

“MONEY! MONEY IN OZ!”:
CONSUMERISM, COMMUNISM, AND
THE CENSORSHIP OF BAUM’S *OZ* BOOKS

By

ANDREW LAWRENCE GRUNZKE

A THESIS PRESENTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

2006

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>page</u>
ABSTRACT.....	iii
CHAPTER	
1 SOME INTRODUCTORY REMARKS	1
2 OZ, AN EDEN FOR CONSUMERISM: CENSORSHIP OF OZ IN A TRANSITIONAL AGE.....	4
3 OZ, THE COMMUNISTIC FAIRYLAND: COLD WAR CENSORSHIP OF BAUM	16
4 SOME CONCLUDING REMARKS	29
WORKS CITED	34
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH	38

Abstract of Thesis Presented to the Graduate School
of the University of Florida in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts

“MONEY! MONEY IN OZ!”:
CONSUMERISM, COMMUNISM, AND
THE CENSORSHIP OF BAUM’S *OZ* BOOKS

By

Andrew Lawrence Grunzke

May 2006

Chair: John Cech
Major Department: English

This thesis presents a history of efforts by critics and librarians to prevent children from being able to read Baum’s *Oz* books. One such librarian, Anne Carroll Moore, head of the New York Public Library Children’s Reading Room and first chair of the American Library Association’s Children Services Section, decided to remove the *Oz* books from the children’s reading room of the New York Public Library in the 1930s. This set a strong precedent for librarians across the nation—and many decided to follow her lead. Moore always left her indictments of Baum’s works vague—although she clearly held the books in low regard, like many librarians of her time, because of their status as series books and their role in the commercialization of children’s literature.

By the 1950s, a political debate over Baum’s *Oz* books had developed, and the books’ utopian vision made some critics and librarians suspect the books of supporting a Marxist ideology. The *Oz* books were removed from library shelves around the nation throughout the postwar period, including across Florida, in Detroit, Washington, D.C.,

New York City, and (ironically) Kansas City.¹ The Red Scare revived feelings that the books were promoting communism, “negativism,” and “a cowardly approach to life” among the nation’s children.² In 1959, Florida State Librarian Dorothy Dodd released a list of children’s books which she urged librarians around the state to remove from their collections; the *Oz* series topped her list. This thesis analyzes personal correspondences, library newsletters, and other primary documents to examine the role anticommunist crusading played in the shaping of children’s library collections in Florida.

Overall, this paper seeks to examine the status of L. Frank Baum’s *Oz* books as contested texts throughout the first six decades of the twentieth century. In particular, it will focus on librarian and scholarly objections to the work of Baum—as works of low art too overly commercial to be worthy of a child’s attention, and as subversively political works with a coded Marxist message. In essence, the thesis seeks to explore the means by which Baum’s works were able to overcome (with the help of millions of children who were avid *Oz* readers) extremely negative critical attention to achieve their status as classic American children’s literature and as central texts in America’s cultural mythology.

¹ Suzanne Rahn, *The Wizard of Oz: The Shaping of an Imaginary World* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1998), 15-16.

² Stuart Culver, “What Manakins Want,” *Representations* 21 (Winter 1988), 98.

CHAPTER 1 SOME INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

L. Frank Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* and the ensuing series of books had a tumultuous history in the decades between 1900 and 1970. Throughout the period, the *Oz* books remained contested texts. Even so, the character of librarian and scholarly objections to the works of Baum underwent considerable revision during this time. For their entire history, librarians and critics have tended to see Baum's work as low art, too overly commercial to be worthy of a child's attention. During the Red Scare following World War II, however, many librarians chastised Baum's books for being, at worst, subversively political works with a coded Marxist message or, at best, diversions that directed the child's mind away from more serious pursuits.

In the last few decades of the nineteenth century, longstanding attitudes about the purpose and proper function of literature for children were shifting dramatically in both England and the United States. The idea that "instruction was the primary object in books for the young was weakening."¹ For centuries, books that explicitly taught morals formed the core texts of a child's upbringing; Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, Aesop's *Fables*, Perrault's fairy tales, and other such popular works prominently featured lessons to be gleaned. In England, the shift began with the publication of Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1866)—"a story designed for children without a trace of a

¹ Anne Eaton, "Widening Horizons 1840-1890," in Cornelia Meigs, *A Critical History of Children's Literature* (New York: Macmillan, 1953), 232.

lesson or moral.”² In the late nineteenth century in the United States, many authors for children began writing works for children that did not moralize. Writers like Mark Twain and Louisa May Alcott wrote prolific works for children without obvious instructional purposes. The shift away from literature concerned with the admonishment and improvement of children was, nevertheless, slower in fantasy literature in the United States. L. Frank Baum’s assertion in the introduction to *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (1900) that “modern education includes morality; therefore the modern child seeks only entertainment in its wondertales”³ remained a controversial one with the librarians endowed with the responsibility of selecting books for children. For fantasy for children—with its roots in perennially educational fables and fairy tales—to abandon its moral character was more difficult for many adults to accept.

Baum’s retreat from moralizing in literature for children was not the only source of dismay over his work experienced by many critics and librarians over the years. Thomas Dreier was a member of the State Library Board in Florida in the 1950s and 1960s, head librarian in St. Petersburg, FL, and prominent advocate for the removal of the *Oz* books from library shelves. Among his personal papers, he kept a copy of a John Steinbeck editorial entitled “One Man’s Opinion” that noted: “... it is wonderful today with all [sic] competition of records, of radio, of television, of motion pictures, the book has kept its precious character. A book is somehow sacred.”⁴ Although more than fifty years had passed since Baum had begun his career as a writer, the attitude that books ought to be

² Ibid., 211, 232.

³ Michael Patrick Hearn (ed.), *The Annotated Wizard of Oz* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2000), 4.

⁴ John Steinbeck, “Reprint of ‘One Man’s Opinion,’” Series 900000, Box M73-16 #2, Florida State Archives, Tallahassee, FL. Circa 1954.

free of the commercial influences to which other media succumbed was still deeply entrenched among many librarians. Baum had embraced the rising consumer culture at the turn of the twentieth century and used his written works as source material for a variety of media. Operating a successful traveling stage show, creating a series of silent Oz films, and marketing Scarecrow and Tin Woodman dolls and toys, Baum created a market for the land of Oz that extended far beyond the pages of his books. While this commercialization of Oz may have increased the audience for Baum's books, many librarians who saw the book, like Steinbeck, as a sacred entity felt it vulgarized children's literature—a literature with a long legacy of serving as moral educator. Thus, many librarians actively sought to keep the books out of the nation's libraries.

The advent of the Cold War changed the perceptions of the political content of Baum's *Oz* series. Ironically, where critics and librarians once saw an advocacy of consumerism, they began to see the spectre of communism. Utopian thinking, particularly in the form of a land like Oz in which money did not exist, became associated with a leftist political agenda. Anticommunist crusaders, such as Thomas Dreier and Florida State Librarian Dorothy Dodd, began to remove Baum's books from library shelves in various locations across the country. Political motivations gave new fuel to an old debate over the appropriateness of Baum's *Oz* books for young readers.

CHAPTER 2
OZ, AN EDEN FOR CONSUMERISM: CENSORSHIP OF OZ
IN A TRANSITIONAL AGE

From the 1920s through the 1950s, the “authoritative voice in the world of children’s books”¹ belonged to Anne Carroll Moore. Because of her work as the Superintendent of Work with Children for the New York Public Library, her position as chair of the Children’s Services Section of the American Library Association, her annual lists of recommended children’s books (from 1918 to 1941), and her regular columns in *Bookman* and the *New York Herald Tribune*, she wielded considerable power for most of the first half of the twentieth century in determining the financial success of newly published children’s books. Publishers, editors, other librarians, book store proprietors, and parents all sought her advice regarding the types of children’s books to publish, stock, and purchase. Moore’s standards were very exacting, possessing, according to one of her defenders, “a profound respect for children as individuals and for children’s intelligence and taste and interests.”² She panned the works of Margaret Wise Brown and Clement Hurd (the author and illustrator of the seminal children’s bedtime story *Goodnight Moon*). She advised E.B. White not to publish his first children’s book, *Stuart Little*, lest it should become “an embarrassment” to him.³ Both of these books went on to

¹ Beverly Lyon Clark, *Kiddie Lit: The Cultural Construction of Children’s Literature in America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), 70.

² Ruth Hill Viguers, “The Golden Age 1920-1950,” in Cornelia Meigs, *A Critical History of Children’s Literature* (New York: Macmillan, 1953), 429.

³ Clark, 70-2.

become great successes despite Moore's harsh critiques. Many other books either became classics because of her praise or were quickly forgotten for lack of her recommendation.

Anne Carroll Moore always disliked the works of L. Frank Baum. As early as 1902 (two years after the publication of *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*), she had harsh words to say about Baum's books. While working for the Pratt Institute Free Library, she wrote in her *A List of Books Recommended for a Children's Library* for the Iowa Library Commission: "Most of the popular picture books of the time are unworthy of a place in the hands of children... Such books as Denslow's *Mother Goose* (1901) [Denslow was the illustrator for Baum's *Wonderful Wizard of Oz*] and Baum's *Father Goose*...should be banished from the sight of impressionable young children."⁴ It was hardly surprising, therefore, that in the 1930s Moore decided to remove the entire *Oz* series from the shelves of the Central Children's Reading Room of the New York Public Library. Moore refused to give a reason for their removal—but she was so well respected and influential that many children's librarians across the country followed her lead.⁵

While Moore remained cryptic about her decision, other librarians and critics were hardly loath to give their reasons for disliking the works of Baum. The source for the antipathy seems to be that:

The Wizard of Oz was too popular with children. Presentable copies could never be kept on the shelves because they were worn out by eager hands. *The Wizard of Oz* won itself a bad reputation because it became a musical comedy and a movie and because it was followed by a shoddy series of books, mostly written by hack

⁴ Michael Patrick Hearn, "Toto, I've a Feeling We're Not in Kansas City Anymore...or Detroit...or Washington, D.C.!" *The Horn Book Magazine*, Jan/Feb 2001, 18-9.

⁵ Suzanne Rahn, *The Wizard of Oz: Shaping an Imaginary World* (New York, Twayne Publishers, 1998), 15.

writers who took over the original author's idea and extended it to impossible lengths.⁶

Clearly, many librarians were dismayed by the commercial nature of the works of Baum. The endless toys, films, comic strips, and other product tie-ins had increased the popularity of the books, but they simultaneously hurt their reputation among those responsible for deciding which books would be stocked in the public libraries.

Although such commercialization of children's literature was rare during the period when Baum was writing his books for children, it is commonplace now. J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* books form the basis of a multimedia empire; movies, toys, video games, bed sheets, costumes, and a multitude of other product tie-ins are marketed as a matter of course. Even so, many critics still critique Baum's work as being overly commercial. John Goldthwaite writes that "Baum was essentially a pulp writer who drew at need from every passing fashion, sometimes to the benefit of the story and sometimes not."⁷ As a writer of series books with a keen interest in the latest fads (such as the silent cinema), Baum's books resided squarely in the realm of pulp fiction—and this comes with a stigma attached. As a recent book written to aid teachers in selecting books for elementary students stated, the first book in the series "might well have sufficed."⁸ Baum's status as a writer of series books continues to plague his work—and the quality of his now classic books is still judged against his reputation as a purveyor of pulp fiction.

⁶ Carol Ryrie Brink, *South Dakota Library Bulletin* (April-June 1948), cited in Michael Patrick Hearn, "Introduction," in *The Annotated Wizard of Oz* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 2000), lxxxvii-iii.

⁷ John Goldthwaite, *The Natural History of Make-Believe: A Guide to the Principle Works of Britain, England, and America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 212.

⁸ Charlotte S. Huck, Susan Hepler, and Janet Hickman, *Children's Literature in the Elementary School, 5th Edition* (Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Publishers, 1989), 141.

In many ways, adult fears concerning the dime novel in the late nineteenth century had driven the movement to establish children's libraries. Poorer children, many Progressive reformers felt, only had access to cheap reading material, which often meant they were reading dime novels—which had a reputation for being sensational and mediocre. Many adults wanted to create places where children could access cheap or free reading material and be steered toward books of higher literary value. As the series book began to develop out of the dime novel tradition, librarians (who had resoundingly refused to stock dime novels) turned their attention toward the series book—attacking it for its perceived low artistic status. One editorial in *Library Journal* in 1905 asked: “Shall the libraries resist the flood [of series books] and stand for a purer literature and art for children, or shall they ‘meet the demands of the people’ by gratifying low and lowering taste?”⁹ The American Library Association had taken an official stance against the inclusion of series books on the basis that they were poorly written and lurid wastes of time.¹⁰

In many ways, these criticisms are not altogether unfair. Baum's books were hastily written and poorly edited. His publishers expected his work would be of fairly low quality. One of Baum's contracts (for a non-*Oz* series, written under a pen name) read: “Baum shall deliver...a book for young girls on the style of Louisa M. Alcott

⁹ Editorial, *Library Journal*, December 1905, 915-916. Cited in Nancy Tillman Romalov, “Children's Series Books and the Rhetoric of Guidance: A Historical Overview,” in Carolyn Stewart and Nancy Tillman Romalov, *Rediscovering Nancy Drew* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1995), 114.

¹⁰ Nancy Tillman Romalov, “Children's Series Books and the Rhetoric of Guidance: A Historical Overview,” in Carolyn Stewart and Nancy Tillman Romalov, *Rediscovering Nancy Drew* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1995), 113-121.

stories, but not so good....”¹¹ Baum’s employers expected him to produce large numbers of books, and they wanted them quickly. They were unconcerned that lack of time might reduce the literary value of his work.

Just as his publishers expected books of little literary value, librarians and critics (such as Anne Carroll Moore) derided Baum’s books for this deficiency. Baum may not have been aiming for quality, but he was certainly aiming for popularity at a time when “popularity and quality were increasingly seen as divergent.”¹² In turning his books into a series, Baum had already alienated the ALA and other guardians of the children’s libraries. By marketing his books using a variety of different media, by increasing the scope of the impact of his work by entering the toy, movie, and theatre markets, Baum was further making himself a target for critics and librarians. All the while, though, his works were becoming increasingly beloved by the audience of children (who were experiencing Baum’s tales in a multimedia fashion that was relatively rare, though not unprecedented, prior to his work).¹³

¹¹ Angelica Shirley Carpenter and Jean Shirley, *L. Frank Baum: Royal Historian of Oz*, (Minneapolis: Lerner Publications, 1992), 80.

¹² Clark, 136.

¹³ It is important to note that the *Oz* books were not, in fact, the first works with such blatantly commercial aspects. Francis Hodgson Burnett’s *Little Lord Fauntleroy* was also widely popular at the turn of the twentieth century. In 1893, Burnett’s book was one of the two most likely books to be held by a public library (second only to *Ben-Hur*). *Fauntleroy* traded heavily in commercial tie-ins. *Little Lord Fauntleroy* playing cards, writing paper, perfume, and his trademark velvet suits were all commercially available (and popular). Librarians treated *Fauntleroy* with disdain similar to that with which they treated the *Oz* books. They derided the book for its “sloppiness” and “artificiality” (Clark, 21-2). *Fauntleroy*, however, was unable to maintain its popularity among children. The books were markedly Victorian—replete with moral lessons. It was, in fact, the perennial popularity of the *Oz* books with children that allowed it to have the large impact that it did on the commercialization of children’s literature. This popularity stemmed from Baum’s setting aside the strict moralizing and embracing the role of the children’s books as pure “entertainment.” (For a more detailed discussion of this decision, see the introduction to *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* in which Baum writes of his decision to write a book free from the moralizing that typified much of children’s literature throughout the Victorian era.) While Baum’s *Oz* books might not have been the first works for children to practice heavy-handed commercialism, they were the epitome of the phenomenon—and likely had the greatest impact on the movement.

The number and variety of Oz promotional products available before the 1939 film release was staggering. For instance, within three years of the publication of *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, Denslow had designed a series of six posters depicting the Oz characters that were sold as a wallpaper frieze for children's rooms. Little brass jewelry boxes with the Cowardly Lion mounted on the lid were given to ladies in the audience of *The Wizard of Oz* on April 15, 1903 to commemorate the hundredth performance of the popular stage play. Buttons featuring many favorite characters from the *Oz* books, including the Scarecrow and the Woggle-Bug, were used to promote the release of a new *Oz* book almost every year. Colored maps of the land of Oz, featuring the royal flag of Oz on the back, were available for purchase in 1914. Detachable cardboard figures designed by John Neill (the illustrator who took over for Denslow) were sold—so children could act out their favorite scenes from the books at home. In 1921, Parker Brothers issued *The Wonderful Game of Oz*. Fans of the books could also purchase dolls and jigsaw puzzles. Children could even eat Oz Peanut Butter.¹⁴ Moreover, the commercial empire of Oz included four silent films, *The Patchwork Girl of Oz* (1914), *The Magic Cloak of Oz* (1914), *His Majesty, the Scarecrow of Oz* (1915), and *The Wizard of Oz* (1925), several stage plays (including *The Wizard of Oz* and *The Tik-Tok Man of Oz*), and a comic strip (*Queer Visitors from the Marvelous Land of Oz*).¹⁵

Baum had much more than a financial interest in the commercialization of his books. In fact, Baum was, in many ways, responsible for developing the commercial tie-

¹⁴ Dick Martin, "The Toys and Games of Oz," *Baum Bugle*, Christmas 1962, 4-7; The Douglas G. and David L. Greene Collection of L. Frank Baum and Related Oziana.

¹⁵ Mark Evan Swartz, *Oz Before the Rainbow: L. Frank Baum's The Wonderful Wizard of Oz on Stage and Screen to 1939* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000).

in as an advertising tool. Baum had moved his family to the Black Hills of South Dakota in the days of the gold rush to operate a general store and publish a newspaper. When the gold rush was ending and Baum's business was dropping precipitously, Baum was forced to try to find new ways of marketing his goods to make ends meet. He would become the "first significant advocate of display" and "among the earliest architects of the dream life of the consumer age."¹⁶ In fact, one of Baum's first book publications was *The Art of Decorating Dry Goods Windows and Interiors* (1900)—a work that garnered him a significant reputation in the burgeoning field of advertising.¹⁷ This reputation saved him from the job as a traveling salesman he was forced to take when the gold rush ended, his store closed, and his newspaper shut down. He moved to Chicago to assume a full-time position as the editor of *Show Window*, a magazine devoted to advertising and design—the occupation that sustained him while he wrote *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*.¹⁸

Of course, the work that Baum did for his book on shop windows and in the magazine *Show Window* influenced into his fantasy writing. The rising consumer culture created, for some, "a worry that the humane spirit of the country was submerged beneath the surface allure of having and displaying possessions."¹⁹ Baum's fantasy world exploited the potential of this surface allure, while exposing it as artifice. The Emerald City is a sparkling jewel of a city—a symbol of light and wealth. However, the glimmer

¹⁶ William Leach, "Strategists of Display and the Production of Desire," in Simon J. Bronner (ed.) *Consuming Visions: Accumulation and Display of Goods in America, 1880-1920* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1989), 107.

¹⁷ Swartz, 318.

¹⁸ Michael O. Riley, *Oz and Beyond: The Fantasy World of L. Frank Baum* (University of Kansas, 1997) 76-7, 96.

¹⁹ Simon Bronner, "Reading Consumer Culture," in Simon J. Bronner (ed.) *Consuming Visions: Accumulation and Display of Goods in America, 1880-1920* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1989) 13.

of the Emerald City is the product of the green glasses all its citizens are forced to wear. It is the site of artistic flair, of beautiful subterfuge. The Wizard embodies the “humane spirit.” He represents the promise of the heart, the brain, and courage. Yet, the Wizard, too, is mere surface allure. Using visual tricks, the man behind the curtain presents himself as “great and terrible.” Nevertheless, the travelers are capable of finding their humanity through him. The Scarecrow receives a brain. The Cowardly Lion’s courage returns. The Tin Woodman finds a heart. And Dorothy finds her home. Although the Wizard is a humbug, he is still capable of bringing personal fulfillment.²⁰

In this respect, the Wizard was not unlike the famed nineteenth century showman P.T. Barnum. People loved Barnum for his trickery, for his grandiose presence, and for the spectacles that he brought them. According to T.J. Jackson Lears, Barnum’s audiences “expected a humbug and admired his skill at it.”²¹ Twentieth century advertisers, like Baum, knew this, and advertisements mass-produced a “fantasy world of wish fulfillment.”²² It is in this sense that the land of Oz is intimately tied to the idea of the advertisement. *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* is a story of wish fulfillment. The characters find everything they are lacking: a heart, a brain, courage, and a home. The Wizard is, in fact, a good-natured satire of P.T. Barnum. (The Wizard worked for

²⁰ Selma Lanes makes an important point regarding the commercial nature of Baum’s books. In no Baum tale is the quest for material possessions. Despite her abject poverty in Kansas, Dorothy never goes on a quest for riches—even to save the family farm. With Baum playing such a prominent role in the rise of consumer culture, this may seem rather counter-intuitive. However, having the creative mind of an advertising man, Baum was able to use the vivid fantasy realm of Oz as a place where one finds deep personal fulfillment. Like an advertisement, the reader is drawn into the world by the promise of finding the happiness one is missing. Selma Lanes, *Down the Rabbit Hole: Adventures and Misadventures in the Realm of Children’s Literature*, (New York: Antheum, 1971), 98.

²¹ T.J. Jackson Lears, “From Salvation to Self-Realization: Advertising and the Therapeutic Roots of Consumer Culture, 1880-1930,” in *The Culture of Consumption: Critical Essays in American History, 1880-1980* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1983), 28.

²² Ibid.

“Bailum and Barney’s Consolidated Shows.”)²³ Despite the fact that the Wizard is a skilled humbug and trickster, the wishes of the characters (and, thus, the wishes of the children reading their adventures) are fulfilled. Oz was a utopia, but as a utopia it “lacked refinement, smacking more of Barnum and Bailey than Old World elegance.”²⁴ The material abundance of Oz and the energy of its people, in conjunction with the P.T. Barnum-like “ingenuity and bravado” of their leader, the Wizard, are part of what make Oz utopia.

In essence, Baum’s satire of the Wizard is also a self-satire. As the son of a medicine showman,²⁵ a flamboyant advertiser, and a crafter of spectacular fantasies Baum had a keen sense for providing his audiences with glittering mass spectacle. The Wizard employed trickery to sell something that didn’t exist. In exchange for destroying the Wicked Witch, the Wizard gives each of the travelers a prize. However, the prizes he gives to the travelers are mere tokens (e.g. a bag filled with sawdust and pins to represent the brain the Scarecrow thought he was missing). In the story, each of the characters finds he or she has the power of self-fulfillment, but this fulfillment is depicted as incomplete until the Wizard provides each with a representative trinket.²⁶ This mirrors, in certain ways, the commercialization of Baum’s literature. Children are excited and

²³ L. Frank Baum, *Dorothy and the Wizard in Oz*, (New York: Dover, 1984), 48. This book was originally published in 1908.

²⁴ Lanes, 98.

²⁵ Baum’s father acquired a fortune marketing a product known as Castroline—a type of “medicine” derived from petroleum.

²⁶ Tom St. John, “Lyman Frank Baum: Looking Backward to the Promised Land,” *Western Humanities Review*, Winter 1982, v. 35, #4, 358.

entertained by the tale, but the toys and other associated Oz paraphernalia teach children to search for satisfaction in consumer culture as well.

Dorothy and her companions are willing to accept the Wizard's tokens as though they were real like so much snake oil. In this way, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* exalted consumer culture. It presented the purchased product as capable of bringing a new and satisfying life to its purchaser. Like a colorful advertisement, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* drew audiences into its elaborate fantasy. Modern advertising culture often depends upon creating a sense of incompleteness in its audience. In order to be effective, an advertisement must convince the spectator his or her life is somehow incomplete—like a Tin Woodman with a missing heart.²⁷ A heart, a brain, and courage (without which each of the characters is incapable of feeling personal fulfillment) have become commodities, purchasable by the successful completion of a given task.

Most of Dorothy's companions were also, in a sense, commodities. The Tin Woodman, the Scarecrow, Jack Pumpkinhead, the Sawhorse, the Patchwork Girl, the Glass Cat, and Tik-Tok are neither people nor animals. They are representations of people or animals brought to life by magical means. They are living mannequins. As long as they remain in Oz, they maintain their energy and their life. Oz's spell is the magic of the advertisement; the commodity is imbued with a life and spirit it doesn't naturally possess. For instance, when Dorothy expresses a desire to take the Porcelain Princess of the China Village (from *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*) home with her, the Princess is distressed, for, she said, her joints would stiffen and she would die in the real

²⁷ T.J. Jackson Lears, *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1925* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 37.

world. The advertised product is alive, but the purchased product dies.²⁸ In an advertisement, a commodity is often billed as capable of providing a fulfillment it is incapable of supplying when it is purchased and brought home—an idea that Baum, the advertising man, knew well.²⁹

By fragmenting the public's sense of self and imbuing inanimate objects with life, advertising causes "visual and verbal signs [to] become detached from all traditional associations and meaning in general is eroded."³⁰ In this sense, the nature of advertising can be compared to another classic children's book: "The work of advertisements gradually acquired an *Alice in Wonderland* quality."³¹ What is intriguing about this phenomenon is that, unlike Carroll, Baum's signifier never became detached from what it signified. Carroll's fantasy world was one in which nothing made sense—which was distressing for both Alice (who nearly drowns in a pool of her own tears) and the audience. Baum, on the other hand, created a world in which Dorothy's (and the audience's) deepest desires were magically fulfilled. In Baum's fantasy world, there is an internal logic (for instance, a man with a pumpkin head must carve himself a new one before the old one spoils). Oz, unlike Wonderland, is not wrenched from the real world;

²⁸ Life and death was not the only dichotomy that was blurred by the advertisement. As Leach points out, the shop window as envisioned by Baum "celebrated metamorphosis, the violation of boundaries, the blurring of lines between hitherto opposed categories—luxury and necessity, artificial and natural, night and day, male and female, the expression of desire and its repression, the primitive and the civilized." William Leach, "Strategies for the Display and Production of Desire," in Simon J. Bronnner (ed.) *Consuming Visions: Accumulation and Display of Goods in America, 1880-1920* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1989), 131. The lines between these opposed categories are constantly being redrawn throughout the *Oz* series. The poor young boy Tip becomes Ozma, the female ruler of Oz. The inanimate is regularly brought to life. The impoverished farm in Kansas, not the opulent Emerald City, is presented as home. One of the wonders of Oz is that it is a place in which one can fulfill any desire.

²⁹ Stuart Culver, "What Manakins Want," *Representations*, Winter 1988, 97-116.

³⁰ T.J. Jackson Lears, "From Salvation to Self-Realization," 21.

³¹ *Ibid.*

it is an ideal extension of an industrialized and commercialized United States. Wonderland is the site of the inadequacy of the logical capabilities of man and is a dangerous and frightening place because of this (e.g. the Queen of Hearts' "Off with her head!" refrain). Baum's Oz is an advertisement for what is good in mankind: a heart, a mind, courage, and a home. As such, it is a land which magically "dispenses with all disagreeable incident."³² Baum exploited the newly developed principles of advertising—principles he had a hand in developing—to teach people to find fulfillment in modern consumer culture.

To librarians like Moore, touting the benefits of modern consumer culture, particularly within the pages of a children's book, was difficult to take. Baum's reputation as an adman ended up hurting his reputation as an author for children. Moreover, that Baum's books were written quickly and published almost as received won him renown as an author capable of producing large amounts of writing (often of dubious literary value). Many librarians in the first half of the twentieth century chose not to include Baum's works in their collections, despite their immense popularity with children, because they did not appreciate the type of literature Baum's books represented—nor the commercial movement they were spearheading.

³² Michael Patrick Hearn (ed.), *The Annotated Wizard of Oz*, (New York: W.W. Norton, 2000), 4.

CHAPTER 3
OZ, THE COMMUNISTIC FAIRYLAND:
COLD WAR CENSORSHIP OF BAUM

On August 10, 1955, General Foods (the sponsor of an Oz radio program) held a party in honor of those who worked in children's literature. Because of her affiliation with the *Oz* books, Ruth Plumly Thompson (the woman who continued the *Oz* series following the death of Baum) was an honored guest. Other attendees included critics, booksellers, librarians, and others involved in the children's book industry. Anne Carroll Moore, because of her position at the Children's Department of the New York Public Library, was among this enclave. As Thompson saw it, throughout the evening, the critics and librarians made disparaging comments regarding the quality of the *Oz* books.

In her words:

As the drinks progressed, they grew ruder *and* ruder. The head of the Children's Department in the New York Public Library... after some fulsome remarks about my *other* books invited me to lunch. By this time I was pretty mad—also sober—which is more than can be said for the men. So I asked this disagreeable old lady [Moore] if she was familiar with Oz books. She looked very uneasy and when I asked her point blank *why* the Oz books were not in the library... she backed off and melted into the crowd. Needless to say, that was one lunch I missed with great pleasure.¹

Thompson was bitter over the reception the *Oz* books were given by Moore and other librarians around the country. She felt that she had for “twenty years fought a one-woman battle over with these pests and finally threw in the towel.”² Despite years of fighting to keep the *Oz* books in children's libraries, Thompson realized she was waging

¹ Ruth Plumly Thompson, “Librarians, Editors, Critics, Children, and Oz,” *Baum Bugle*, Autumn 1984, 7-8.

² *Ibid.*

a losing battle, as the book continued to disappear from library shelves in one city and state after another.

In the introduction to *The Lost Princess of Oz*, Baum expressed certain sentiments concerning the power of fantasy books to shape the minds of children to creative and useful adult occupations: “A prominent educator tells me that fairy tales are of untold value in developing the imaginations of the young. I believe it.”³ Thompson echoed these sentiments: “It is the power that creates new worlds and gives youth and radiance to worlds that are old, sends the Edisons and the Einsteins, the Columbuses and Heyerdahls on their quests.”⁴ Thus, the battle over keeping the Oz books in libraries is part of a bigger war over the presence and importance of fantasy in a library collection for children. In Thompson’s view, the librarians of the period were increasingly against the fantastic in literature for children:

The imagination of a child needs to be fostered and encouraged, but his reading needs today are in stern and realistic hands. Juvenile departments in publishing houses, to a gal, are manned by eager, young college graduates, young women heady with psychological theory and literary lore—but with no experience, no love for, no knowledge of, or any contact with the children themselves. If not under the supervision of a college gal or woman, the department is run by some older, theory-ridden lass, on uplift and instruction bent—also completely out-of-touch with the live and lively young she is supposed to entertain. Entertain? Perish the thought! Writing for children is completely mechanized and regimented like everything else in this slide rule era.⁵

Obviously, Thompson drastically overstates her case. Librarians were not, “to a gal,” trying to remove the influences of fantasy from the minds of children. However, by 1955, the battle to keep Baum’s *Oz* books on the shelves of the nation’s libraries was

³ L. Frank Baum, *The Lost Princess of Oz* (New York: Amereon House, 1917), 13.

⁴ Thompson, 8.

⁵ *Ibid.*

becoming increasingly ferocious—as some librarians saw the books as either politically subversive, too fantastic to develop practical thinking in children, or both.

Thompson's lament over the difficulty of her position as advocate for the works of Baum had become particularly acute by 1955. Although copies of Baum's books began to disappear from library shelves in small but noticeable quantities after the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, the arrival of the immensely popular film caused a re-evaluation of the political sub-text of the *Oz* series. Anticipating the release of the 1939 MGM film version of *The Wizard of Oz*, the leftist periodical *New Masses* published a piece entitled "The 'Red' Wizard of Oz" which mused that Baum's series of *Oz* books had a strong communist subtext. "Good Heavens!" it read, "The land of Oz is a fairyland run on Communistic lines, and is perhaps the only Communistic fairyland in all of children's literature."⁶ The *New Masses* article claimed that Baum's decision to make Oz a land in which money did not exist exposed his own Marxist sympathies. In *The Road to Oz* (the fifth book of the series), the Tin Woodman explains the economic system that the fairyland uses:

Money! Money in Oz!... What a queer idea! Did you suppose we are so vulgar as to use money here?... If we used money to buy things with, instead of love and kindness and the desire to please one another, then we should be no better than the rest of the world... Fortunately money is not known in the Land of Oz at all. We have no rich and no poor; for what one wishes the others all try to give him, in order to make him happy, and no one in Oz cares to have more than he can use.⁷

The article's author noted the close relationship between this passage and the communist mantra: from each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs. The article

⁶ Stewart Robb, "The 'Red' Wizard of Oz," *New Masses*, 4 Oct. 1938, 8.

⁷ L. Frank Baum, *The Road to Oz* (New York: William Morrow and Co., 1991), 164-5. The original date of publication was 1909, and the publisher was Reilly and Britton; Robb, 8-9.

also used Baum's indictment of bankers (who sought to foreclose on Aunt Em and Uncle Henry's farm) and his declaration that Oz was free of "cruel overseers" set to watch over laborers as evidence of Baum's radical left-wing sympathies.⁸ Beginning with the publication of the *New Masses* article, charges that the books encouraged communist thinking in children would dog the books from that point through most of the Cold War.

Accusations of a political subtext to the land of Oz were leveled by various sources. The *Hollywood Tribune* noted that the film version of Oz is "'a land full of progressive ideas such as how all should share alike in work and produce of work.'" The job of those trying to defend the *Oz* books became more difficult when the *Daily Worker* called *The Wizard of Oz* "an outstanding film." *The New Statesman* even went so far as to proclaim the book a prolific American political tract: "the book of 'The Wizard' is as common in American homes as is *Mein Kampf* in German."⁹ On the whole, it appears that a perception existed about the political character of Baum's utopian vision and that many people were becoming less willing to accept it, as the political climate became more hostile to ideas from the left.

One such hostile figure was Ralph Ulveling, head librarian at the Detroit Public Library. He removed Baum's *Oz* books from the children's library in Detroit in 1957 because, he argued, in them could be found "'nothing uplifting or elevating.'"¹⁰ The story quickly attracted the attention of the national media, and Ulveling was flooded with negative attention over his decision. *The Detroit Times* even went so far as to publish

⁸ L. Frank Baum, *The Emerald City of Oz* (New York: William Morrow and Co., 1993), 22, 31; Robb, 8-9.

⁹ All three are cited in Hearn, "Toto, I've a Feeling..." 31. The *Hollywood Tribune* article appeared on Aug. 21, 1939, the *Daily Worker* article on Aug. 18, 1939, and the *New Statesman* article on Feb. 3, 1940.

¹⁰ Rahn, 16.

The Wonderful Wizard of Oz serially so that local children could have an opportunity to read it.

In response to this onslaught of public criticism, Ulveling wrote his own defense in the American Library Association's Bulletin "... so that librarians... will not be placed in an awkward situation... should the matter be raised in their own localities."¹¹ In this rebuttal Ulveling took offense at those who suggested he was involved in censorship. *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* remained available, he argued, in the Main Library (as it had been for 30 years). It had only been removed from the children's library. In fact, Ulveling had never directly removed the any of the *Oz* books from the children's library. Instead, he waited for the children to wear out each book in the series and simply did not replace them. "This," he wrote, "is not banning; it is selection."¹² In Ulveling's mind, the decision not to include Baum's books in the Detroit Children's Library may have seemed logical if, indeed, the books had "outlived a useful purpose in promoting reading in children."¹³ The American Library Association Post-War Standards indicated that this was a valid method for choosing books for a children's library. The official policy of the ALA was that "a special objective of the library's program should be to foster good reading habits in children and young people in order to develop an adult population that knows and appreciates books."¹⁴

If the sole value of the Baum's *Oz* books was to encourage children to read, then when Ulveling began his crusade they had not outlived this function. The *Oz* books were

¹¹ Ralph Ulveling, "Ralph Ulveling on Freedom of Information," ALA Bulletin, Oct 1957, 653-5, 721.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Emerson Greenway, "What About Tomorrow's Children?" *Library Journal*, April 15, 1950, 656-9.

as popular with children in the late-1950s as they had been in the past. In 1959, there were seven different editions of *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* in print, all selling well. The publisher Reilly and Lee was selling so many copies of the books that it was forced to re-illustrate the books because the plates containing the illustrations were wearing out. Milwaukee libraries (where the books were not banned) reported that children had worn out 135 copies of *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* in eight years, and the remaining fifty copies were rapidly deteriorating.¹⁵

In February of 1959 (in the midst of this period of extraordinary affection among the nation's children for the works of Baum), Florida State Librarian Dorothy Dodd released a list of children's books that would thereafter be banned from public libraries in Florida. Among the books on her list were many perennial childhood favorites: *Uncle Wiggly*, *Tarzan*, *Tom Swift*, the works of Horatio Alger, the *Campfire Girls*, the *Hardy Boys*, and the *Oz* series.¹⁶ The national media quickly brought the list to the attention of the American public. *Life* magazine, concentrating on the decision to remove the *Oz* books from the library, and noting the irony that Miss Dodd shared a name with the heroine of the *Oz* books, publicized the battle over children's books in Florida in an editorial in its February 16, 1959 issue.¹⁷ The article reported vociferous protests from parents, children, and an outspoken public—including Florida Governor Leroy Collins who was dismayed that the works of his favorite childhood author (Alger) were in

¹⁵ Martin Gardner, "Librarians in Oz," *Saturday Review*, April 11, 1959, 18.

¹⁶ It is noteworthy that each of the books recommended for removal from Florida's libraries was a series book. The stigma against series books at the turn of the century seems to have lasted well into the twentieth century and beyond.

¹⁷ "Dorothy the Librarian," *Life*, Feb. 16, 1959, 47.

jeopardy: “I grew up on Horatio Alger, and I hate to have him put out of business.”¹⁸ While the governor may have been most upset with the removal of Horatio Alger’s works, the bulk of the public ire against the removal of these children’s books centered around L. Frank Baum’s *Oz* books. The censorship of the *Oz* series in Florida was intimately tied to Cold War anticommunism. Few children, it seems, worried about the potentially politically subversive subtext in their literature—and the removal of Baum’s beloved books proved to be a severe political liability.¹⁹

While anticommunism played a large role in determining which books would be censored from Florida’s libraries, it was not solely the perceived communist subtext of Baum’s work that inspired the decision to remove the books from library shelves. Efforts to increase funding and support for the expansion of Florida’s library system were tinged with anticommunist rhetoric throughout the postwar period. Thomas Dreier, head librarian of the St. Petersburg public library and member of the State Library Board, often discussed the importance of funding libraries as a tool protecting the country against the dangers posed by the Soviet Union. In one article written for *The St. Petersburg Times*, Dreier showed concern that the Soviets were working diligently to develop a literate population, which he felt would give them an advantage on the world stage:

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ It is also important to note that with children wearing out so many copies of the books, it would have proven quite expensive for libraries to keep the books in stock. With forty books in the series it is difficult to see how a cash-strapped library could afford to continually replace the books. While financial concerns might have been used as a possible reason for keeping the books out of libraries, it does not appear they were in the case of either Detroit or Florida. Dorothy Dodd’s order was that all the books mentioned on her list were “not to be purchased, not to be accepted as gifts, and not to be circulated. Any title now on the shelves should be withdrawn from circulation.” Thus, even if the book came to the library at no expense or was already on library shelves, Dodd wanted it removed. This indicates that Dodd’s concern was not solely one on selecting titles that made the most of a limited library budget. Instead, she believed there was something implicitly denigrating in housing Baum’s books in public libraries in Florida. Michael Hearn, “Toto, I’ve a Feeling We’re Not in Kansas City Anymore... or Detroit... or Washington, D.C.,” 31.

All of us must face the fact that Russia is seeking world domination. It is possible that Russia will succeed. Only one thing will enable Russia to triumph... It will not be sputniks or missiles or material explosives of any kind. Such things... are details. What will enable Russia to win is its possession of more mental capital than the people of the free world... One way in which it is being done is through building public libraries at fantastic speed.²⁰

The challenge posed by Russia's push to expand its public libraries was, as Dreier envisioned his own job as librarian, one that was intimately tied to national security. In a letter for the Florida library newsletter, Dreier reiterated his position:

Russia has 394,000 libraries. The United States has 25,000. Florida ranks 39th among our 50 states. If Russia eventually outstrips us it will be because they seek everywhere the ideas and learn how to make better use of their minds.

Dreier was arguing that his movement to improve the quantity and quality of Florida's libraries was a necessary front in the Cold War. He viewed libraries as extremely important institutions that would create a populace capable of defeating the Soviet Union in the marketplace of ideas. Referring to Arthur Trace's popular book *What Ivan Knows That Johnny Doesn't*, Dreier wrote an article for the St. Petersburg public library newsletter entitled "Johnny Will Read." In it he wrote, "It has been cried aloud all over the country that 'Johnny can't read'.... More Johnnys would read if given the chance.... One thing is sure, we'll not get [the type of library required to inspire our children to read] until the citizens demand it."²¹ However, like the librarians who fought to keep series books out of children's libraries in the early part of the twentieth century, he had very definite ideas about the sort of books Florida's libraries ought to carry.

²⁰ Thomas Dreier, "Libraries Will Help Russia Win Minds of the World," *St. Petersburg Times* (April 3, 1960).

²¹ Thomas Dreier, "Johnny Will Read," *Your Public Library: Food for the Mind*, newsletter for the public library of St. Petersburg, FL (not dated, circa 1961), series 1506, carton 2, Florida State Archives, Tallahassee Florida. The reference to Trace's book (published in 1961) being a topic of conversation among people in the country indicate that the article was published soon after the book.

“Public libraries,” he wrote, “save people from suffering from mental malnutrition.... Public libraries are not mere places where loafers may find entertaining books for a loafing hour.”²²

Outside the pages of his library newsletter, Dreier was an even more strident anticommunist. Elsewhere he wrote vitriolic propaganda pieces with stark depictions of leftists:

The socialist is smarter than the capitalist. He has to be to get what he wants. The capitalist is the producer. He raises the fruits and vegetables. He makes gadgets. He accumulates profits. That’s when the socialist, himself unable to create anything, steps in and passes laws that compel the capitalist to turn part of his profits into socialist projects. The time will come when the socialist will actually pass laws that compel the producer to surrender complete control of what he has created.²³

Given his antipathy toward leftist politics, the fact that Baum’s work was often suspected of containing subversive political ideas gave Dreier additional impetus to support Dodd’s list of books to be removed from Florida’s libraries.

Librarians from other states began to adopt Dreier’s thesis that libraries provided a line of defense against communism. In March of 1961, William Hinchliff, librarian in Pacific Palisades, California, wrote a letter to Dreier thanking him for granting permission to reprint his *St. Petersburg Times* article. He noted, “The reprint has already helped spur public library support in Los Angeles.”²⁴ Encouraged by this rhetoric, the principal of an elementary school in Westwood, California, announced in late 1961 that

²² Thomas Dreier, “Of What Use Are Public Libraries?” *Your Public Library: Food for the Mind*, newsletter for the public library of St. Petersburg, FL (not dated, circa 1956), series 1506, carton 2, Florida State Archives, Tallahassee, Florida, 1. While it isn’t dated, a reference to the Florida Library Association annual meeting of 1957 indicates that the article was published soon before.

²³ Thomas Dreier, “The Capitalist is the Socialists’ Slave,” *The Vagabond*, v. XLII, #6, 1.

²⁴ Letter from William E. Hinchliff to Thomas Dreier (March 20, 1960), Series 1506, Carton 2, Florida State Archives, Tallahassee, Florida.

he was banning *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* in his school, because Baum “had communist sympathies.”²⁵ Dreier also explained in a short note to Dodd that libraries in Pennsylvania were having some success against strong state opposition to increasing library funds using his anticommunist argument.²⁶ When it came to employing the tactic of using the public’s anticommunist sentiment to remove the works of Baum from public libraries (and thereby empower the library in its fight against communism), Dreier and Dodd were not alone. These localities joined Detroit, Washington, D.C., Chicago, (ironically) Kansas City, and other local library districts across the nation in purging their shelves of the works of Baum.

Dorothy Dodd’s anticommunist rhetoric was far more tempered than Thomas Dreier’s, but she still appealed to public fear of falling behind the Soviet Union to give her the power to shape children’s library collections. “Kids don’t like that fanciful stuff anymore,” Dodd responded when asked to justify her decision to remove the *Oz* books from Florida libraries, “They want books about missiles and atomic submarines.”²⁷ The *Life* magazine article saw Dodd’s censorship attempts as part of a larger battle over the value of fantasy fiction in an atomic age: “They [Dodd’s arguments] stem from the recurrent fad for teaching kids to ‘adapt to reality’ by shunning fantasy.”²⁸ In the context of the Cold War, Dodd believed children who read practical books (or books about

²⁵ Mary Lou White, “Censorship—Threat Over Children’s Books,” *The Elementary School Journal* (Oct 1974), 6; Michael Hearn, *The Annotated Wizard of Oz* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 2000), xcvi.

²⁶ Letter from Thomas Dreier to Dorothy Dodd (March 27, 1961), Series 1506, Carton 2, Florida State Archives, Tallahassee, Florida.

²⁷ Martin Gardner, “The Librarians in Oz,” 18.

²⁸ “Dorothy the Librarian,” 47.

“missiles and atomic submarines”) would increase their personal knowledge and consequently increase the nation’s scientific and technological potential.

Dodd, in fact, over-estimated postwar children’s aversion to the *Oz* series when she said, “Kids don’t like that fanciful stuff anymore.” With the continuing popularity of the *Oz* books, Dodd was placed in the awkward situation that Ulveling wrote his article to avoid. After *Life* gave national exposure to her list of children’s books to be removed from the library, she was forced to explain herself and take responsibility for a major scandal:

In view of what has happened, it does seem too bad that we used the list of children’s books in the Newsletter. I can’t say, however, that I would have been perceptive enough to foresee the furor it did create. As for me taking the rap, I think I am the one to take it. I do it with good grace because I think we are fundamentally right in insisting these books in question are not suitable reading material. I hope though, that this experience will teach us that a soft approach is better.²⁹

Part of the “furor” that Dodd’s list inspired came in the form of letters from an irate public demanding to know why their favorite books were being removed from the library. Dodd, in fact, had to respond to so many letters that she had little time for anything else. She was forced to write a letter to Thomas Dreier explaining her tardiness in fulfilling her duties as State Librarian: “As a result of the letters I’ve had to write about the children’s books, I am way behind on a number of things including the biennial report.”³⁰

While Dodd eventually convinced the governor to stand by her decision to remove the children’s books, even some of Dodd’s coworkers had serious reservations about her censorship attempts. Library Extension Officer Verna Nistendirk, at great professional

²⁹ Letter from Dorothy Dodd to Thomas Dreier (Feb 18, 1959), Series 1506, Carton 2, Florida State Archives, Tallahassee, Florida.

³⁰ Letter from Dorothy Dodd to Thomas Dreier (Feb 25, 1959), Series 1506, Carton 2, Florida State Archives, Tallahassee, Florida.

risk, went so far as to reprint the *Life* article, that “brutal Verboten piece,” in her own library bulletin, directly defying Dodd.³¹ Over the course of 1959, the relationship between Dodd and Nistendirk steadily deteriorated. Their personal relationship became ugly, and their working relationship was inharmonious. These problems had become common knowledge among library employees across the state. Thomas Dreier, in his position on the State Library Board, eventually offered Dodd the choice: “You hired her. You can fire her.”³² Dodd decided not to fire Nistendirk, but Nistendirk’s role in the children’s book drama almost assuredly prevented her from being promoted upon Dodd’s retirement.³³

The wild fantasy and the perception of subversive political ideas in L. Frank Baum’s *Oz* books made them an obvious target for censorship attempts by state library officials. These censorship attempts, however, by and large failed to achieve their goals. Baum’s stories continued to resonate with the children who read them, and each generation found a new legion of fans who vocally defended their favorite works. This created the “furor” that Dodd found so great that, by her own admission, she would have to think twice about directly censoring books in the future. When it came to librarians’ attempts to control access of children to the ideas of the *Oz* books, Ruth Plumly Thompson, Baum’s successor as author of the *Oz* series, noted, “...the children

³¹ Letter from Thomas Dreier to Dorothy Dodd (Feb 2, 1959), Series 1506, Carton 2, Florida State Archives, Tallahassee, Florida.

³² Letter from Thomas Dreier to Dorothy Dodd (Nov 18, 1959), Series 1506, Carton 2, Florida State Archives, Tallahassee, Florida.

³³ Letter from Margaret Chapman (President of Florida Library Association) to Adam Adams (Chairman of the State Library and Historical Commission) (July 7, 1965), Series 1510, Carton 3, Florida State Archives, Tallahassee, Florida. The letter points out that Nistendirk would have been a likely and popular candidate to take over Dodd’s position upon her retirement, if it were not for the fact that Dodd would not recommend her for the position, due to personal and professional conflicts.

themselves settled the matter by buying millions of Baum's books... though many whose parents could not afford to buy the books were deprived of the delights and excitement of the wonderful Land of Oz."³⁴

³⁴ Thompson, 7-8.

CHAPTER 4 SOME CONCLUDING REMARKS

The *Oz* books were perpetually ignored or disrespected by much of the scholarly community and many librarians throughout the first half of the twentieth century. Despite its immense popularity, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* was missing from many important encyclopedias of children's literature and lists of recommended reading for children; none of Cornelia Meig's *Critical History of Children's Literature* (1953), May Hill Arbuthnot's *Children and Books* (1947), *Bookman's* 1922 list of "One Hundred Story Books for Children," Laura E. Richard's *What Shall the Children Read?* (1939), Alice M. Jordan's *Children's Classics* (1947), nor dozens of other important books attempting to establish standards for selection of quality literature for children's libraries mentioned either Baum or Oz.¹ A deliberate effort was made by many scholars of children's literature and librarians in children's libraries to keep the works of Baum out of the cannon, although they were deeply enjoyed by generations of children by the time many of these lists and encyclopedias were published.

As argued here, the emphasis Baum placed on commercial aspects of a child's experience of his work was difficult for many librarians to accept. They tended to see Baum's work as pulp fiction and unworthy of a place in the hands of a child. The presentation of Oz as a land exploring the metaphorical possibilities of consumerism did little to assuage these negative feelings.

¹ Clark, 27, 133; Martin Gardner, "Why Librarians Dislike Oz," *The American Book Collector*, v. 13, #4, December 1962, 14.

While before World War II critics and librarians felt Baum's work was overly commercial, librarians in postwar America often saw something quite different. Still believing that Baum's books lacked literary quality, the sense that Baum was advocating American consumerism was replaced by the opposite feeling that the *Oz* books contained a coded Marxist message. In the meantime, many librarians were trying to shape library collections in ways that would direct the mental efforts of children to practical ends as a tool for fighting the Soviets in the Cold War. Baum's particular brand of escapist fantasy was tossed aside by the "stern and realistic hands" of librarians like Ulveling, Dodd, and Dreier.

Most of the battles to keep the *Oz* books out of public libraries and schools subsided by the mid-1970s. By the 1970s, librarians and educators were largely defending a child's right to read freely and broadly. In part, this new attitude was adopted as a means of protecting children from what was seen as an even more negative influence: television.²

Occasionally, concerned parents would and will complain about ethnic stereotyping in the works of L. Frank Baum, which do contain negative characterizations of Blacks and other racial and ethnic minorities. Of all the charges leveled at the *Oz* series in its tumultuous history, the argument to keep children away of the pernicious depictions of racial minorities is likely the strongest. In *The Patchwork Girl of Oz* and *Rinkitink in Oz* Dorothy and her companions visit the Tottenhots, whom Glinda the Good Witch describes as a "lower form of man," with black skin and wiry hair—a clearly racist caricature of the Hottentot peoples of South Africa. Additionally, in some of his other

² Romalov, 119.

shorter works for children, Baum also included negative characterizations of the Irish, Chinese, French, and Arabs.³ Baum's own racial politics were no less troubling. Living in South Dakota at the time of the Ghost Dancers and Custer's Last Stand, Baum argued in his newspaper editorials that the only way to secure peace in South Dakota was the extermination of Native Americans.⁴ This was the source of racial protests against Baum's books beginning in the 1970s and continuing through the 1980s. While these protests were rather common, but they have since begun to wane. Newer editions of some of the offending titles have removed some problematic illustrations and text, and the number of concerned parents seems to be dropping.⁵

The *Oz* series, like J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* books, also seem recently to have found an enemy in fundamentalist Christians. In 1986, seven fundamentalist families filed suit against a public school in Tennessee for placing *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* on a required reading list for students. In *Oz*, they argued, woman assume traditional male roles—presumably referring, at least in part, to the transformation of the young boy, Tip, into Ozma, the ruling princess of Oz, at the end of the second book. The families also objected to the promotion of magic; the idea of a Good Witch was anathema to them. Moreover, they bemoaned the fact that in the books animals achieve human status (the Cowardly Lion, for instance, is treated as an equal in Oz), thus violating the dictum that God gave man dominion over the animals. The judge ruled that parents with religious

³ Francis B. Randall, "Ethnic Stereotypes in Baum's Books for Children," *Baum Bugle*, 28: 1 (Spring 1984), 8-11.

⁴ Hearn, *The Annotated Wizard of Oz*, xxiv.

⁵ Angelica Shirley Carpenter and Jean Shirley, *L. Frank Baum: Royal Historian of Oz* (Minneapolis: Lerner Publications, 1992), 134.

objections to the books could remove their children from the classroom when Baum's books were read.⁶

On the whole, however, arguments over the acceptability of Baum's work in public libraries and schools have largely subsided. *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* is now absent from the ALA's annual list of the hundred most banned books in the United States. Debates over the literary value of series books continue, but the debates are far less intense and tend to be isolated.⁷ Throughout the nineteenth century, children in the United States had only European fairy tales to read. *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* represented for these children the first fairy tale with distinctly American images and themes. It filled a cultural void for them, and the story of Dorothy and her companions has continued to resonate with children for more than a century since its publication.⁸ The cultural importance of the tale in the United States was strengthened considerably by its translation to film. MGM's 1939 production of *The Wizard of Oz* has been seen more times and by more people than any other film in history.⁹ This level of popularity virtually ensured Baum's work a place in the pantheon of children's literature in the United States. Now, in fact, most children read the works of Baum because they enjoyed

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ In 1991, the public library in Boulder, CO, removed the Nancy Drew series from the card catalog and moved the books to special collections, in an attempt to discourage children from reading series books. Romalov, 120.

⁸ Some scholars have begun to challenge Baum's status as the first writer of fantasy for children in the United States. Mark I West's *Before Oz: Juvenile Fantasy Stories from Nineteenth Century America*, (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1989) presents a compelling argument for the reevaluation of this claim and is a valuable collection of American fantasy from the nineteenth century. It remains clear, nevertheless, that *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* was the first book-length fantasy for children published by an American author. As such, it holds an important distinction in the history of children's literature.

⁹ Neil Earle, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz in American Popular Culture* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1993), 1.

the film (and not vice versa). In part because of the prominence of the film and despite librarians' criticism of the low art of his works, Baum's most famous tale has become an integral part of America's cultural mythology. While librarians and critics diligently worked to keep the books away from young readers, the century-long support of Baum's work by generations of children have ensured that it will be read, enjoyed, and remembered.

WORKS CITED

- Baum, L. Frank, *Dorothy and the Wizard in Oz*. New York: Dover, 1984.
- Baum, L. Frank, *The Emerald City of Oz*. New York: William Morrow and Co., 1993.
- Baum, L. Frank, *The Lost Princess of Oz*. New York: Amereon House, 1917.
- Baum, L. Frank, *The Road to Oz*. New York: William Morrow and Co., 1991.
- Brink, Carol Ryrie, *South Dakota Library Bulletin* (April-June 1948), cited in Michael Patrick Hearn, "Introduction," in *The Annotated Wizard of Oz*. New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 2000.
- Bronner, Simon, "Reading Consumer Culture," in Simon J. Bronner (ed.), *Consuming Visions: Accumulation and Display of Goods in America, 1880-1920*. New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1989, 13-53.
- Carpenter, Angela Shirley and Jean Shirley, *L. Frank Baum: Royal Historian of Oz*. Minneapolis: Lerner Publications, 1992.
- Clark, Beverly Lyon, *Kiddie Lit: The Cultural Construction of Children's Literature in America*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003.
- Culver, Stuart "What Manakins Want," *Representations*, Winter 1988, 97-116.
- "Dorothy the Librarian," *Life*, Feb. 16, 1959, 47.
- Dreier, Thomas, "The Capitalist is the Socialists' Slave," *The Vagabond*, 42:6, 4-5.
- Dreier, Thomas, "Johnny Will Read," *Your Public Library: Food for the Mind*, newsletter for the public library of St. Petersburg, FL (not dated, circa 1961), series 1506, carton 2, Florida State Archives, Tallahassee Florida.
- Dreier, Thomas, "Libraries Will Help Russia Win Minds of the World," *St. Petersburg Times*, April 3, 1960.
- Dreier, Thomas, "Of What Use Are Public Libraries?" *Your Public Library: Food for the Mind*, newsletter for the public library of St. Petersburg, FL (not dated, circa 1956), series 1506, carton 2, Florida State Archives, Tallahassee, Florida.
- Earle, Neil, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz in American Popular Culture*. Lewsiton, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1993.

- Eaton, Anne "Widening Horizons 1840-1890," in Cornelia Meigs (ed.), *A Critical History of Children's Literature*. New York: Macmillan, 1953, 167-298.
- Editorial, *Library Journal*, December 1905, 915-916. Cited in Nancy Tillman Romalov, "Children's Series Books and the Rhetoric of Guidance: A Historical Overview," in Carolyn Stewart and Nancy Tillman Romalov (eds.), *Rediscovering Nancy Drew*. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1995.
- Gardner, Martin, "Librarians in Oz," *Saturday Review*, April 11, 1959, 18-19.
- Gardner, Martin "Why Librarians Dislike Oz," *The American Book Collector*, 13:4, December 1962, 14-15.
- Goldthwaite, John, *The Natural History of Make-Believe: A Guide to the Principle Works of Britain, England, and America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996.
- The Douglas G. and David L. Greene Collection of L. Frank Baum and Related Oziana.
- Greenway, Emerson, "What About Tomorrow's Children?" *Library Journal*, April 15, 1950, 656-659.
- Hearn, Michael Patrick (ed.), *The Annotated Wizard of Oz*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2000.
- Hearn, Michael Patrick, "Toto, I've a Feeling We're Not in Kansas City Anymore...or Detroit...or Washington, D.C.!" *The Horn Book Magazine*, Jan/Feb 2001, 16-34.
- Huck, Charlotte S., Susan Hepler, and Janet Hickman, *Children's Literature in the Elementary School, 5th Edition*. Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Publishers, 1989.
- Lanes, Selma, *Down the Rabbit Hole: Adventures and Misadventures in the Realm of Children's Literature*. New York: Atheneum, 1971.
- Leach, William, "Strategists of Display and the Production of Desire," in Simon J. Bronner (ed.), *Consuming Visions: Accumulation and Display of Goods in America, 1880-1920*. New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1989, 99-132.
- Lears, T.J. Jackson, "From Salvation to Self-Realization: Advertising and the Therapeutic Roots of Consumer Culture, 1880-1930," in *The Culture of Consumption: Critical Essays in American History, 1880-1980*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1983, 1-28.
- Lears, T.J. Jackson, *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1925*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981.
- Letter from Margaret Chapman (President of Florida Library Association) to Adam Adams (Chairman of the State Library and Historical Commission), (July 7, 1965), Series 1510, Carton 3, Florida State Archives, Tallahassee, Florida.

- Letter from Dorothy Dodd to Thomas Dreier (Feb 18, 1959), Series 1506, Carton 2, Florida State Archives, Tallahassee, Florida.
- Letter from Dorothy Dodd to Thomas Dreier (Feb 25, 1959), Series 1506, Carton 2, Florida State Archives, Tallahassee, Florida.
- Letter from Thomas Dreier to Dorothy Dodd (Feb 2, 1959), Series 1506, Carton 2, Florida State Archives, Tallahassee, Florida.
- Letter from Thomas Dreier to Dorothy Dodd (Nov 18, 1959), Series 1506, Carton 2, Florida State Archives, Tallahassee, Florida.
- Letter from Thomas Dreier to Dorothy Dodd (March 27, 1961), Series 1506, Carton 2, Florida State Archives, Tallahassee, Florida.
- Letter from William E. Hinchliff to Thomas Dreier (March 20, 1960), Series 1506, Carton 2, Florida State Archives, Tallahassee, Florida.
- Martin, Dick, "The Toys and Games of Oz," *Baum Bugle*, Christmas 1962, 4-7.
- Rahn, Suzanne, *The Wizard of Oz: Shaping an Imaginary World*. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1998.
- Randall, Francis B., "Ethnic Stereotypes in Baum's Books for Children," *Baum Bugle*, 28:1 (Spring 1984), 8-11.
- Riley, Michael O. *Oz and Beyond: The Fantasy World of L. Frank Baum*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1997.
- Robb, Stewart, "The 'Red' Wizard of Oz," *New Masses*, Oct. 4, 1938, 8.
- Steinbeck, John, "Reprint of 'One Man's Opinion,'" Series 900000, Box M73-16 #2, Florida State Archives, Tallahassee, FL.
- Stewart, Carolyn and Nancy Tillman Romalov, *Rediscovering Nancy Drew*. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1995.
- St. John, Tom, "Lyman Frank Baum: Looking Backward to the Promised Land," *Western Humanities Review*, 35:4 (Winter 1982), 349-360.
- Swartz, Mark Evan, *Oz Before the Rainbow: L. Frank Baum's The Wonderful Wizard of Oz on Stage and Screen to 1939*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000.
- Thompson, Ruth Plumly, "Librarians, Editors, Critics, Children, and Oz," *Baum Bugle*, Autumn 1984, 7-8.
- Ulveling, Ralph, "Ralph Ulveling on Freedom of Information," *ALA Bulletin*, Oct 1957, 653-655, 721.

Viguers, Ruth Hill, "The Golden Age 1920-1950," in Cornelia Meigs (ed.), *A Critical History of Children's Literature*. New York: Macmillan, 1953, 427-604.

West, Mark I., *Before Oz Juvenile Fantasy Series in Nineteenth Century America*. Hamden, Conn.: Archon Press, 1989.

White, Mary Lou, "Censorship—Threat Over Children's Books," *The Elementary School Journal* (Oct 1974), 2-10.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Andrew Grunzke completed undergraduate degrees in mathematics and English from the University of Florida in 1999. After earning his Master of Arts in Teaching mathematics, he began pursuing his Ph.D. in social foundations of education. Developing an interest in the educational function of children's literature, he is currently writing his dissertation on Baum's *Oz* books.

Find Lawrence Andrew's contact information, age, background check, white pages, relatives, social networks, resume, professional records & pictures. Related to: Tara Smith, 59 Michael Yockey, 41 Nora Guerra, 57 Has lived in: San Antonio, TX Irving, TX Houston, TX Andrew lawrence uncensored part 1 (2016). Andrew lawrence uncensored part 2 (2016). (n.b.- please only download onto a pc IT won't work on a tablet, thanks!) New book out now 'Reasons to kill yourself'. Andrew J Lawrence. The Florey Institute of Neuroscience and Mental Health Behavioural Neuroscience. 46.68. BSc(Hons), PhD. Contact. About. Publications 320. Andrew J Lawrence. View. Relaxin-3 Regulates Stress-Induced Alcohol-Seeking in Rats. Conference Paper. Jan 2014. Andrew J Lawrence. Hanna E Kastman.