicated to the epigraph and the TPV.

6.3. Constructing the author

The peritext can contribute information meant to shape the reader's perception of the author. Analysis indicates that the author or creator is positioned as a credible figure through the peritext—whatever that may mean in the specific context of the book at hand. Certain practices were overwhelmingly frequent; the most represented in the sample were the use of academic credentials (sometimes underlined though self-citation [Mc Andrew]), a list of previous works in the same genre, and awards won; special recognitions, such as being a UN Citizen of the World (Noël) were also mentioned, along with public readings (e.g., David), international productions (e.g., Paquet; Billette), and screen adaptations (Fortier). Alternately, a link to a website can also serve as an invitation to pursue the information trail (e.g., Abbott; Billette; English; and Underwood). There is evidence, however, that credibility is sometimes built by omission and this was noted in one case: Robitaille's young adult (YA) work bears no mention of his academic publications.

Perhaps the most interesting aspects of this use of peritext are the biographical and anecdotal. The biographical anchors the author's credibility in relevant experience: English, who signs a biography of former Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau, was himself a former member of the Parliament of Canada. Gruda is identified as a journalist for *La Presse*—a statement which assumes that the readership will recognize this newspaper publication. The author can be credited with doubling as collection editor or director (Fournier; Papineau; and Ouellet), actor or puppeteer (Haché; Poulin-Denis; and Stutson), curator (Hage), or even cook (Thúy), helping to make their (varied) experience more attractive to more readers.

Clearly, some of the aforementioned examples border on the anecdotal, which is also used to make the author more human or relatable. Connelly's international and Casey's national roaming provide the background for *Burmese Lessons* and *Lakeland*, respectively; Desjardins, Rainfield, and Denman can be pictured writing next to their pets. The allusions to the author's life are not always joyous: the fact that author Page was deceased when the book was published certainly might color the reader's experience.

In opposition to credibility, one also finds information aimed at building excitement for the yet undiscovered: Charest, Fortier, Gruda, Pool, and Thúy are all billed as new authors of first works, thereby suggesting that this is an added value, worthy of mention.

Finally, one book offered a case study in author construction—or lack thereof: the work *Morceaux* is credited to Daniel and René-Daniel Dubois; nowhere in the peritext is it mentioned that this is a dialogue between an actual author (René-Daniel) and an imaginary double (Daniel; Canada Council for the Arts, 2010b). Here, it is up to the reader, or information professional, to solve the puzzle—but only an outside source (or epitext) will support that inquiry.

6.4. Marketing other titles

One of the peritext's functions is to associate the title at hand with other titles, thereby encouraging the discovery, consumption, and potential purchase of other books. Genette (1997) noted informational variants in the lists provided by publishers: for example, lists provided

in the peritext may include the very title the reader has in hand or titles that are no longer available (p. 100); he further commented on disparities within "classification by genre" often included in this part of the peritext (pp. 100–101).

As per the lists of titles found in the sample, the emphasis can be placed on the author, the publisher, or both, and can serve to underscore the relationship between them. The lines here can sometimes be blurred: while Ouellet's book includes a list of titles branded by collection, 8 of the 24 titles mentioned are either by the author, edited by the author, or co-edited by the author. Nepveu's list includes many sections, including one labelled "upcoming" (in French, *en préparation*), setting the stage for the author to be followed beyond the work at hand. Robitaille's book includes a page with two headings for one single title, which is hence identified as penned by Robitaille but published elsewhere, and in English. Listings in both languages are also included in Stewart—with ($n = 1$) or without ($n = 2$) translator credit.

The organization and location of these lists are far from standardized and questions linked to audience and retrieval arise. The catalogue list in Tremblay's YA work presents in numeral order, followed by title, genre, and author; no dates are cited, but prizes won are mentioned. Publisher Dramaturges Éditeurs' lists are organized alphabetically by title. The catalogue list in Laferrière's book include three of his titles—the flap, on the other hand, names only two. Dubois' list does not include genre labels, even though it includes, for example, drama titles—a genre clearly identified in Birdsell's work. The lists can also situate the title in a series (Pool; Noël; and Stewart) or collection, which is common. Yet sometimes the information is hard to track: there are two logos in the Josie book and it is unclear whether either one is meant to identify the collection.

In many instances, both in French and in English, the publisher provided a URL to its catalogue—albeit in conspicuous places at times, such as the back flap (e.g., Dupré).

6.5. Dosage of information

The sample made evident that peritextual information comes in various dosages, and that certain practices are linked to specific target publics. Resource guides (Flett; Rainfield) and glossaries (Stewart) were more readily included in children's and YA titles; succinct explanatory background or contextual notes were also found in books for these age groups (Croteau; Robitaille), along with media notes for illustrations (Croza; Underwood). Even TPV were sometimes made more interesting in children's/YA books through illustration: Turcotte's TVP contains the mirrored image of the epigraph printed on the adjacent page.

URLs were also more prominently displayed (Croteau; Davidts; Steinmetz; and Turcotte). Surprisingly, there were few overt links to social media; McMurchy-Barber's *Free As a Bird* contained a rare example of a Web 2.0 invitation to readers to interact with its publisher. Papineau's *Le journal secret de Lulu Papino* contained an invitation to follow the title character's blog, but it was obsolete at the time of access, not having been updated since September 9, 2011 (Le blogue secret de Lulu Papino, 2009).

The transcriptions of primary resources (Lavoie) and a complete recipe for plum pudding (Fortier) were two notable inclusions of supplementary informational material in adult materials. Obviously, this does not seem to be a popular practice in adult works, creating a limitation in the exploration of the peritext as a gateway to other types of materials.

Nine of the ten works from the Drama category (French and English) included a statement on original production information. Further, most drama books included legal and contact information for performance rights, but only one contained a content warning: a statement on the back cover of Haché's play *Trafiquée* warns that this work is explicit, contains references to prostitution, and might not be suitable for young or unaware readers. This warning comes from a Belgian publisher and offers an interesting parallel with the children's books by Croteau and Davidts, published in Canada, but which both contain a mention of adherence to a non-Canadian law, the French censorship law 49–956 governing the content of publications aimed at children (Legifrance, 2012). The inclusion of this mention may reflect the publisher's export intentions and therefore places the book in a wider playing field in cultural production.

7. Discussion

The findings have illustrated that the peritext communicate traces of diverse informational and cultural practices to the reader; it therefore acts as a tool for research, as it can inform on the players as well as the constraints and expectations of the literary field (including the exceptions created by some of these players). Furthermore, the peritext contains information which can support both the function of the library as an institution and the services offered therein. If one of the library's core goals is to connect readers and/or library users with reading material and information, then a theoretically grounded use of the peritext could have implications for the organization and promotion of reading materials, for the provision of readers' advisory (RA) services, and for targeted services to the author population.

7.1. Potential uses of peritextual information for the organization and promotion of collections

The genre peritext is already used as a method of organizing books on library shelves—albeit one that does not always create a consensus in the library community (Trott & Novak, 2006). Genette (1997) evokes the use of genre designations as part of the title or subtitle paratext, since titles such as *Odes* or *Elegies* seem to indicate content, form and what Genette himself calls "subject matter" (p. 77) in one fell swoop. Subtitles can also be an indication of a work's genre—a misleading one at times and "ultimately always questionable" (p. 95), as it can even get changed from the original to subsequent editions. The sample reflects this ambiguity, with Steinmetz' work, for example, being labeled *roman* (in English, novel) on the TP and *roman fantastique* (in English, fantasy) on the back cover. De la Chenelière's work is identified as drama and is published by Leméac; in comparison, Lansman and Dramaturges Éditeurs, two publishers specializing in theater, do not label the works they publish as drama (although the latter's name is a hint). Desjardins' novel is not branded as such, but rather as the "revised but unexpurgated version of the mythical *Maleficium* by the Abbot Savoie (1877–1913) …" (researcher's translation; Desjardins, 2009, back cover)—an unsubstantiated claim, which can be troublesome for the librarian trying to tie this book with its genre. Peritextual elements identified above as tools to market the publisher's catalogue or collections can also be of use (despite their noted organizational flaws) in developing library collections. However, as was shown, these are not always formatted in a library-friendly way; still, the information professional may choose to consult these for discovery, as a browsing technique, or to make the type of connections encouraged by the format and titles chosen by the publisher for this particular book, and which may differ from more complete versions of the catalogue. The peritext can also resolve ambiguities linked to a book's re-branding as another genre or format in the catalogue.

As mentioned above, readers' advisory services are already making some use of the peritext, and the findings support these uses. Libraries can capitalize on the documented information regarding award nominations and prizes won, such as those stated in titles from Billette, Birdsell, Connelly, Fournier, Hage, Noël, and Quiviger, in order to bring together titles that may have similar characteristics—or, to speak in cultural terms, have been deemed worthy by the application of similar criteria.

The peritext from the sample often included useful annotations of books or other sources that can be considered related to the title itself, suggesting that authors or titles might share similar appeal factors (Saricks, 2005) with the original author or title. However, the information professional may choose to be critical of these annotations; Genette (1997) does comment on the practice of blurbing and suggests that it is a "ritualistic" or "automatic" practice, particularly for American publishers (p. 111). Nonetheless, connections between the original author and title and other authors (sometimes with titles cited) can be very useful RA tools. As an example, the blurb on the rear cover of the title *Room* reads, "…one that places Emma Donoghue in the company of writers such as Hilary Mantel and Muriel Spark—writers who address evil in their works without flinching"; Gallant's work is compared to Henry James, Mordecai Richler, and Edith Wharton—whose short story *The Last Asset*, cited in the epigraph, is also referred to in the afterword as the inspiration for the book. One caveat, however, is worth mentioning: librarians may, at times, need to use their knowledge of the collections in order to navigate certain ethical lines before incorporating cited texts into reading lists: while Tremblay's (2009) *Le dernier été* is geared towards YA readers (in French, *Pour les jeunes de 12 ans et plus*), some of his cited sources of inspiration (Norman Mailer, Milan Kundera, etc., p. 161) are more readily aimed at older or adult readers, and context may need to be considered.

Going deeper into what the peritext can offer, librarians might also use the peritext to recreate the genesis of the work as having begun in other, and possibly still available, documents, such as previous versions, in whole or in part (Catalano; David; Heath; Nepveu; Rivard), or works previously published in other forms (Greene; Harris; Hine). This could help direct users to materials by liked authors, but existing only in other formats—and traceable through the book's peritext.

RA can benefit from peritextual exploration in various ways, by harnessing peritextual inclusions beyond what is suggested in Moyer's (2011) synthetic and standard list and by suggesting other foci for the grouping of titles. For example, since book displays are, by nature, visual RA tools, illustrations-as-peritext and the peritextual information provided about them can be used to connect readers with other materials and information. The painting featured on David's work, identified as *Christine Pisan écrivant dans sa chambre* (1407), can lead, by thematic association, to books on or featuring women writers, or items pertaining to medieval works—including works featuring medieval illustrations on the cover (such as Abbott's work, from the dataset). The provenance information for Gruda's cover illustration, "Galerie d'Avignon", can be seen as an invitation to discover publications pertaining to this region (Avignon, France) or this gallery's collection. Bisaillon's illustrations for children (in Croteau), inspired by Marc Chagall, might lead to the discovery of this artist; the peritext which tells the reader of the Chagall museum in Nice, France may connect this work to adult readers, museum discovery, and travelling. Whole-collection RA or integrated services (Moyer, 2010), where other media are considered, can also be supported: for example, Rivard's work can be linked to the movie *La Neuvaine* through the photograph on its cover.

The peritext can therefore be mined and appropriated into varied RA initiatives, including reading maps or guides, physical or virtual displays, or webographies, thereby integrating many parts of the collection and digital documents in new and unexpected ways.

7.2. Potential impact for libraries: Programming and resources

Library services can also compensate for areas where the peritextual details reveal socio-cultural issues, thereby further asserting their role as cultural agents with the field of cultural production. The aforementioned lapse in translation practices can readily be understood, from a Bourdieusian perspective, as a means of accommodating the market by occulting the unfamiliar (literally, here, the "foreign") from the cover, an important marketing tool. This cultural bias can be remedied by introducing reading material from the original culture (or others) into more diverse reading lists—perhaps even by putting the focus on the translator's, rather than the author's, collected works. Cultural bridges can also be built by programming events around translation-centered reading lists.

Along the same lines, certain peritextual elements encourage the discovery of orality or oral traditions through reading, and can serve as launching pads for in-library activities. For example, involving a Michif-speaking person in storytime with *Owls See Clearly at Night: A Michif Alphabet* would teach young children the importance of pronunciation in language. A peritextual note on Dramaturges Éditeurs' TPVs insists on the importance given, in their publishing ethic, to the respect of the author's coding of orality, on the written page, as related to staging drama (Paquet; Poulin-Denis); this could yield interesting writing or reading activities, perhaps in collaboration with local theatre companies.

The examination of the peritext could also inspire activities based around the author's personality, whether they are present in the library or not: Thúy's experiences as an immigrant and restaurateur can bring books and programming together in fresh ways; Klassen's illustrations can be linked to his work as a puppeteer, which can lead to craftwork; and English's insistence on the role of memory in reconstituting events might lead to activities around the anniversaries of historical events, for example. Bourdieu (1996) warns the cultural researcher against the "charismatic representation of the writer as 'creator'", which he also dubs the "personage of the writer" (p. 190), in that it somehow disassociates the writer from the social context which witnessed and (certainly, in Bourdieu's view) provided the conditions for the work to emerge. However, the aspects of writers' lives or personalities they (or their representatives) put forth in marketing their work and themselves can inspire libraries to fashion events which do not require an objective and scientific approach; in fact, libraries can benefit from the more flamboyant or 'packaged' persona as it is already meant to engage through appeal.

There are limitations to the findings from the sample studied here, which was small (69 codices), though rich in cultural diversity as it represented books in both of Canada's official languages (French and English) as well as one Native language (Michif), in various genres, for adult and young readers. First, it should be noted that the variations in peritext use and presentation can be disconcerting and even, at times, misleading for the information professional seeking some constancy or standardized aspects. For example, the analysis of the TP and TPV showed just how complicated the cataloger's work can be when confronted with such an extraordinary range of content and presentation. Second, it is important to recognize that certain peritextual elements, such as prefaces and acknowledgements, have strong ties to community- or culture-based values and expectations; it is therefore necessary to study or use them in the context of the creation. Reading them through theoretical frameworks such as the one presented here helps to ascertain some of the constraints placed on the information shared.

8. Conclusion

The purposive sample provided by the 2010 Governor General of Canada's Literary Award finalists was broad in its reach, making it possible to explore various uses and modes of peritext. The peritext, or what Genette defined as that which accompanies the text proper in the book-as-object, is a rich and useful tool, hiding in plain sight. The research set out to ascertain what, if anything, the peritext could yield in terms of information about the authors' information-sharing habits, the cultural conventions and constraints of the publishing industry, and the potential connections between titles.

The findings suggest that two LIS areas can benefit most from the peritextual exploration and study: readers' advisory and research. Firstly, within RA and related services, connections between books

are made through the librarian's observations and savoir-faire, and the reader's experience can be made richer by the librarian's own exploration, engagement with the book, and even discernment. Previous uses had shown that the peritext could, indeed, be useful to the LIS community; this research has shown that its study may actually serve information professionals in many ways, helping them understand the work itself, the process of the author, the coded workings of the publishing industry, and the demands placed on the creators by the field of cultural production, understood in the Bourdieusian sense, in order to see their work reach the readership. Specifically for libraries, it offers a wealth of connections, indeed more than traditionally exploited, between books, between genres, between items on multiple supports, and between the book and users. And while some peritext will resist the library's conventions (the title *&: A serial poem*, by Hine, is a cataloguing and retrieval challenge), many aspects of this important component of the book can help information practitioners get a quick yet solid idea of how the work is constructed, to whom it may appeal to, and how it may be connected to other works in novel ways.

In the second area of research it is clear from the sample that the peritext does indeed reveal much of publishing trends and information-sharing tactics (including omissions), as well as underlying societal and cultural values placed on various types of information shared. This, in turn, provides two avenues for further research. First, it invites the study of a broader sample, more culturally specific samples, or genre-based samples, which may provide clear bases for comparison. Now that this exploratory phase has been completed, a more quantitative approach to a peritextual typology for LIS might be considered. Second, as has been done for citations and co-authorship, some aspects of the peritext merit further and more pointed investigation—some of which is currently underway: the acknowledgements, for example, appear to be one of the peritextual sites of major interest for the analysis of the information habits of writers (Desrochers & Pecoskie, 2012; Pecoskie & Desrochers, 2012). Genres and cataloguing, translation credits and multilingual indexing, the transfer of books to electronic formats, and whole-collection retrieval are but a few of the many aspects of the peritext that can take our understanding of the book, its creation, its uses, and its players much further still.

Appendix A. The 2010 Governor Generals finalists (Language and Genre Category in parentheses; 69 titles listed in total as one title [Turcotte] was nominated twice)

Abbott, E. (2010). *A history of marriage.* Toronto, ON: Penguin Canada. (English; Non-fiction)

Billette, G. (2010). *Les ours dorment enfin.* Carnières-Morlanwelz, Belgium: Lansman Éditeur. (French; Drama)

Birdsell, S. (2010). *Waiting for Joe: A novel.* Toronto, ON: Random House. (English; Fiction) Blais, M. (2010). *Mai au bal des prédateurs: Roman.* Montréal, QC: Les Éditions du Boréal. (French; Fiction)

Brown, I. (2009). *The boy in the moon: A father's search for his disabled son.* Toronto, ON: Random House Canada. (English; Non-fiction)

Casey, A. (2009). Lakeland: Journeys into the soul of Canada. Vancouver, BC: Greystone 763 Books. A division of D&M Publishers. Copublished by the David Suzuki Foundation. (English; Non-fiction)

Catalano, F. (2010). *qu'une lueur des lieux.* Montréal, QC: Éditions de l'Hexagone. (French; Poetry)

Chafe, R. (2010). *Afterimage: Adapted from the short story by Michael Crummey.* Toronto, ON: Playwrights Canada Press. (English; Drama)

Charest, M. (2010). *Rien que la guerre, c'est tout.* Montréal, QC: Éditions Les Herbes Rouges. (French; Poetry)

Connelly, K. (2009). *Burmese lessons: A love story.* Toronto, ON: Random House Canada. (English; Non-fiction)

Corbeil-Coleman, C. (2009). *Scratch.* Toronto, ON: Playwrights Canada Press. (English; Drama)

Croteau, M. (2010). *Le funambule: un conte sur Marc Chagall.* (J. Bisaillon, Illus.). Montréal, QC: Les Éditions des 400 coups. (French; Children's Literature—Illustration)

Croza, L. (2010). *I know here.* (M. James, Illus.). Toronto, ON: Groundwood Books/House of Anansi Press. (English; Children's Literature—Illustration)

David, C. (2010). *Manuel de poétique à l'intention des jeunes filles.* Montréal, QC: Éditions Les Herbes Rouges. (French; Poetry)

Davidts, J. (2010). *Triste sort ou l'hurluberlu de Morneville.* (M. Gauthier, Illus.). Montréal, QC: Les Éditions des 400 coups. (French; Children's Literature—Illustration)

de la Chenelière, E. (2009). *L'imposture.* Ottawa, ON/Montréal, QC: Leméac Éditeur. (French; Drama)

Denman, K. L. (2009). *Me, myself and Ike.* Victoria, BC: Orca Book Publishers. (English; Children's Literature—Text)

Desjardins, M. (2009). *Maleficium.* Québec, QC: Éditions Alto. (French; Fiction)

Donoghue, E. (2010). *Room: A novel.* Toronto: HarperCollins. (English; Fiction)

Dubois, D. & René-Daniel. (2009). *Morceaux. Entretiens sur l'écho du monde, l'imaginaire et l'écriture.* Montréal, QC: Leméac Éditeur. (French; Non-fiction)

Dupré, L. (2009). *High-wire summer: Stories.* (L. Hawke, Trans.). Toronto, ON: Cormorant Books. (Translation—French to English; original title: L'été funambule)

English, J. (2009). *Just watch me: The life of Pierre Elliott Trudeau 1968–2000.* Toronto, ON: Alfred A. Knopf Canada. (English; Non-fiction)

Fairfield, L. (2009). *Tyranny.* Toronto, ON: Tundra Books. (English; Children's Literature—Text)

Flett, J. (2010). *Lii Yiiboo Nayaapiwak Lii Swer: L'alfabet di Michif = Owls see clearly at night: A Michif alphabet.* Vancouver, BC: Simply Read Books. (English; Children's Literature—Illustration)

Fortier, D. (2010). *On the proper use of stars.* (S. Fischman, Trans.). Toronto, ON: McClelland & Stewart Ltd. (Translation—French to English; original title: Du bon usage des étoiles)

Fournier, D. (2009). *Effleurés de lumière.* Montréal, QC: Éditions de l'Hexagone. (French; Poetry)

Gallant, M. (2009). *Rencontres fortuites: Roman.* (G. Letarte & A. Strayer, Trans.). Montréal, QC: Les Allusifs. (Original work published 1970). (Translation—English to French; original title: A Fairly Good Time)

Greene, R. (2009). *Boxing the compass.* Montréal, QC: Véhicule Press. (English; Poetry)

Gruda, A. (2010). *Onze petites trahisons: Nouvelles.* Montréal, QC: Les Éditions du Boréal. (French; Fiction)

Haché, E. (2010). *Trafiquée.* Carnières-Morlanwelz, Belgium: Lansman Éditeur. (French; Drama)

Hage, R. (2009). *Le cafard.* (S. Voillot, Trans.). Québec, QC: Éditions Alto. (Translation—English to French; original title: Cockroach)

Harris, M. (2010). *Circus.* Montréal, QC: Véhicule Press. (English; Poetry)

Healey, M. (2010). *Courageous.* Toronto, ON: Playwrights Canada Press. (English; Drama)

Heath, J. (2009). *Sale argent: petit traité d'économie à l'intention des détracteurs du capitalisme.* (L. Saint-Martin & P. Gagné, Trans.). Montréal, QC: Les Éditions Logiques. (Translation—English to French; original title: Filthy Lucre: Economics for People Who Hate Capitalism)

Hine, D. (2010). *&: A serial poem.* Markham, ON: Fitzhenry and Whiteside Limited. (English; Poetry)

Josie, M. (2009). *Le géranium.* (M. Josie, Illus.). Montréal, QC: Marchand de feuilles. (French; Children's Literature—Illustration)

Laferrière, D. (2009). *L'énigme du retour: Roman.* Montréal, QC: Les Éditions du Boréal. (French; Fiction)

Lavoie, M. (2010). *C'est ma seigneurie que je réclame: La lutte des Hurons de Lorette pour la seigneurie de Sillery, 1650–1900.* Montréal, QC: Les Éditions du Boréal. (French; Non-fiction)

Mc Andrew, M. (2010). *Les majorités fragiles et l'éducation: Belgique, Catalogne, Irlande du nord, Québec*. Montreal, QC: Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal. (French; Non-fiction)

McMurchy-Barber, G. (2010). *Free as a bird*. Toronto, ON: Dundurn Press. (English; Children's Literature—Text)

Mouawad, W. (2009). *Forests*. (L. Gaboriau, Trans.). Toronto, ON: Playwrights Canada Press. (Translation—French to English; original title: Forêts)

Nepveu, P. (2009). *Les verbes majeurs*. Montréal, QC: Éditions du Noroît. (French; Poetry)

Noël, M. (2009). *Nishka: Roman*. Montréal, QC: Les Éditions Hurtubise. (French; Children's Literature—Text)

Ouellet, P. (2010). *Où suis-je? Parole des égarés*. Montréal, QC: VLB Éditeur. (French; Non-fiction)

Page, P.K. (2010). *Uirapurú: Based on a Brazilian legend*. (K. Bridgeman, Illus.). Fernie, BC: Oolichan Books. (English; Children's Literature—Illustration)

Papineau, L. (2009). *Le journal secret de Lulu Papino: mon premier amour*. (V. Egger, Illus.). Saint-Lambert, QC: Les éditions Héritage inc. Collection Dominique et compagnie. (French; Children's Literature—Illustration)

Paquet, D. (2009). *Porc-Épic*. Montréal, QC: Dramaturges Éditeurs. (French; Drama)

Phillips, W. (2010). *Fishtailing*. Regina, SK: Coteau Books for Teens. (English; Children's Literature—Text)

Pool, S. (2009). *Exploding into night*. Toronto, ON: Guernica Editions. (English; Poetry)

Poulin-Denis, G. (2009). *Rearview*. Montréal, QC: Dramaturges Éditeurs. (French; Drama)

Quiviger, P. (2010). *The breakwater house*. (L. Lederhendler, Trans.). Toronto, ON: House of Anansi Press. (Translation—French to English; original title: La maison des temps rompus)

Rainfield, C. (2010). *Scars*. Lodi, NJ: WestSide Books. (English; Children's Literature—Text)

Rivard, Y. (2010). *Une idée simple: Essai*. Montréal, QC: Les Éditions du Boréal. (French; Non-fiction)

Robitaille, P. (2009). *Le chenil*. Ottawa, ON: Les Éditions L'Interligne. (French; Children's Literature—Text)

Siebert, M. (2010). *Deepwater vee*. Toronto, ON: McClelland & Stewart Ltd. (English; Poetry)

Steinmetz, Y. (2009). *La chamane de Bois-Rouge: Roman*. Saint-Laurent, QC: Éditions Pierre Tisseyre. (French; Children's Literature—Text)

Stewart, S. (2009). *L'exode des loups: Roman*. (C. Vivier, Trans.). Montréal, QC: Les Éditions du Boréal. (Translation—English to French; original title: Wolf Rider)

Stutson, C. (2010). *Cats' night out*. (J. Klassen, Illus.). New York, NY: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers. (English; Children's Literature—Illustration)

Taylor, D. H. (2010). *Motorcycles & sweetgrass*. Toronto, ON: Alfred A. Knopf. (English; Fiction)

Thompson, J. (2010). *Such creatures*. Toronto, ON: Playwrights Canada Press. (English; Drama)

Thúy, K. (2009). *Ru*. Montréal, QC: Les Éditions Libre Expression. (French; Fiction)

Tremblay, A. U. (2009). *Le dernier été ou L'Odyssée de Sarg-XI*. Saint-Lambert, QC: Soulière éditeur. (French; Children's Literature—Text)

Toews, M. (2009). *Les Troutman volants: Roman*. (L. Saint-Martin & P. Gagné, Trans.). Montréal, QC: Les Éditions du Boréal. (Translation—English to French; original title: The Flying Troutmans)

Tremblay, M. (2009). *The blue notebook*. (S. Fischman, Trans.). Vancouver, BC: Talonbooks. (Translation—French to English; original title: Le cahier bleu)

Turcotte, É. (2009). *Rose, derrière le rideau de la folie*. (D. Sylvestre, Illus.). Montréal, QC: Les éditions de la courte échelle. (French; Children's Literature—Text and French; Children's Literature—Illustration)

Underwood, D. (2010). *The quiet book*. (R. Liwska, Illus.). New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin Books for Children. (English; Children's Literature—Illustration)

Warren, D. (2010). *Cool water*. Toronto, ON: HarperCollins. (English; Fiction)

Winter, K. (2010). *Annabel*. Toronto, ON: Anansi Press. (English; Fiction)

Yee, D. (2010). *Lady in the red dress*. Toronto, ON: Playwrights Canada Press. (English; Drama)

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