

1988

An Analysis of the Changing Characterizations in the Nancy Drew Series, 1930-1987

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to discern from an examination of the original Nancy Drew series and the "Nancy Drew Files" how the characters have changed from the beginning of the series in 1930 to 1987. This study concentrated on three groups of characters; Nancy Drew and her three friends

An Analysis of the Changing Characterizations
in the Nancy Drew Series, 1930-1987

A Research Paper

Presented to the

Faculty of the Library Science Department

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

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Chapter I

Introduction

The popularity of juvenile series fiction with young people is indisputable. Many young adolescents, girls in particular, focus much of their reading interest on current romance series. Sweet Valley High, Caitlin, and the Sweet Dreams romances are but a few of the popular series now being read. Media specialists have been and are addressing the decision to include series or formula books on their library shelves. An article written in 1953 in a popular library journal describes the atmosphere and positions taken by librarians a few years prior to that date as lists of "not-to-be" circulated books were published:

We were told that books such as these were a menace to good reading. They were sentimental, unscientific, and lacking in color and vitality. No writer could be more than hackneyed and uninspiring when he carried the same character or a similar theme through twenty or more books. (Hollowell, 1953, p. 736).

Menace or not, series fiction appeals to many young people. Robert Carlsen in his book, Books and the Teenage Reader (1980), compares what he calls subliterate, comic books, series books, and formula romances to junk food: "tasty and fattening, but not very nutritious" (p. 44).

Several explanations for series appeal have been cited. These reasons include: (a) the books are cheap and easily acquired; (b) the stories are easy to read; (c) the story pattern is similar to folk literature in that the tale moves from one peak of action to another without much thought given to characterization, setting description, and cause and effect; (d) the stories provide a degree of escapism for the reader; and (e) the reader also finds security in the stories because he knows the characters so well (Carlsen, p. 51-52).

In an examination of series fiction, the Nancy Drew series, perhaps the most widely read of this type, should be included. The series began in 1930 with The Secret of the Old Clock and has continued to the present with estimates of over \$80 million in sales in the United States alone (Billman, 1986, p. 100).

Edward Stratemeyer was the creator of the first three books in the series. Stratemeyer began his career writing juvenile series fiction in 1890 while working for and with Horatio Alger. Upon Alger's death, Stratemeyer finished eleven books under Alger's name (Prager, July 10, 1971, p. 16). During a career which spanned approximately 40 years, Stratemeyer is credited with either writing or creating more than 800 books under 65 pseudonyms (p. 15). He created such long standing series as the Bobbsey Twins, Tom Swift,

and the Hardy Boys, to mention only a few. Stratemeyer did not live long enough to see how popular the Nancy Drew series was to become. He died after producing only the first three in the series. His daughter, Harriet Stratemeyer Adams, continued the series under the pseudonym Carolyn Keene until her death in 1983.

The plot structure of all Stratemeyer books followed an unvarying form (Billman, 1986, p. 26). A three-page outline was established and sent to a ghost writer to fill in the "predictable flesh." "This outline contained such items as a list of the dramatis personae, their fates in the course of the volume, a blow-by-blow plot outline, and the time elements for the novel" (p. 26). Stratemeyer also established definite guidelines which the writers were to follow. The books were to contain:

A low death rate but plenty of plot. Verbs of action, and polka-dotted with exclamation points and provocative questions. No use of guns by the hero. No smooching. The main character introduced on page one and a slam-bang mystery or peril set up. (p. 26)

The Nancy Drew series was Stratemeyer's first juvenile detective series with a female as a main character. Considering the atmosphere of the time which was long before the feminist movement, a young female detective was a peculiarity. "The girl detective was a natural development of the girl who

solved trivial mysteries as a sideline, but she wasn't classified as a standard figure in juvenile fiction until the first Nancy Drew books began to appear in 1929 and 1930" (Cadogan and Craig, 1981, p. 149).

The pattern, or formula, for the Nancy Drew mysteries followed a simple but inflexible form (Prager, 1971, p. 79). First, Nancy receives an anonymous warning to get off the case or face the consequences, a threat which she never heeds. Next, a wild chase either on foot or in vehicles involving Nancy and the villains would commence. Money or other valuables would then be withheld by thieves or embezzlers from deserving people. Finally, the missing valuables (wills, treasure maps, jewels, secret codes, etc.) would be returned to their rightful owner.

Other students of the mystery genre claim that there is no mystery to the Nancy Drew books. (Cadogan and Craig, 1976). These authors state that the basic theme of the books is that nothing is mysterious; everything has a "prosaic" and usually economic explanation (p. 306).

The books in the Nancy Drew series have appealed to young readers not only because of the action packed adventures but because of the Nancy Drew character. What sets the Nancy of the earlier books apart from the other characters in the series who are stereotyped in

one form or another is the lack of stereotyped characterizations applied to her. Nancy is neither young, or old, male or female. She is all knowing and competent in everything she attempts. "She acts much as the liberated woman of 1980 is supposed to act. The amazing thing is that she has been doing it since 1930" (Fitzgerald, 1980, p. 324).

The current Nancy Drew character can still be found in the continued numbered books and in a new series, the "Nancy Drew Files". The "Nancy Drew Files" was created in an effort to interest older readers in the series, according to an article in Publisher's Weekly (Felder, 1986). The Simon and Schuster publishing company which had been publishing the Nancy Drew series in digest format since 1979 acquired the Stratemeyer Syndicate in 1984. Simon and Schuster introduced the "Nancy Drew Files" in 1986. The original series for younger readers continues to be published. The publishing company will "...reissue those books coming up for reprint with new covers and some updated text, and will publish originals as well" (p. 30). The Nancy of the "Files" series is "...still the same feisty, independent, somewhat, ahead-of-her time character she's always been" (p. 34). Possibly the biggest change will be in Nancy's attitude toward romance.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to discern from an examination of the original Nancy Drew series and the "Nancy Drew Files" how the characters have changed from the beginning of the series in 1930 to 1987. This study concentrated on three groups of characters; Nancy Drew and her three friends (Bess Marvin, George Fayne, and Ned Nickerson), the victims and the villains. This study also attempted to discover what, if any, changes have been made in the series concerning characterizations since the death of Harriet S. Adams in 1983, the principle author of the books. The series continues to be written under the Carolyn Keene pseudonym.

The specific questions studied were:

1. How have the characterizations of Nancy and her three friends changed from the 1930-1971 books to 1971-1987 books?
2. How have characterizations of Nancy Drew and her three friends changed from the 1971-1987 books to the "Nancy Drew Files" books?
3. How have the characterizations of the victims changed from 1930-1970 books to the 1971-1987 books?
4. How have the characterizations of the

victims changed from the 1971-1987 books to the "Nancy Drew Files" books?

5. How have the characterizations of the villains changed from the 1930-1970 books to the 1971-1987 books?
6. How have the characterizations of the villains changed from the 1971-1987 books to the "Nancy Drew Files" books?

Hypotheses

1. The characterizations in the continuing Nancy Drew Series and the "Nancy Drew Files" series exhibit stereotypes.
2. There are 75% more stereotyped personality characterizations of Nancy Drew and her three friends, Bess Marvin, George Fayne, and Ned Nickerson, in the books published between 1930-1970 than those published between 1971-1987.
3. There are 75% more stereotyped characterizations of the victims in the books published between 1930-1970 than those published between 1971-1987.
4. There are 75% more stereotyped characterizations of the villains in the books published between 1930-1970 than those published between

1971-1987.

5. There is no significant change in personality characterizations of Nancy Drew and her three friends between the books published during 1971-1987 and the first 15 books of the "Nancy Drew Files".
6. There is no significant change in characterizations of the victims between the books published during 1971-1987 and the first 15 books of the "Nancy Drew Files."
7. There is no significant change in characterizations of the villains between the books published during 1971-1987 and the first 15 books of the "Nancy Drew Files".

Assumptions

This researcher assumes that personality characteristics can be analyzed and quantified under predetermined traits categories. It is also assumed that the individual character's personality traits are clearly evident from reading the book.

Because of the success of the series, it is assumed that the current creator will continue to portray the major characters, Nancy in particular, similarly in the new books as in the old.

It is a popular and common assumption that children are influenced by what they read. One author mentions that series books tend to imply false assumptions to the young reader (Carlsen). Some of these false assumptions which relate to this study of the Nancy Drew series include the following:

1. Adolescents are more perceptive than adults and if left to their own devices can do a better job than older people.
2. One's physical appearance indicates one's character.
3. People are either good or bad. Good always wins over bad and the wrongdoer will be punished materially or physically.
4. Heroes tend to have Anglo-Saxon names. (Carlsen, p. 52-53)

Limitations

The sample in this study is limited to the books in the Nancy Drew series published from 1930-1987 by the Grossett and Dunlap and the Simon and Schuster publishing companies, respectively. For purposes of comparison to the original series, 15 books (1-15) from the "Nancy Drew Files" series published by Simon and Schuster was also studied. This series was first published in 1986 and is intended for an older audience. However, the central characters which are in nearly all of the older books remain in this new version of the series.

The sample excluded those books in the series which were first written at an earlier date and rewritten and released a few years later.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined as pertaining to this study.

Series fiction: a set of novels with an unchanging character or set of characters. "Readers anticipate that when they come to the next novel, the main characters will be exactly the same as when they left them..."(Schmidt, 1987, p. 35). The books can be read in any order since the plots are not dependent on each other.

Character trait: a particular quality or feature of an individual. In this study, personality traits, physical characteristics, national origin, and social position were considered as character traits.

Stereotype: an unvarying or fixed characterization, having no individuality.

Significance of the Study

The importance of inclusion of juvenile series fiction in a collection is debatable. Writers and authors of various publications have indicated that

series fiction does serve a useful purpose as a stepping stone to higher quality literature and as an aid in encouraging reluctant readers to read. But, the formulaic plot and stereotyped characters which are the trademarks of the earlier titles in the Nancy Drew series rarely exhibit any realism. It would be presumptuous to classify all of the titles in a series as being similar in character development, especially a series which has spanned more than fifty years. A study of this type is significant in understanding how character development in series fiction is presently handled.

Chapter II

Review of Related Literature

Tekla Bekkedal (1973) reviewed studies which researched the content of children's books and found that a majority of the literature could be grouped into three types of content analysis studies. These three subjects areas were: (a) studies of human relationships, (b) studies on values and cultural content, and (c) studies concerned with the portrayal of specific racial and ethnic groups. Bekkedal wrote, "Adults who read widely in children's books cannot escape noticing differences between books published in recent years and those published thirty years ago" (p. 109). Because of the changing content in children's books, Bekkedal indicated a need for more content analysis studies. There are several studies of the Nancy Drew series which have been published. Those which are predominately concerned with the characterizations, and, in particular the changing characterizations, will be discussed. Nearly all of the studies touch upon one or more of the three subject areas mentioned in Bekkedal's study.

James P. Jones (1973) studied the first eighteen volumes of the Nancy Drew Series published between 1930 and 1941, a time period which began with the early

years of the Depression and extended to the beginning of World War II. He analyzed the characters of these first 18 books and found many similarities, especially stereotypes. The villains in the series who were the cause of most of Nancy's "traumatic experiences," were easy to identify (p. 709). "They were mean and sly, inevitably wore loud clothes, had bad manners, and used bad grammar" (p. 709). A villain was often from a national or racial minority. Jones also noted that policemen were stupid, highhanded, pompous, and usually Irish.

Through the first 17 books of the series, 17 Negroes appeared briefly. All were either cooks, butlers, servants or porters. Jones commented that stereotypes of the Negro included such attributes as a person who spoke incorrect English, one who was inclined to crime, strong drink and shuffling of his feet when he walked. National groups which appeared in the early volumes included Italians, who were dark and swarthy, the brawny Polish, and the squint-eyed Chinese. Jews were described as "loud, cheap, unstable, and crude" (p. 711).

Jones found that there was a definite social class of people who were the preferred throughout these early books. "The 'good guys' led by Nancy and her father were clearly representative of upper middle class

America" (p. 712). He wrote, "The virtue and rightness of the family of the professional man or business success was a central theme of the series" (p. 712). Jones documented incidents throughout the early books which contributed to periodizing the series. Subtle mention is made of such timely subjects as the Depression, the New Deal and other politics of the time, and the World War. Jones commented on the changes which have occurred in the series since 1941. Older titles were rewritten to remove stereotypes and to present policemen in a more positive light. Nancy Drew, though, remains relatively unchanged.

Bobbi Ann Mason (1975) devoted a chapter to the Nancy Drew series in her book, The Girl Sleuth: A Feminist Guide. Mason analyzed the major characters of the series, Nancy in particular, and to a lesser degree the formulaic plot sequence and settings of the books. She described Nancy as "... independent, brilliant, poised, courageous, kind, attractive, gracious, well-to-do - i.e., free, white, and sixteen" (p. 50). Nancy aged only two years in the series, from sixteen to eighteen, but she behaved as a thirty-year-old. Mason wrote that Nancy "...is as immaculate and self-possessed as a Miss America on tour, ... as cool as a Mata Hari and as sweet as Betty Crocker" (p. 50). She noted that Nancy transgresses age and sex barriers.

Nancy moves easily into adult territory by behaving like one and "... trespasses male territory without giving up female advantages" (p. 53). Mason remarked that Bess and George mirror the two sides of Nancy, her femininity and her masculinity. The companions demonstrate to the reader the "...extreme options open to females - tomboy and fluff-head" (p. 56).

Mason described the elements of the plots in the Nancy Drew mysteries and compared them to sonnets, "... endless variations on an inflexible form" (p. 56). The settings in contrast to the plot and characterizations for the stories are very often thoroughly described and are usually all "...feminine, domestic, aristocratic, slightly Gothic - quaint reminders of a traditional, Victorian, idealized world. They are 'enchanted', fascinating and intricate, like enlarged dollhouses" (p. 57). The villains are described by Mason as "...old geezers with funny names who draw attention to their basic weaknesses by resorting to clumsy, melodramatic ploys" (p. 66). The most common characteristic of Nancy's foes is piercing black eyes. Through the various mysteries and adventures she gets involved in, Nancy's job throughout the earlier volumes, according to Mason, was to preserve the line between the classes and to "...restore a crumbling place to a past and perfect order" (p. 75).

Ken Donelson (1980) analyzed and commented on changes which were made in the two versions of the first Nancy Drew book, The Secret of the Old Clock, 1930 and 1959. He noted that some of the changes were obvious, either to conform to a more modern era such as in changing the word roadster to convertible or to do away with blatant stereotypes. The Drew's housekeeper and Nancy's mother figure, Hannah Gruen, change drastically from the older series to the new. Donelson noted that the author had most likely discovered the importance of Hannah's character to the series. Donelson wrote about Nancy Drew, "... (she) has not changed from 1930 to 1959. She remains almost a Sears-Roebuck catalog of dreams fulfilled for young readers. She is independent, she is popular, she can tell good people from bad people instinctively and accurately, she is incredibly and inevitably successful..." (p. 224-225).

Bea Knodel (1982) examined the inequality of young adult literature in regard to the number of books with strong female characters compared to the number of books with strong male characters. She noted that current popular literature for young adults often fails female readers in one of three areas. "First, the most frequently recommended books for young adults portray worlds which are almost exclusively masculine" (p. 2).

The second type of book includes male and female characters, but the boys are most often found doing things while the girls watch admiringly (p. 3). The third type of book which fails the female reader is the well written book with a female major character who is portrayed as the victim (p. 4). Knodel argued that girls want to read about a strong female character. She wrote, "Nancy Drew has been a mainstay of young girls reading for many years, not only because of her adventures, which make the books guaranteed page turners, but because of her personal characteristics" (p. 2). Girls can read about a character who is, "...intelligent, independent, and able to cope with any eventuality" (p. 2). Knodel commented that the character of Nancy Drew is an unrealistic portrayal of females but a character who a generation of girls have dreamed of being.

Lois Marchino (1980) analyzed and compared the characters in the Nancy Drew series to the characters in reading textbooks used in elementary classrooms and found that a majority of the reading textbooks present "distorted and negative representations of the people who inhabit this world" (p. 1). The Nancy Drew character, on the other hand, exhibits much less sex role stereotyping. Marchino reported on studies which revealed that female characters in children's reading

textbooks were most often presented as generally passive and their careers and activities did not reflect reality.

She also stated that while Nancy Drew is portrayed throughout the series as "confident, capable, courageous, and always victorious in adventures," her female companions, Bess and George, are characterized quite stereotypically (Marchino, p. 6). Bess is portrayed as a passive, frightened, giggling overeater. George exemplifies characteristics of a cheerful tomboy. She is a girl who likes her boyish name and short hair. Marchino wrote that the two are "...designed to show off Nancy's unique perfection and to demonstrate the extreme options open to women" (p. 7).

Stereotyped attributes are used to separate one type of character from another. The 'bad guys' are easy to spot because they exhibit such characteristics as greed, insolence, piercing dark eyes, gaudy clothes, and are very often of a minority group (Marchino, p. 8). She observed that the series has degenerated somewhat in the past fifteen to twenty years. The books are now shorter with shorter paragraphs and sentences. The reading level of the vocabulary has been lowered. She noted that while the early books in the series rarely referred to romance the newer

versions have placed more emphasis on dating. Marchino concluded that the Nancy Drew series, albeit flawed, has some merit in presenting a more assertive female image in the character of Nancy Drew compared to the images of females found in most literature textbooks for children.

Lee Zacharias (1976) analyzed how the reader of the Nancy Drew series perceived the female's role in society through the five major characters in the series; Nancy Drew, Carson Drew, Bess Marvin, George Fayne and Ned Nickerson. Zacharias wrote, "Nancy succeeds not merely because the reader can identify with her but because the reader wants to identify with her, she is an ever-contemporary projection and fulfillment of the reader. She is everything the reader is not and wishes to be" (p. 1028). Through the Nancy Drew stories the reader learns that life is a mystery which can be solved. The individual mysteries in each book do come together in one final solution. The reader is left with the impression that "...there is order in chaos, that the seemingly random events of her life and the confusions she perceives in the world do have a pattern" (p. 1027).

Zacharias wrote that Nancy's father, Carson Drew, is intelligent, honest and forceful. He is ever supportive of Nancy's adventures and takes her very

seriously. "His love for Nancy is intense..." (p. 1028). But it is a love which is partially pride in Nancy and her sleuthing abilities. This evidence of pride reassures the pre-teen female reader that "...fathers are not disappointed their daughters aren't sons" (p. 1029).

Bess and George, cousins and Nancy's companions, have opposite exaggerated personalities. Bess is plump, feminine with blonde permed hair, less vivacious than her cousin, George, but better looking and more careful in her dress. George, on the other hand, is boyish and thin, has athletic abilities, and ridicules anything feminine. The two extremes in characterization place George and Bess into stereotyped sex roles, but they are roles in which a pre-teen female reader may see herself. Many readers can identify with "...the tomboy she recently liked to be and the grown-up, dignified lady she will soon be expected to be" (Zacharias, p. 1032).

Zacharias commented that Ned Nickerson's most endearing qualities are his muscles, devotion and loyalty to Nancy. He willingly supplies the brawn to Nancy's brains. Nancy, aside from all of her superior qualities, is quite vain. Zacharias noted that the solution of the mysteries, which is an act of power, is Nancy's ultimate vanity. "Nancy doesn't merely solve

the mystery and bring the villains to justice; she beats them" (p. 1035). He concluded by stating that to the reader, Nancy is "...a fantasy for pre-teens who feel more inferior, less confident, and less in control than they ever have before..." (p. 1037).

John Shephard (1962) studied sixteen popular children's books. These were books which children often selected, according to librarians, teachers and parents, and were not limited to one particular type of book or author. The books included formula fiction by Carolyn Keene as well as books which had a moral, sociological or fantasy theme. His purpose for studying these books was to see if the villains or heroes portrayed unique characteristics among themselves. In preparing the design of his study, Shephard used the 'content analysis' process (p. 672). He divided the characters from each book into two groups, the heroes and villains. Both groups were analyzed according to six categories: (a) race, (b) nationality, (c) religion, (d) physical appearance, (e) socio-economic status, and (f) standards of conduct and attitude.

These six categories were then divided as either a positive or negative characterization. Shephard found that within this sample the "...heroes and heroines strongly tend to be clean, white, healthy, handsome,

Protestant Christian, middle class people" (p. 672). The villain was more often an "...ugly, physically undesirable person of non-Causasian races, often either very poor or of the wealthy class" (p. 672). He commented that since it is the common sense assumption that reading affects the reader it is "...the responsibility of the teacher, parent and librarian to know some of the more subtle content of books - the values approved and the traits attached to favored and nonfavored characters in children's fiction" (p. 676).

The Secret of the Stratemeyer Syndicate by Carol Billman (1986) is possibly the most recent work to be published on the history of the series books which Edward Stratemeyer originated in the late 1800's. Of the many Stratemeyer series, the Nancy Drew series has outsold all and has outlived two authors. Harriet S. Adams who inherited the Nancy Drew series from her father, Edward Stratemeyer, made Nancy a little less bold and bossy. Adams also confirmed that "...'half ghosts' - writers who filled in plot outlines but were in no way responsible for story ideas - have been involved in the series attributed to Carolyn Keene" (p. 101). After the death of Harriet Adams in 1983, Nancy Axelrad continued the series still under the Carolyn Keene pseudonym (p. 101).

Billman listed as a reason for the success of the series the continual "...surface changes which have been made to keep the series abreast of new generation's tastes in fashions, automobiles, and fun" (p. 102). The changes included the cover art and illustrations of the individual books, as well as changes in Nancy's looks.

The formula for characterizations in the Nancy Drew books is similar to other Stratemeyer titles. Names, nonstandard grammar, rough and impolite behavior, and clothing give away a person's status in the series. Billman stated that particularly in the Nancy Drew series, "...The assignment of characters to either stereotypically bad or equally good status is even more pronounced ... than in earlier Stratemeyer publications" (p. 106). Billman commented about Nancy, "...beyond her infallible ability to judge character and reduce crooks to jelly, (her) defining qualities are coolness and her independence" (p. 108). Nancy's calm composure in the face of adversity and her free lifestyle has the effect of making her seem more than human. As a role model for young readers, Billman stated, "... it is precisely because she is so far removed from the little qualms and the brief frustrations and decisions facing real girls and women

that she cannot be considered a helpful fictional model of successful womanhood" (p. 119).

Barbara Wertheimer and Carol Sands (1975) examined the Nancy Drew books and the criticisms from educators which they have generated. Critics cite the limited characterization and lack of realism in the series. Nancy's character is seen as "...achievement rather than affiliation oriented" (p. 1134). "Her individual goals are never subordinated to group efforts, and the reading of her adventures does nothing to spur human understanding of diversity among peoples or tolerance for minorities" (p. 1134). Wertheimer and Sands noted that the series is valuable as a "...tool to encourage non-readers in the habit of reading..." (p. 1134). The authors commented that it is an educator's responsibility to promote higher quality reading for two reasons. Books which have more indepth characterizations than those found in the Nancy Drew series can heighten the awareness of human relations values. Higher quality literature can also improve children's composition.

The most recent study which analyzed the Nancy Drew character was written by Anne Scott MacLeod (1987). This article is the second part of an article which compared the character of Nancy Drew to other young female detective series characters, such as the

Dana girls and Judy Bolton. The independence which Nancy has throughout the series and the implied evidences of feminism are the two factors which separate the Nancy Drew character from her imitators. MacLeod stated, "Nancy's independence is not a gift coaxed from dim or fond adults...(it) is her right, won by her responsible and intelligent management of practically everything, and it is never seriously questioned" (p. 442-443). MacLeod commented that a feminist message is strongly present in the Nancy Drew series. She spoke of the author, Harriet Adams. "She allows Nancy her fears, even flashes of panic in various tight spots, but she never asks her reader to see Nancy Drew as pitiful. The persona that developed over the first ten years of the series had to do with triumph, not sympathy" (p. 445).

The Nancy Drew character is rarely if ever portrayed stereotypically. MacLeod wrote, "...Adams used her heroine to counter every stereotype of 'feminine' weakness, including such standard fictional attributes as frivolity, vanity, squeamishness and irrationality..." (p. 445). Adams consistently assigns Nancy roles which are normally given to boys. She is "...serious, competent, disciplined, and determined..." (p. 446), characteristics which are unusual of girls in formula fiction. MacLeod concluded the article by

stating that Adam's 'genius' throughout the series was her creation of Nancy Drew, the feminist, a feat which made her well ahead of her time.

As a girl who suffers none of the social drawbacks of her sex, who functions as only men are normally permitted to function in her society without losing the least part of her acceptability as a woman, Nancy Drew is herself the dominant message of Adam's series. (p. 450)

CHAPTER III

Methodology

For this study the researcher divided the Nancy Drew series, the population, into three groups from which to select samples. The first group was comprised of those books written between 1930-1970. All are part of the numbered Nancy Drew series, one through 47, written by Carolyn Keene and published by Grosset and Dunlap. A random sample of 15 books was selected from this group. The second group consisted of the books in the series from 1971 to 1987. This group included the continuing numbered books in the series written by Keene and published in the early editions (up to 1979) by Grosset and Dunlap and the later editions (1979 to 1987) by Simon and Schuster. A random sample of 15 books was also selected from this group.

The third group consisted of all of the "Nancy Drew Files" series, one through 15. The third group, also written by Carolyn Keene is published by Archway Paperbacks, a division of Simon and Schuster, publishers. The first "Nancy Drew Files" book was released in 1986. This series which includes the same regular characters is intended for older readers.

In order to quantify individual character traits in the series, content analysis methods were used to

analyze the individual books. Berelson (1952) states, "... content analysis should employ the categories most meaningful for the particular problem at hand; and relatively specific and concrete categories are often the most meaningful" (p. 148). The specific category of analysis for this study was the traits category. "This category... includes the ordinary personal characteristics, certain psychological traits and other ways of describing people" (p. 155).

The book section of the data instrument (See Appendix B) was designed to record the title of the book, date of publication, basic plot, setting, and any significant comments about the individual book.

In designing this study, the researcher grouped certain characters from the series into predetermined sets. The first group consisted of some of the "regular" cast of characters; this includes, Nancy Drew, Bess Marvin, George Fayne, and Ned Nickerson. Aside from Nancy, these characters did not play a major role in the individual story but were included enough to be considered "regulars". The second group analyzed were those characters to whom a wrong had been done, or were considered the unfortunates or victims in the story. They were the individuals who Nancy tries to help through her detective work. The final group was comprised of the villains or "bad guys" in the story.

The character instrument (See Appendix B) was designed to include specific character traits which were applied to each of these groups. For the first group, the "regulars", descriptive information was noted about each character, including, name, age, and physical description. For the second group, the victims, the character instrument noted the race or nationality of the character and the social status (poor, middle, or wealthy class). For the last group, the villains, information was noted concerning the following: name, nationality or race, physical description (i.e., piercing eyes), physical deformity, clothing (unusual or gaudy), and social status.

A personality traits checklist for each group of characters was also included in the character instrument design. A portion of the personality traits list was adapted from a list of character values developed by Lester (1982) (See Appendix A). The checklist also contained those traits which the researcher considered to be most applicable to the particular group being studied. The traits were based upon the literature review and what other authors found to be common characteristics, especially in the earlier books of the series.

CHAPTER IV

Analysis of the Data

For this study, 30 books from the Nancy Drew series written between 1930 and 1987 were randomly selected and analyzed by the researcher. Fifteen books were selected from the 1930 to 1970 time period and 15 books were selected from the 1971 to 1987 time period (See Appendix C). A third group consisting of the first 15 books in the Nancy Drew Files series written between 1986 and 1987 were also analyzed (See Appendix D). The researcher used a checklist (See Appendix B) to record certain obvious personality and physical traits for three groups of characters including, Nancy Drew and her three friends, the victims, and the villains. Eight tables were designed by the researcher to display the data collected and to test whether, or not, hypotheses 2 through 7 could be accepted. The chi-square test was used to determine if hypotheses 5, 6, and 7 were null. The researcher has included selected passages from some of the books to support the findings of the data.

The first hypothesis, stating that characters in the continuing Nancy Drew series and in the "Nancy Drew Files" series exhibit stereotypes, was accepted by the researcher. Despite the fact that the Nancy Drew

character by nature of her "occupation", teen-age detective, is not a stereotypical role for a teen-age girl, stereotypes of lesser characters were found throughout the series.

Table 1 displays the physical traits of Nancy, Bess and George which were found within the samples from the two time periods, 1930-1970 and 1971-1987 and in the books from the "Files" series. It should be

TABLE 1
Number of Books in which Physical Traits of Nancy and Her
Two Friends are Described - Groups I and II, with III

Physical Traits	Nancy		George		Bess	
	'30-'87	Files	'30-'87	Files	'30-'87	Files
Eyes:						
Blue	17	6			4	2
Brown			4	2		
Hair:						
Blond	10				10	10
Brown			6	7		
Red	15	13				
Build:						
Slim	7	1	6	2		
Plump					12	2
Dress:						
Stylish	7	5				
Feminine					5	4

noted that Bess and George were not in every book of the sample. If it is assumed that a stereotypical view of a caucasian teen-aged girl is one who has blond hair, blue eyes, a slim figure, and a stylish manner of dress, then certainly a stereotyped impression is present within these samples of the Nancy Drew series.

There was little change in physical characteristics between the two time periods of the continuing series and the books of "Files" series, except for the color of Nancy's hair. She was described as a blond in 10 of the early books but toward the end of the first time period and in the books from the "Files" series, her hair was described as being red-gold or "Titian".

Bess has had a weight problem for over 50 years, a physical quality of hers which was rarely forgotten by her friends. George, on the other hand, was Bess's opposite in many ways. For example, in The Clue in the Old Album the cousins are described as follows. "Attractive and plump, Bess was just as feminine as George Fayne, her cousin, was tomboyish" (p.23). The description did not vary within the sample. In a later book from the series, The Haunted Carousel published in 1983, Bess is described as "... the plump girl - who was often teased about her appetite" (p. 24). In the books from the "Files" series less was mentioned about Bess being plump.

In order to test hypothesis 2, the researcher identified those characteristics which would be considered stereotypes. Table 2 lists the number and percent of books portraying personality traits of Nancy and her three friends, George, Bess and Ned. The

traits which are in bold type indicate those traits which the researcher considered stereotypes. For the most part, the traits are assigned to a feminine stereotype. Ned's qualities were also examined and were found to be typically male characteristics. His character is not mentioned in every book and not extensively in the books in which he is mentioned. Ned could be counted on for his courage and his helpful, cheerful manner.

TABLE 2
Number and Percent of Books Portraying Personality Traits
of Nancy and Her Three Friends - Groups I and II

Traits	1930-1970		1971-1987	
	No.*	%	No.*	%
Ambitious	3	20.0	5	33.3
Capable	15	100.0	13	86.7
Cheerful	7	46.7	7	46.7
Courageous	15	100.0	15	100.0
Feminine	3	20.0	3	20.0
Frightened	12	80.0	10	66.7
Honest	3	20.0	7	46.7
Imaginative	9	60.0	12	80.0
Independent	12	80.0	15	100.0
Intelligent	15	100.0	15	100.0
Logical	8	53.3	12	80.0
Loving	8	53.3	1	6.7
Obedient	7	46.7	1	6.7
Passive	0	0.0	1	6.7
Polite	5	33.3	6	40.0
Responsible	4	26.7	11	73.3
Tomboy	2	13.3	0	0.0

* Total of 15 books per time period.

Hypothesis 2 was rejected by the researcher because results of the data revealed that 59% rather than 75%

more stereotyped characterizations were found in the older, 1930-1970, books in the series than in the later, 1971-1987, books. In both groups analyzed, Nancy Drew and her friends continued to be cheerful, feminine, polite and very often frightened. These traits did not change over the years. The traits which changed the most were the loving and obedient characterizations. These traits were more evident in the earlier books than in the later books. Nancy Drew and her friends exhibited some non-stereotypical traits in the 1971-1987 books which were not found as often in the earlier books. The characters were considerably more logical and responsible in the later books of the series.

Table 3 displays information concerning the victims in the books analyzed. It was assumed that a stereotyped victim is a white female from a wealthy background. Hypothesis 3, which stated that there are 75% more stereotyped characteristics in the 1930-1970 sample than in the 1971-1987 group, was rejected by the researcher. The data revealed that 59% more stereotypes were evident in the earlier books than the later.

The books in the sample reflect similarities in the traits of the victims. More victims in the later books of the series were male. The victim of the later

books was also more likely to be from a middle social class and was caucasian.

Table 3

Number and Percent of Victims Described by Traits in the Nancy Drew Books - Groups I and II

Traits	1930-1970		1971-1987	
	No.*	%	No.**	%
Male	5	29.4	9	47.4
Female	12	70.6	10	52.6
<hr/>				
Nationality/ Race:				
Not Known	4	23.5		
Caucasian	7	41.2	12	63.1
Other	6	35.3	7	36.8
<hr/>				
Social Status:				
Wealthy	1	6.0	2	10.5
Middle	4	23.5	13	68.4
Poor	2	11.8	4	21.1
From wealthy family but suffering hard times	10	58.8	0	0.0

* Two books of the 15 had 2 victims. 17 victims total.

** Four books of the 15 had 2 victims. 19 victims total.

The information on Table 4 compares the traits of the villains from the two time periods, 1930-1970 and 1971-1987. The researcher has indicated the stereotyped qualities one might consider to be those of a villain on Table 4 in bold type. A typical Nancy Drew villain, in the early sample, had an unusual name, was male, was often from a minority race, and had one

Table 4

Number and Percent of Villains Described by Traits in the
Nancy Drew Books - Groups I and II

Traits	1930-1970		1971-1987	
	No.*	%	No.**	%
Unusual Name	6	28.6	10	52.6
Nationality/ Race:				
Caucasian	8	38.1	8	42.1
Jewish	3	14.3	0	0.0
Black	0	0.0	0	0.0
Asian	1	5.0	0	0.0
Polish	0	0.0	0	0.0
Italian	0	0.0	1	5.0
Other	4	27.0	5	26.3
Not Known	5	23.8	5	26.3
Male	16	76.2	17	89.5
Female	5	23.8	2	10.5
Personal Traits:				
Piercing Dark eyes	10	47.6	5	26.3
Impolite	5	23.4	4	21.1
Gaudy or loud clothing	2	9.0	2	10.0
Uses improper grammar	6	28.6	2	10.0
Physical Deform- ity	5	23.8	2	10.0
Crude	6	28.6	5	26.3
Sly	5	23.8	6	31.6
Mean	10	47.6	5	26.3
Annoying habit	1	5.0	0	0.0

* Six books of the 15 had 2 villains. 21 villains total

** Four books of the 15 had 2 villains. 19 villains total

or more distinguishing personal traits, such as, piercing dark eyes, and a physical deformity. The data indicate that those qualities were often found in the later books of the series.

Hypothesis 4 which states that there are 75% more stereotyped characterizations of the villains in the books published between 1930-1970 than those published between 1971-1987 could not be accepted. The data indicate that the earlier books portrayed villains who exhibited 20% more stereotyped characterizations than the later books analyzed.

Some traits showed a change from one time period to the next. More villains of the later books were found to have unusual names than the earlier books. The books analyzed from the later time period did not have any villain from the Jewish race. The villains of the later books had personal traits which were less stereotypically presented. Although piercing dark eyes, improper grammar, and an obvious mean nature were common qualities of the villain of the early books, the later books of the series presented a villain who was not as easy to discern.

The information on Table 5 compares the physical traits of Nancy, Bess and George which were recorded from the books of the 1971-1987 sample and the "Files"

books. The most significant changes occur with the descriptions of Bess and George's builds. Bess of the "Files" books is not considered plump as often as in the earlier books. Bess's figure is now considered curvy. George is not considered thin as often as in earlier books. George, who has always been more active than Bess, now has a well-toned body as opposed to a thin one.

Table 5

Number of Books in which Physical Traits of Nancy and Her Two Friends are Described - Groups II and III

Physical Traits	Nancy '71-'87 Files		George '71-'87 Files		Bess '71-'87 Files	
Eye color:						
Blue	6	6				2
Brown			1	2		
Hair Color:						
Blond					10	10
Brown			6	7		
Red	12	13				
Build:						
Slim	2	1	8	2		
Plump					7	2
Dress:						
Stylish	2	5				
Feminine					2	4

Table 6 lists the personality traits which were examined for Nancy Drew and her three friends. Each trait was tested using chi-square to find if there was

significant difference at .05 level in the number of characteristics shown in these two groups of books.

Table 6

Number and Percent of Books Portraying Personality Traits of Nancy and Her Three Friends - Groups II and III

Traits	1971-1987		Files 1-15		chi-square
	No.	%	No.	%	p=.05
Ambitious	5	33.3	4	27.0	0.00
Capable	13	86.7	12	80.0	.04
Cheerful	7	46.7	3	20.0	.90
Courageous	15	100.0	15	100.0	0.00
Feminine	3	20.0	2	13.0	0.00
Frightened	10	66.7	4	27.0	1.79
Honest	7	46.7	1	6.7	3.12
Imaginative	12	80.0	10	66.7	.18
Independent	15	100.0	15	100.0	0.00
Intelligent	15	100.0	14	93.0	.03
Logical	12	80.0	13	86.7	.04
Loving	1	6.7	9	60.0	4.90
Obedient	1	6.7	6	40.0	2.29
Passive	1	6.7	0	0.0	N.A.*
Polite	6	40.0	2	13.0	1.12
Responsible	11	73.3	10	66.7	.05
Tomboy	0	0.0	0	0.0	N.A.*

1 df, .05=12.71

* chi-square could not be computed.

The researcher accepted the hypothesis that there was no significant change in personality characterizations of Nancy Drew and her three friends between the books published during 1971-1987 and the first 15 books of the "Nancy Drew Files". As data on table 6 indicate the largest chi-square value is 4.90 for the character trait of loving. The creators of the

"Files" series attempted to bring romance into the series which could explain why this result is higher than others.

Hypothesis 6 which states that there is no significant change in characterizations of the victims between the books published during 1971-1987 and the first 15 books of the the "Nancy Drew Files" was also accepted based upon the data collected. In order to analyze the data for this group of characters, the researcher divided the traits into three groups and used chi-square to determine if there were any statistically significant changes. Table 7 displays the results of the analysis.

In the 1971-1987 group, 47.4% of the victims were male and 52.6% were female. In the "Files" group, 41.2% were males and 58.8% of the victims were females. There was no significant change in this trait from one group to the other.

The nationality or race of the victim did not change significantly from one group to the other. The victims, as shown on the table, were most often caucasian in both groups of books.

The last group of traits analyzed was the victim's social status. Again, the data support the hypothesis that there was no significant change between the two groups. Victims tended to be middle class people,

Table 7
 Number and Percent of Victims Described by Traits in the
 Nancy Drew Books - Groups II and III

Traits	1971-1987		Files 1-15		chi-square
	No.*	%	No.**	%	p=.05
Male	9	47.4	7	41.2	2 df
Female	10	52.6	10	58.8	.14
<hr/>					
Nationality/ Race:					
Not Known	0	0.0	0	0.0	
Caucasian	12	63.1	14	82.3	2 df
Other	7	36.8	3	17.6	.83
<hr/>					
Social Status:					
Wealthy	2	10.5	5	29.4	
Middle	13	68.4	11	64.7	
Poor	4	21.1	1	6.0	
From wealthy family but suffering hard times	0	0.0	0	0.0	3 df 1.41

* Four books of the 15 had 2 victims. 19 victims total.

** Two books of the 15 had 2 victims. 17 victims total.

2 df, .05 = 4.30

3 df, .05 = 3.18

neither poor nor wealthy. It is interesting to note in the "Files" books that many of the victims were young adults who had promising careers ahead of them or were almost professionals in some area. For instance, in Deadly Doubles the victim is a rising young tennis star from an oppressed country somewhere in South America. In Murder on Ice the victim is a young hopeful olympic

skier who has had his olympic dreams ruined by a ruthless villain. Another interesting observation was that the fourth descriptive quality, from wealthy family but suffering hard times, was not found in any of these groups of books but was very often found in the 1930-1970 books of the series. There was no difference in social status of the victims between the two groups of books analyzed.

Table 8 presents information regarding the traits of the villains in the two groups of books in the sample. As was found in the analysis of victims, some of the books had more than one prominent villain. In both groups sampled there were four books which had two villains. The researcher used chi-square to test the hypothesis that there was no significant change in characterizations of the villains between the books published in 1971-1987 and the first 15 books in the "Files" series.

Unusual names were evident in 52.6% of the books published between 1971-1987 but only in 5% of the "Files" books. The creators of the series appear to have improved in this one area. Names such as, Baldy Krebs, Fingers Malone, and Fleetwood Joe helped the researcher decide easily who the villain was in the story. The one name recorded as unusual in the "Files" books is not as obvious as the names in the earlier

Table 8
 Number and Percent of Villains Described by Traits in the
 Nancy Drew Books - Groups II and III

Traits	1971-1987		Files 1-15		chi-square p=.05
	No. *	%	No.*	%	
Unusual Name	10	52.6	1	5.0	1 df 5.82
Nationality/ Race:					
Caucasian	8	42.1	11	57.9	
Jewish	0	0.0	0	0.0	
Black	0	0.0	0	0.0	
Asian	0	0.0	0	0.0	
Italian	1	5.0	0	0.0	
Other	5	26.3	4	21.0	3 df
Not Known	5	26.3	4	21.0	.13
Male	17	89.5	12	63.2	2 df
Female	2	10.5	7	36.8	2.33
Personal Traits:					
Piercing dark eyes	5	26.3	1	5.0	
Impolite	4	21.0	1	5.0	
Gaudy or loud clothing	2	10.5	2	10.5	
Uses improper grammar	2	10.5	0	0.0	
Physical Deform- ity	2	10.5	2	10.5	
Crude	5	26.3	4	21.0	
Sly	6	31.6	3	15.8	
Mean	5	26.3	14	73.7	7 df
Annoying habit	0	0.0	0	0.0	6.24

* Four books of the 15 had 2 villains. 19 villains total.
 1 df, .05 = 12.71; 2 df, .05 = 4.30; 3 df, .05 = 3.18; 7 df, .05 = 2.37

books but still just as suspicious. In the book Two Points to Murder, the principal villain is a Dr. Riggs, the college basketball team's physician who is guilty of running a gambling ring and "rigging" games.

The nationality and/or race of the villain was not statistically different between these two groups of books. Descriptive information about individual characters aided the researcher in determining what was the nationality or race of the individual. If descriptive information was not sufficient enough, the not known category was checked.

The final portion of Table 8 presents the data for personal traits of the villains which were found in the sample. The chi-square result, 6.24, indicates that there is a statistical difference between the two groups of books in regard to the personal characteristics exhibited by the villains. The trait which reveals the greatest difference in the two groups of books concerns the meanness of the villain. The villains in the "Files" books performed more acts of personal violence toward the victims and on Nancy Drew. Murderous crimes are not present in the sample from the continuing books in the series but are in the "Files" books.

Although one category of villain traits, personal traits, was significantly different in the two groups of books, three trait categories were not. Therefore, the hypothesis that there is no significant difference between the villains of the continuing series and the villains of the "Files" series was accepted.

Chapter V

Findings and Interpretations

Conclusions

The personal traits and qualities for which Nancy Drew has been noted in the early books of the series have changed very little over time. Such qualities as independence, intelligence, the ability to handle just about any situation, and her logical detective mind were constantly present in nearly all of the sample, 1930-1987.

Nancy's friends changed very little over 50 years. They remained devoted to Nancy and her many mysteries throughout the span of the series. A few noticeable differences were due in part to the era in which the book was written. Two examples are the physical appearances of Bess and George. From the early beginnings of the series, Bess had a weight problem. Plump was the adjective most often applied to her and the most often mentioned. If she was not directly described as plump, usually by Nancy and George, she was often teased about needing to go on a diet. Food was often a topic of discussion in the books. George, on the other hand, could eat as much as she liked and was perpetually thin. Bess of the "Files" was no longer plump, but now had a curvy figure. George, who

was still thin, was described as well-toned and athletic. They still represent two opposing characterizations, but more current, acceptable terminology is used to describe them. The creators of the "Files" have a slightly older audience in mind when describing these two characters.

Statistically, the victims did not change significantly. They were presented somewhat differently from one time period to the next. The early books presented a victim who was usually a female, caucasian, and one who had come from a wealthy family but for some unfortunate reason was suffering from hard times. The time period could be one explanation why this type of the victim's social status was frequently used. The country was in the midst of a Depression. The creator, Edward Stratemayer and then his daughter, Harriet Adams, were possibly considering an audience which, if not wealthy, probably was suffering their own hard times.

The second time period, 1971-1987, reflected a less wealthy victim and one who was frequently a male. The victims of this time period were more middle class in social status. For example, Mr. and Mrs. Flockhart, who were sheep farmers in The Strange Message in the Parchment, relied on Nancy to help them decipher a code to help solve a mystery. Miss Antler, a young American

a young American Indian, needed Nancy's help to locate a buried treasure.

The victims of the "Nancy Drew Files" were nearly always young adults who were upwardly mobile. Such victims included: a young business executive, a young politician, a tennis player, a skier, and a basketball player who were almost professionals in their professions. This choice of character could also possibly be explained by the time period, the 1980's, in which one's professional success is an indication of status. Wealthy individuals tended to be the preferred victim in the early books of the series. The "Files" series is also geared toward the young adult and, as is often the case in young adult fiction, older adults are not often portrayed.

The villains in the earlier books of the series could be easily spotted by Nancy Drew as well as the reader. They were almost always male with an unusual name. They exhibited one or more common personal traits, such as piercing dark eyes, a physical deformity, and a crude, sly manner. The creator of the early series was particularly uncreative when it came to describing the villain.

The later books in the continuing series exhibited fewer glaring personal traits which set them apart from

other characters. But, they still were most often male and had an unusual name which labeled them a villain.

The villains of the "Files" were much more difficult to identify. A reader is not able to decide who the villain is until after Nancy has done her detective work. Statistically the "Files" villains are not significantly changed from the villains of the later books of the continuing series.

Recommendations

The researcher would recommend that if this study is replicated the sample could be shortened. The plot structure of the books changes very little due to the formulaic nature of the books, and a smaller sample from the different time periods would likely reveal similar findings. The character and book instrument could be revised and possibly condensed to make it less cumbersome to use. A shortened instrument would be less difficult for the researcher to manipulate when recording data. The study could also be narrowed in scope. Fewer characters could be studied. Looking for characterizations for so many characters was somewhat confusing, and it is possible that some less obvious character traits might have been missed. It would be possible to use this type of study to examine other continuing series, such as The Hardy Boys.

The findings could be used by librarians to help them decide whether or not to include Nancy Drew books in their collection. Although stereotyped characters abound in the Nancy Drew books, the series continues to present a very strong female main character. Nancy Drew's independence, intelligence, logical mind, and capability to handle any situation presented to her are not stereotypical attributes of fictional female characters. The Nancy Drew books are not realistic fiction but the positive female image which is presented is a plus in its favor.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to examine the Nancy Drew series for any possible changes in the characterizations of Nancy Drew and her friends, George, Bess, and Ned, the victims, and the villains from the beginning of the series in 1930 until 1987. Forty-five books were read, 15 from two time periods and 15 from the "Nancy Drew Files". A character instrument was used to record certain physical and personal character traits for the three groups of characters in each of these three groups.

Seven hypotheses were tested. Four hypotheses were accepted while three were rejected. The sample from the continuing series and the first 15 books from

the "Files" exhibited characters which could be considered stereotyped. The findings revealed that there were not 75% more stereotyped personality characterizations of Nancy Drew and her friends in the books published between 1930-1970 than in the later books of the series. Neither the victims nor the villains in the early books were portrayed 75% more stereotypically than in the later books. The three groups of characters were portrayed differently during the two time periods of the continuing series, but less than the extent hypothesized.

The three remaining hypotheses were accepted. It was found that there was no significant change in personality characterizations of Nancy Drew and her friends in the later books, 1971-1987, than in the books from the "Files" series. There was also no significant change between the victims or the villains of the "Files" series and the victims or villains of the continuing series. Although changes were noted between the two samples, particularly among the villains and victims, statistically the changes were insignificant, and the hypotheses were accepted.

The results of the study indicate that the Nancy Drew series continues to portray some predictable stereotypical minor characters and a very strong non-stereotypical main character who is not afraid to

tackle any difficult, even dangerous, task to help some one in need.

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Appendix A

Personality Values or Traits*

- Ambitious: hard-working, aspiring
desirous, striving, audacious, eager, bold
- Capable: competent, effective
able, accomplished, qualified, ingenious,
proficient
- Cheerful: lighthearted, joyful
genial, happy, glad, highspirited, mirthful
- Courageous: standing up for your own beliefs
brave, valiant, unafraid, audacious, dauntless
- Helpful: working for the welfare of others
aiding, supporting, assisting, accomodating
- Honest: sincere, truthful
open, scrupulous, veracious, upright,
conscientious
- Imaginative: daring, creative
inventive, ingenious, originative, adventurous,
productive
- Independent: self-reliant, self-sufficient
self-governing, self-ruling, free, autonomous
- Intellectual: intelligent, reflective
insightful, discerning, perceptive, knowledgeable
- Logical: consistent, rational
reasonable, coherent, lucid, sane
- Loving: affectionate, tender
devoted, considerate, attentive, compassionate
- Obedient: dutiful, respectful
docile, amenable, compliant, devoted
- Polite: courteous, well-mannered
cordial, refined, gracious, well-bred, civil
- Responsible: dependable, reliable
trustworthy, accountable, liable, answerable
- Self-controlled: restrained, self-disciplined
self-constrained, self-restricted, patient

*An adaptation of a list developed by Lester of personality values or traits with definitions and synonyms from which the personality traits checklist was designed (Lester, p.325-327).

Appendix B

Book and Character Instrument

Title

Date Published

Brief Plot Summary

Setting

Characters Analyzed

Group I

- a. Nancy _____
- b. George _____
- c. Bess _____
- d. Ned _____

Group II

Major Victim(s)

- a. _____
- b. _____

Group III

Major villain(s) or antagonist(s)

- a. _____
 - b. _____
-

Comments

Character Instrument
Group I

Physical Traits

	Nancy	George	Bess	Ned
eye color:				
blue				
brown				
other				
hair color:				
blond				
brown				
red				
other				
build:				
slim				
plump				
muscular				
dress:				
stylish				
feminine				

Personality Traits

Ambitious_____	Intelligent_____
Capable_____	Logical_____
Cheerful_____	Loving_____
Courageous_____	Obedient_____
Feminine_____	Passive_____
Frightened_____	Polite_____
Honest_____	Responsible_____
Imaginative_____	Tomboy_____
Independent_____	

Comments

Character Instrument
Group II

Name (s) a. _____

b. _____

Physical Traits

Age a. _____ b. _____

Male a. _____ b. _____

Female a. _____ b. _____

Nationality or Race

Caucasian _____

Other _____

Social Status

Wealthy _____

Middle _____

Poor _____

From wealthy family but suffering hard times

Other Comments

Character Instrument
Group III

Name (s) a. _____

b. _____

Nationality or Race

Caucasian_____

Jew_____

Black_____

Asian_____

Polish_____

Italian_____

Other_____

Physical Description

Male (a)_____ (b)_____

Female (a)_____ (b)_____

Age (a)_____ (b)_____

Personality Traits

Piercing Dark eyes_____

Impolite_____

Gaudy, or loud clothing_____

Uses improper grammar_____

Other_____

Crude_____

Sly_____

Mean_____

Comments

Appendix C

Title and Publication Dates of Sample Books
Analyzed from Two Time Periods, 1930-1970 and
1971-1987

Group I

The Bungalow Mystery	1930
The Clue in the Diary	1932
The Password to Larkspur Lane	1933
The Clue of the Broken Locket	1934
The Mystery of the Ivory Charm	1936
The Haunted Bridge	1937
The Clue in the Jewel Box	1943
The Clue in the Crumbling Wall	1945
The Clue in the Old Album	1947
The Clue of the Velvet Mask	1953
The Witch Tree Symbol	1955
The Secret of the Golden Pavilion	1959
The Clue in the Old Stagecoach	1960
The Spider Sapphire Mystery	1968
The Invisible Intruder	1969

Group II

The Crooked Banister	1971
The Double Jinx Mystery	1973
The Secret of the Forgotten City	1975
The Strange Message in the Parchment	1977
The Flying Saucer Mystery	1980
The Secret in the Old Lace	1980
The Greek Symbol Mystery	1981
The Twin Dilemma	1981
Captive Witness	1981
The Haunted Carousel	1983
Enemy Match	1984
The Mysterious Image	1984
The Emerald-Eyed Cat Mystery	1984
The Eskimo's Secret	1985
The Phantom of Venice	1985

Appendix D

Titles and Publication Dates for the First Fifteen
Books from the Nancy Drew Files Series

Secrets Can Kill	1986
Deadly Intent	1986
Murder on Ice	1986
Smile and Say Murder	1986
Hit and Run Holiday	1986
White Water Terror	1986
Deadly Doubles	1987
Two Points to Murder	1987
False Moves	1987
Buried Secrets	1987
Heart of Danger	1987
Fatal Ransom	1987
Wings of Fear	1987
This Side of Evil	1987
Trial by Fire	1987

Abstract

This study examined the continuing Nancy Drew series from its beginning in 1930 until 1987 and the first 15 books from the "Nancy Drew Files" for changes in characterizations of three groups of characters. Content analysis methods were used to carry out the study. Forty-five books were read and analyzed to determine if certain pre-determined physical and personality traits were present in the later versions of the series as they were in the old. Seven hypotheses were tested. Data revealed that the characters in the continuing series and in the "Nancy Drew Files" exhibited stereotypes. It was found that there were not 75% more stereotyped personality traits of Nancy Drew and her friends in the early books of the series than in the later. The victims and villains from the early series, 1930-1970, did not possess 75% more stereotyped characterizations than the victims and villains of the later series, 1971-1987. In comparing the books from the continuing series and the books from the "Files" series, characterizations of the three groups of characters were not significantly different.