"Les Miserables: The Twitter Revolution" : a study of fan activity, parasocial relationships, and audience-persona interactions

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“LES MISERABLES: THE TWITTER REVOLUTION”
A STUDY OF FAN ACTIVITY,
PARASOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS,
AND AUDIENCE-PERSONA INTERACTIONS

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ABSTRACT

This study simulated a fan extension of the Broadway-renowned musical *Les Miserables* on a community level and measured the effects of fan interactions—both online and with the characters’ narratives as performed at Theatre Baton Rouge during summer 2013. The stimulus materials in this study were Tweets distributed via Twitter identities for each of the lead characters whereby their thoughts and narratives were communicated with audiences and Twitter followers—coinciding with the opening of the live theatrical production. Patrons of Theatre Baton Rouge were surveyed online after the closing of the production. This study served as a practical use of Twitter for Theatre Baton Rouge and promoting the live production as well as an examination of the aforementioned media theories. The goal was that greater audience engagement with the narratives would result in more interest in attending the actual production. This theoretical approach also had very real-world implications and usefulness for the organization and its operations.

Through a quasi-experimental, post-test only design, this study observed the significant predictive relationship between audiences’ empathy, connectedness, identification, and perceived realism of the characters of *Les Miserables* and their attitudes towards the narratives, their personal involvement with *Les Miserables*, as well as their behavioral intention to attend the live production. This study also found a significant predictive relationship between audiences’ familiarity, or fan activity, with *Les Miserables* and the parasocial interactions (PSIs) and audience-persona interactions they experienced. While the hope of this study was that there would be real-world implications of this digital performance or campaign on Twitter for a traditionally non-digital theatre, the expectation was that data collected would also offer an opportunity to apply media theories in new and creative ways.
INTRODUCTION

In the preface of his seminal literary work *Les Miserables*, author Victor Hugo wrote, “So long as there shall exist, by virtue of law and custom, decrees of damnation pronounced by society...so long as ignorance and poverty exist on earth, books of the nature of *Les Miserables* cannot fail to be of use” (Hugo, 1992, p. 4). Hugo saw the need for fictional characters to transcend social boundaries in order to advocate for the greater good and serve as revolutionary catalysts for social change. Theatrical performers—much like many mass communication professionals—rely on communicating personalities to an audience and doing so through a particular medium. Actors communicate the relevancy of an author’s narrative in the performance of stage characters—just as a media figure communicates the important news of the day through the use of their journalistic persona.

The timeless relevance of fictional works has not diminished despite the marked decay of audience participation in contemporary theater. Many artists reflect on the communicative power within the interactions of Twitter and theatre—both as a revolution for how individuals perceive the theatre experience, but also as a means to connect with up-and-coming, younger, tech-savvy new patrons (Suilebhan, 2011; Pan, 2012). This vital young audience “grew up online,” noted Katy Otto, connectivity coordinator for the Philadelphia-based company New Paradise Laboratories (NPL), “We realized there was a whole audience of people that weren't really participating in theater but they [were] really heavily influenced by the Internet….NPL had a lot of interest in making theater that would appeal to these people” (Pan, 2012, para. 4). For nearly a decade, theater companies from across the nation have turned to Twitter as a powerful tool for grabbing audiences’ attention before they ever step foot in an actual theater. As a social media tool that enables users to share 140-character messages with the world, Twitter is “an easy way
to bring you closer to the people and topics you care about” (Twitter 101, para. 4). Ultimately, Twitter directly connects communicators with their audiences in a real-time, two-way exchange of information—whereby revolutionizing traditional notions of mass communication.

Additionally, Gwydion Suilebhan (2011) argued that Twitter is not only revolutionizing how artists talk about theater with audiences, but that “Twitter itself seems to be the revolution” (para. 2). He noted how Twitter allowed “theater practitioners [to] completely re-invent the theater-making process…or even redefine what theater actually is” (para. 12). Suilebhan (2011) cited how Marketing and Communications Director of Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company Alli Houseworth “understands that Twitter is best used to connect audiences to the stories being told on stage” (para. 11). Suilebhan (2011) further cited Houseworth, writing,

‘So much of the social media work I do at Woolly is all about transparency. How can I open up the proverbial doors of how we create work to our online audiences? My theory is that the more my audience feels invested in the process of creating new work, the more they will value the experience of attending it live.’…For Alli, Twitter helps theaters ‘democratize the theatre-making process’ (Suilebhan, 2011, para. 11).

Joann Pan (2012) cited the expertise of NPL Artistic Director, Whit MacLaughlin, who noted how social media has become a “medium where stories can be told in a whole bunch of ways…I wanted to find out how you translate theater into an online space. You have to figure out the narration of social media…how to convey something about a person” (para. 8).

With this motive of conveying characters’ stories over Twitter as a means of enticing audience attendance at theater productions, the online marketing and advertising firm, Situation Interactive, ignited Broadway’s first-ever “Twitter Performance” coinciding with the launch of the new musical Next to Normal (Newman, 2009). Newman explained,

In early May, six weeks after opening, the production began what is by all accounts a Broadway first: over Twitter, the social networking site, an adapted version of the show began to be published in…tweets—just a line from a character at a time. Several times
daily over 35 days, followers of ‘N2NBroadway’ eagerly awaited the arrival of the tweets on their cell phones and computers (Newman, 2009, para. 3).

Damian Bazadona, president of Situation Interactive, cited the utmost importance of communicating the characters’ narratives through Twitter, rather than using the technology to merely self-promote (Newman, 2009). Bazadona noted, “You wouldn’t go to a social event and start selling someone something…The content itself was doing the selling for us, so we didn’t need to bang someone over the head and say, ‘Here’s how to buy tickets.’ That would have smelled so advertising” (Newman, 2009, para. 7). The show’s book and lyrics writer, Brian Yorkey, noted the creative challenge of exploring the characters—“…it’s telling the story of the show but telling it from a lot of different perspectives. It was the show—but a new multiangle way of thinking of it.” (Newman, 2009, para. 9-10).

The Next to Normal “Twitter Performance” greatly influenced ticket sales and revolutionized the way theaters saw the role of social media in engaging with audiences. Since the game-changing Twitter campaign, many other theater productions have begun integrating Twitter into their work. Such subsequent Twitter productions include: The Royal Shakespeare Company’s Romeo and Juliet Twitter adaptation called Such Tweet Sorrow that was performed on Twitter over a five-week period; The New York Neo-Futurists and The Playground Theatre’s use of audience member Tweets to improvise new shows; Playwright Chinaka Hodge’s use of Twitter to write into existence the characters in her play Mirrors in Every Corner; and the project Reorbit that invites writer-actors to create plays in real-time as they inhabit historical or fictional characters online (Suilebhan, 2011, para. 13).

Rationale

When examining the role of mediated personalities and story-telling in online communities, Kelemen and Smith (2001) made the pivotal observation that “narrative is crucial
in the production of virtual identity; the stories we tell about ourselves and others on the Internet make up our virtual identity” (p. 377). Davisson and Booth (2007) also suggested,

As technology changes and new forms of mediation and interactivity are found, the key for continued research will be continued adaptation. In particular with New Media, it is important to consider interdisciplinary options for understanding the way that scholars engage text and audience, and attempt to control text and influence audience (p. 41).

Horton and Wohl (1956) made a clear argument that a persona in a television program is very different from an actor on stage—specifically, that a persona is continuous and always present, whereas an actor’s character will cease at the end of the performance. However, this study examines the effects of transforming those stage characters into living, continuous, ever-present and perpetually interactive personalities through the use of social media—specifically Twitter.

Twitter has proven to be a revolutionary tool in shaping the way audiences influence new creative works, connect with the literary richness of each character and more deeply experience the narratives in live performances. Guided by the theories and measures of Parasocial Interactions (PSIs) (Horton & Wohl, 1956), Audience-Persona Interactions (Auter & Palmgreen, 2000), Mediated Personalities (Giles, 2002; Reeves & Nass, 1996), and Fan Activity (Davisson & Booth, 2007; Beilby, Harrington and Bielby, 1999), this research ultimately sought to understand what drives, and sustains, the fan experience—specifically when mediating relationships with favorite theatrical characters on Twitter.

Beilby, Harrington and Bielby (1999) researched fan activity and concluded that fans of their favorite theatre or fictional characters want to “participate in a range of activities that extend beyond the private act of viewing” (p. 35). They suggested the desire to interact with the characters in new and different ways reflects a greater emotional involvement with the narrative being told (Beilby et al., 1999). However, as Reeves & Nass (1996) noted, mediated expressions
of personalities must be substantially coordinated in order to maintain the illusion of believability. Furthermore, Auter (as cited in Davisson & Booth, 2007) found that this is more achievable and powerful when “characters break the fourth wall and engage with audiences directly” (p. 35).

**Purpose of this Study**

Therefore, this research directly informs the aforementioned researchers’ notions of revolutionizing the fan experience through the use of ever-present, maintained, mediated personas. This study simulated a fan extension of the Broadway-renowned musical *Les Miserables* on a community level and measured the effects of fan interactions—both online and with the characters’ narratives as performed at Theatre Baton Rouge during summer 2013. The stimulus materials in this study were Tweets distributed via Twitter identities for each of the lead characters whereby their thoughts and narratives were communicated with audiences and Twitter followers—coinciding with the opening of the live theatrical production. Patrons of Theatre Baton Rouge were surveyed online after the closing of the production. This study served as a practical use of Twitter for Theatre Baton Rouge and promoting the live production as well as an examination of the aforementioned media theories. The goal was that greater audience engagement with the narratives would result in more interest in attending the actual production. This theoretical approach also had very real-world implications and usefulness for the organization and its operations. Therefore, the expectation is that if the illusion of characters’ realness is extended and audiences are able to engage with them in their everyday lives, then these potential patrons would see this interaction potentiality as a motivator to also attend the live production of *Les Miserables*.

Through a quasi-experimental, post-test only design, this study observed the significant
predictive relationship between audiences’ empathy, connectedness, identification, and perceived realism of the characters of *Les Miserables* and their attitudes towards the narratives, their personal involvement with *Les Miserables*, as well as their behavioral intention to attend the live production. This study also found a significant predictive relationship between audiences’ familiarity, or fan activity, with *Les Miserables* and the parasocial interactions (PSIs) and audience-persona interactions they experienced. While the hope of this study was that there would be real-world implications of this digital performance or campaign on Twitter for a traditionally non-digital theatre, the expectation was that data collected would also offer an opportunity to apply media theories in new and creative ways.
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Parasocial Interactions (PSIs)

Parasocial Interactions (PSIs) research posits that television spectators develop “the illusion of [a] face-to-face relationship” with performers on the screen—noting the similarity to how a “character in a story comes to life…in an especially vivid and arresting way” (Horton & Wohl, 1956, p. 215). Horton and Wohl (1956) examined the forming of relationships between audiences and performers at a time when “radio, television, and the movies” were primary sources of media consumption (p. 215). The authors asserted that audiences feel an overwhelming intimacy with these performers—as if the distant actor actually shared the same space with the viewer; as if the actor was a close friend of the spectator (Horton & Wohl, 1956). PSIs are characteristically “one-sided, nondialectical, controlled by the performer, and not susceptible of mutual development” (Horton & Wohl, 1956, p. 215). While audiences are permitted to withdraw at any time, the performer primarily controls these relationships (Horton & Wohl, 1956).

Through the use of television “personas,” audiences form deep connections to the performer—seeing themselves as a participant in the performer’s daily struggles while possessing a certain amount of stake in the actor’s well-being (Horton & Wohl, 1956). The persona remains “unchanged in a world of otherwise disturbing change…ordinarily predictable, and gives his adherents no unpleasant surprises” (Horton & Wohl, 1956, p. 217). Bonds of intimacy between audiences and performers are an illusion because true reciprocity cannot happen. The persona must replicate informal, interpersonal communication styles; blur the line between him and his show, as a formal performance; and step out of the format of the performance at hand (Horton & Wohl, 1956).
Horton and Wohl (1956) also detailed the role of the audience in their research—citing how is it possible that some spectators’ “collaborative expectancy may assume the more profound form of identification with one or more of the performers” (p. 218). The authors saw a new trend of passive spectatorship emerging and urged that further social psychology research examine how “parasocial interactions are integrated into the matrix of usual social activity”—echoing their thesis that true parasocial connections will not be sustained unless the performer becomes a part of the spectator’s everyday life (Horton & Wohl, 1956, p. 229).

**PSIs and Theater**

Horton and Wohl (1956) argued that theatrical works cannot achieve true PSIs due to the longevity of the illusion—“This glamorous confusion of identities is temporary: the worlds fact and fiction meet only for the moment…Radio and television, however…are hospitable to both these worlds in continuous interplay” (p. 216). A key difference in television “personae” and dramatic characters is that the illusion is a “continuing relationship…a regular and dependable event, to be counted on, planned for, and integrated into the routines of daily life” (Horton & Wohl, 1956, p. 216).

In contrast to theatrical works, “personality programs” do not permit esthetic illusions whereby viewers are swept up in symbolic imagery—“the only illusion maintained is that of directness and immediacy of participation” (Horton & Wohl, 1956, p. 219). When this participation between personae and spectators occur, the audience maintains more control than when viewing dramatic or theatrical works wherein members must surrender identification with others (Horton & Wohl, 1956).

The authors denoted two additional differences between PSIs with personae programs than with dramatic works: (1) personality programs allow for more joking, teasing, telling
anecdotes and admiring, “in which the values of friendship and intimacy are stressed;” (2) the television program is real, “enveloped in the continuing reassurances and gratifications of objective responses” (Horton & Wohl, 1956, p. 223).

**PSIs and Audiences**

PSIs also play a role in coaching audience attitudes—whereby the persona has the power to control “how the situation should be defined by the audience, what to expect of the persona, what attitudes to take toward him, [and] what to ‘do’ as a participant in the program” (Horton & Wohl, 1956, p. 219). This persuasion comes from the high frequency of genuine, sincere, warm interactions with viewers on the part of the performer—and in turn, audiences reward the perceived sincerity of the persona with loyalty (Horton & Wohl, 1956). This leads to the following hypothesis:

H1a: Stronger parasocial interactions (PSIs) will be a predictor of more favorable attitudes toward *Les Miserables*.

Horton and Wohl (1956) also noted that simply witnessing a program does not necessarily mean the spectator will take up their role and engage with the performer—moreover, the suspension of immediate judgment is less complete in the self conscious viewing of such “personality programs,” unlike in the viewing of dramatic programs (p. 221). Horton and Wohl (1956) noted that for the majority of audiences, PSIs are complementary to normal social life, whereby everyday assumptions are applied to PSIs. However, in rare and extreme cases of social isolation and ineptitude, “the parasocial relationship becomes a substitute for autonomous social participation…when [proceeded] in absolute defiance of objective reality…[and] can be regarded as pathological” (Horton & Wohl, 1956, p. 223). Davison (1983) combated the notion that
extreme parasocial attachments are pathological—arguing that the mediated experience is a real social experience; not imaginary or pseudo-social.

**Further PSIs Research**

One of the first studies of PSIs conducted by McQuail and colleagues (1972) sought to examine viewer responses to characters in soap operas and came to the conclusion that the main reasons audiences engaged with the performers was companionship and personal identity. As cited by Giles (2002), “most subsequent parasocial interaction research has been conducted in the psychometric tradition of uses and gratifications research….Most of these studies have operationally defined parasocial interactions by using variations on a scale devised by A. M. Rubin, Perse, and Powell (1985), henceforth referred to as the PSI scale” (p. 281).

The PSI scale measures involvement that may take many forms including “seeking guidance from a media persona, seeing media personalities as friends, imagining being a part of a favorite program’s social world, and desiring to meet media performers” (Rubin et al., 1985, p. 156-7). Rosengren and Windahl (1972) treated PSIs as an outcome of media behavior and interaction potentiality—while Levy (1979) suggested that those gratifying relationships lead to individuals seeking increased exposure in order to expand their contact with a persona. This leads to the following hypothesis:

**H1b:** Stronger parasocial interactions (PSIs) will predict greater behavioral intention to view the live production of *Les Miserables*.

The scale also contains elements of empathy, perceived similarity and physical attraction. Moreover, the scale measures perceptions and behaviors that are goal-driven. PSI scales are used to predict individuals’ perceived relationship importance as well as cognitive emotional involvement (Rubin et al., 1985). Research using adaptations of the PSI scale have also found
perceived realism and attractiveness to media figures as significant factors in media users’
evaluation of performers (Giles, 2002). The leads to the following hypothesis:

H1c: Stronger parasocial interactions (PSIs) will predict increased personal involvement
with *Les Miserables*.

Gleich (as cited in Giles, 2002) found television dependency and amount of consumption
were additional influencers with PSI. Gleich (as cited in Giles, 2002) noted three main factors
that account for variance with PSI research: “companionship describes most of these items,
concerns those aspects of PSI that gratify a need for social interaction…person-program
interaction, concerns items that are directly related to program content…empathetic interaction,
refers to items that imply some degree of behavioral or affective response such as verbally
addressing the media figure, or feeling embarrassed when they make a mistake” (p. 282). Auter
and Palmgreen (2000) echoed the findings of Horton and Wohl (1956) and further developed the
Audience-Persona Interaction Scale to account for the sub-dimensions that may influence PSIs—
therein informing how researchers interpret the effects of these pseudo-relationships on the fan
experience. The creators of this scale identified the following four factors: *identification with
favorite character; identification with the group of characters; preference for favorite
characters’ problem solving abilities; and interest in favorite character* (Auter & Palmgreen,
2000, p. 83). The need to examine the impact of these factors regarding perceived interactions
with favorite characters, and the effect this interaction may have on the fan experience, leads to
the following hypotheses:

H2a: Increased audience-persona interactions will predict more favorable attitudes
toward *Les Miserables*. 
H2b: Increased audience-persona interactions will predict greater behavioral intention to view the live production of *Les Miserables*.

H2c: Increased audience-persona interactions will predict increased personal involvement with *Les Miserables*.

**PSIs and Online Communities**

More contemporary research is beginning to focus on the implications of these originally television-oriented theories on new forms of media—such as online communities (Ballantine & Martin, 2005). Ballantine and Martin (2005) return to the foundation of PSI research and agree that parasocial relationships resemble normal social interactions, even though they may appear to be less powerful—therein disagreeing with previous scholars that parasocial interactions may be neurotic and for individuals with limited social opportunities. “Given the important role of online communities in developing consumer preferences through the advocacy of other users, the development of theory to help explain how active participants within an online community can influence consumption behavior…becomes critical” (Ballantine & Martin, 2005, p. 198). Essentially, these authors posit that there is a link between the extent to which individuals are active in online spaces and their interest in, and likeliness to interact with, their favorite characters or product at hand. This intersection of activity and enactment informs the following hypotheses:

H3a: More active weekly Twitter use before the Twitter Performance will predict more favorable attitudes toward *Les Miserables*.

H3b: More active weekly Twitter use before the Twitter Performance will predict greater behavioral intention to view the live production of *Les Miserables*. 
H3c: More active weekly Twitter use before the Twitter Performance will predict increased personal involvement with *Les Miserables*.

**Mediated Relationships**

Giles (2002) further noted that PSI research has been challenged over the definition of “relationships”—citing that accepted operationalization of the term needs both parties involved to not be strangers of one another. “In order to develop research into parasocial relationships, therefore it may be necessary to redefine relationships in general” (Giles, 2002, p. 285).

Nearly a decade earlier, Reeves and Nass (1996) argued the same idea—noting that the way people form relationships through media is not characteristically independent from the way they form relationships in actual reality. According to the findings of their research project *Social Responses to Communication Technologies*, “individuals’ interactions with computers, television, and new media are fundamentally social and natural, just like in real life” (Reeves & Nass, 1996, p. 5). They conclude the human brain “evolved in a world in which only humans exhibited rich social behaviors”—in other words, “anything that seemed to be a real person or place was real” (Reeves & Nass, 1996, p. 12). Reeves and Nass (1996) also explained that automatic acceptance of seemingly “real” yet mediated personalities and relationships are natural. With little to no reminder that these mediated relationships are not actually real, “our old brains hold sway and we accept media as real people and places” (Reeves & Nass, 1996, p. 12).

Reeves & Nass (1996) further posited that mediated relationships are perceived as real at first, before being understood to be false after more thought. This realness can be seen in the authenticity of mediated personalities, the application of social responses to fictional representations and the social power of personality (Reeves & Nass, 1996). This leads to the following hypothesis:
H4a: Greater perceived realism of the Twitter Performance will predict greater perceived realism of the characters of *Les Miserables*.

However, mediated personalities also have unique benefits that interpersonal relationships do not. These benefits include the flexibility of expression and greater control of situations in which they appear—“without the constraints of real life” (Reeves & Nass, 1996, p. 83). This leads to the following hypothesis:

H4b: Greater perceived realism of the Twitter Performance will predict stronger feelings of connectedness and identification with the characters of *Les Miserables*.

Reeves and Nass (1996) argued that media can create characters with personalities that are clear, consistent and effectively understood by audiences. Lastly, they noted that mediated expressions of personalities can be “creative, even totally novel and irreproducible in the real world”—but that characters must be substantially coordinated in order to maintain the illusion of believability (Reeves & Nass, 1996, p. 85). Rubin and colleagues (1985) used scales of perceived realism as a predictor variable of parasocial interaction and viewing outcomes—wherein these relationships supported construct validity and were found to be a significant contributor to PSIs. This leads to the following hypothesis:

H4c: Greater perceived realism of the Twitter Performance will predict stronger parasocial interactions (PSIs) with the characters of *Les Miserables*.

Perse and R. B. Rubin (as cited in Giles, 2002) argued PSIs must be looked at as an extension of normal social activity—noting that people “use fundamentally the same cognitive process in both interpersonal and mediates communication… specifically…personal constructs and uncertainty reduction” (p.286-7). Giles (2002) echoed the research of Cohen (1999) on user-figure relationships as a means to place PSI in a spectrum of social interaction. Giles (2002)
noted that PSI is “more than just a media-related phenomenon…imaginary social relationships are characteristic of most societies through history” (p. 290). These researchers are essentially concluding that an individual’s increased perceived realism of the people and experiences of his or her life will start to have a direct impact on their attitudes and behaviors. This idea of how realistic relationships with mediated personas can influence the fan experience leads to the following hypotheses:

H5a: Greater perceived realism of *Les Miserables* characters will predict more favorable attitudes toward *Les Miserables*.

H5b: Greater perceived realism of *Les Miserables* characters will predict greater behavioral intention to view the live production of *Les Miserables*.

H5c: Greater perceived realism of *Les Miserables* characters will predict increased personal involvement with *Les Miserables*.

**PSIs and Fan Activity**

Davisson and Booth (2007) identified that much of PSIs research fails to address the motivations of users to form relationships based on their affinity for the particular creative work at hand. The authors noted how fans are often portrayed as over-the-top spectacles or stereotypes that only engage with characters due to extreme fanatical devotion to the fictional artifact (Davisson & Booth, 2007). James Gee (2003) coined the term “projective identity” to explain the formation of relationships between video game users and the characters portrayed in the game. Gee (2003) argued that this type of parasocial relationship exists in “the interface between…the real-world person and the virtual character” (p. 56). Moreover, this mediated interaction between characters and users helps “the fan to move past the limitations of one-way communication into
the potentiality of a fully social interaction” (Davisson & Booth, 2007, p. 34). This leads to the following hypothesis:

H6a: More familiarity, or fan activity, with Les Miserables will predict stronger feelings of connectedness and identification with its characters.

Beilby, Harrington and Bielby (1999) focused mostly on how fans actively reclaim a text, often modifying or extending the narratives of the characters and noted key characteristics of PSIs that lead to more engaged fans. They suggested the desire to interact with the characters in new and different ways reflects a greater emotional involvement with the narrative being told (Beilby et al., 1999). Henry Jenkins (1988) coined the term “textual poaching” to describe the process fans go through when engaging with a text and making it their own. He noted how “fans have nevertheless found ways to turn the power of the media to their own advantage and to reclaim media imagery for their own purposes…fans must confront media representations on equal terrain” (Jenkins, 1992, p. 32-33).

However, this engagement doesn’t always have to stem from a completely fan-generated interpretation of the story—as often seen with fanatic stereotypes. Markman (as cited in Davisson & Booth, 2007) found that fans just want to exert some control in their relationship with the character and the narratives—moving away from more passive participation with the text. Davisson and Booth (2007) echoed this idea that for PSIs to influence fan activity, the characters and the text must be integrated into an individual’s everyday life. This tactic does not redefine the parasocial relationship—“the connection between the character and the view is one-sided” (Davisson & Booth, 2007, p. 35). Auter’s research (as cited in Davisson & Booth, 2007) noted that this is more achievable and powerful when “characters break the fourth wall and engage with audiences directly” (p. 35). This leads to the following hypotheses:
H6b: More familiarity, or fan activity, with *Les Miserables* will predict greater perceived realism of the characters of *Les Miserables*.

H6c: More familiarity, or fan activity, with *Les Miserables* will predict stronger parasocial interactions (PSIs) with its characters.
METHODS

Design

This study used a post-test only, quasi-experimental design—wherein interaction with Twitter stimuli as well as patrons’ live theatrical experience were taken into account with scale items used in the online questionnaire. The independent variables (IVs) in this study include the following: Audience-persona interactions, parasocial interactions, perceived realism of Twitter, perceived realism of Les Miserables, familiarity with Les Miserables and Twitter use. The dependent variables in this study include the following: attitude toward Les Miserables, behavioral intention of attending live production of Les Miserables, personal involvement with Les Miserables, audience-persona interactions, parasocial interactions and perceived realism of Les Miserables.

The online questionnaire was distributed to participants beginning in September 2013 and concluded by October 2013 (see Appendix C). After consenting to participate in the questionnaire, respondents were asked to answer 30-40 questions, which took an average of approximately 15-20 minutes to complete. At the end of the questionnaire, participants were asked to answer demographic questions regarding: age, gender, education, income, ethnicity, Twitter habits, and theatre ticket purchasing habits. Data collected from the questionnaire was examined using simple linear and multiple regression analyses in SPSS. Factor analyses used the Principal Component Analysis extraction method, as well as the Varimax with Kaiser Normalization rotation method for the scales measuring audience-persona interactions, parasocial interactions, and personal involvement.
Stimulus Material

The stimulus materials in this experiment were tweets—short 140-character messages—communicated from created accounts for the nine *Les Miserables* theatrical characters, as well as the original book’s author, Victor Hugo, over four weeks. The timeline and plot of *Les Miserables* was chronologically distributed through each character’s virtual narrative over the four-week “Twitter Performance” of *Les Miserables*. The virtual performance launched June 1, 2013, and remained active until June 28, 2013—the opening night of the live production. The stimulus materials—or tweets—were crafted based on literary context from the stage libretto of *Les Miserables*. The stimulus materials focused on communicating the inner thoughts as well as nuanced moments of dialogue between characters in the stage adaptation. These inner thoughts, subtle moments of dialogue, and audio snippets of songs from the production provided nuances and background for many of the characters that audiences might not ascertain by merely attending the stage play. Additionally, the stimulus materials were abstract enough to spark intrigue on the part of potential theater patrons to attend the live production—or to become familiar with *Les Miserables* narratives and characters. Stimulus was distributed via Hootsuite.com and Roundteam.co social media management services. Sound bites from the score of *Les Miserables* were also distributed via Twitter and managed through Soundcloud.com music hosting service (see Appendix D).

Participants

Participants included any Theatre Baton Rouge patrons who attended a live production of *Les Miserables* and/or interacted with, viewed, or participated in the “Twitter performance.” The link to the online questionnaire was distributed via email from the marketing office of Theatre Baton Rouge—and consisted of multiple email blasts to 5,000 patron addresses with the
incentive of entering a raffle to win free tickets for participation. Of these patrons, 250 individuals (5 percent of total email addresses) initiated the Qualtrics questionnaire. After accounting for dropout, 109 questionnaires were completed in their entirety (2.1 percent of total emails and 43.6 percent of total surveys initiated).

Of these 109 participants, 76.6 percent were female and 23.4 percent were male. Ages of participants ranged from 18-77 with a mean age of 45, and a most frequent (mode) age of 49. Respondents were also 96.3 percent White/Caucasian and 82.3 percent very either college graduates or postgraduates. Nearly 14.7 percent reported having interacted with the “Twitter performance” online, while 80 percent of participants reported attending a live performance of Les Miserables at Theatre Baton Rouge—with only 11 percent of these attendees reporting that they knew about the “Twitter performance” before attending. The participants reported the following weekly Twitter habits: 44 percent have never used Twitter, 28.4 percent have stopped using Twitter recently, 13.8 percent only view Tweets, 11 percent view and post Tweets, 2.8 percent only post Tweets, and 1.8 percent are not familiar with Twitter. An overwhelming 97.2 percent of participants only post 0-5 Tweets weekly, while 83.3 percent of participants only view Twitter 0-5 times weekly.

**Sampling**

Because this is a post-test only design, there was no pre-testing of participants. Patrons and participants were not told that this Twitter campaign was an experiment before being encouraged to interact with the stimulus materials—they were merely invited to “Join the Revolution.” All online and email promotion directed participants to the created Twitter accounts for the nine primary Les Miserables character accounts. Interaction was promoted through various Theatre Baton Rouge media channels (press release to local arts media publications,
email marketing to patrons and volunteers, homepage links, print promotion, Facebook
promotion, and promotion to youth workshops)—as well as personal social media promotions
(see Appendix E).

**Measurement**

**Parasocial Interactions**

In order to test the perceived friendship or intimacy by individuals with the personas of
*Les Miserables*, this study used an 8-item variation of the 10-item version of the Parasocial
Interaction Scale originally created by Rubin and colleagues (1985). This scale examined
individuals’ empathy and physical attraction by measuring agreement with various statements
using a five-point Likert scale—ranging from (1) *strongly disagree* to (5) *strongly agree*. For the
purpose of this study, the adjustments of the Parasocial Interaction Scale replaced “favorite
newscaster” with “favorite character” in *Les Miserables*.

The original 20-item scale had a mean score of 2.70 and a .93 Cronbach alpha (Rubin et
al., 1985). Rubin and Perse (1987) reduced the 20-item scale to 10-item scale adapted for soap
opera involvement, with a .88 alpha. The 10-item version was adapted for addressing local TV
news involvement with a .91 alpha (Perse, 1990); and favorite TV personality with a .90 alpha
(Conway & Rubin, 1991). Canonical correlation and multiple regression analyses linked PSI to
perceived TV news realism (\(r = .47\)) and affinity (\(r = .61\)) and to informational news-viewing
motivation (Rubin et al., 1985). Rubin and McHugh (1987) found PSI to relate significantly to
the social (\(r = .35\)) and task (\(r = .33\)) dimensions of interpersonal attraction and to perceived
relationship importance (\(r = .52\)).

This study used factor analysis to concur with Rubin and colleagues (1985) and their
initial PSI theory’s two factor loadings: *empathy with favorite character* which explained 36.58
percent of the total variance (alpha = .82, N of items = 5); and *attraction to favorite character* which explained 22.33 percent of the total variance (alpha = .56; N of items = 3). All factors had a minimum loading of .50 on a primary factor. Due to the low reliability of the second factor, *attraction to favorite character* was excluded from analysis, resulting in the new variable “Parasocial Interactions” computed from the remaining five items (see Table 1A).

**Audience-Persona Interaction**

To further test parasocial interactions and feelings of connectedness between audiences and the characters of *Les Miserables*, this study used the Audience-Persona Interaction Scale created by Auter and Palmgreen (2000). The creators of this scale identified the following four factors: *identification with favorite character*; *identification with the group of characters*; *preference for favorite characters’ problem solving abilities*; and *interest in favorite character*. All four factors of the scale were found statistically significant, very reliable and positively related to program exposure levels (*p* < .01) (Auter & Palmgreen, 2000). The creators of the scale noted that “the 22 items retained in this solution has a minimum loading of .50 on a primary factor” (Auter & Palmgreen, 2000, p. 82).

This study uses a 21-item adaptation of the original 22-item scale—borrowing the seventh, eleventh, and sixteenth items from Rubin and colleagues’ (1985) PSI Scale. Agreement with various statements is measured using a five-point Likert scale—ranging from (1) *strongly disagree* to (5) *strongly agree*. For the purposes of this research, the items referring to “favorite characters” and “characters” in a television program are replaced with the characters in *Les Miserables*.

This study used factor analysis to also identify the aforementioned, original four factor loadings. All factors also had a minimum loading of .50 on a primary factor. *Identification with*
favorite character explained 19.94 percent of the total variance (alpha = .86, N of items = 7); Identification with the group of characters explained 15.13 percent of the total variance (alpha = .82, N of items = 7); Preference for favorite characters’ problem solving abilities explained 14.71 percent of the total variance (alpha = .85, N of items = 4); and Interest in favorite character explained 12.99 percent of the total variance (alpha = .83, N of items = 3). Each factor and its respective items were computed to new variables by the same names and entered as IVs stepwise during regression analyses (see Table 2A).

Perceived Realism

In order to measure audiences’ perceived realism of characters, this study used the multidimensional Perceived Realism Scale (PRS) developed by Rubin (1981). The PRS has traditionally been used to test the realism of characters seen on television. The authors encourage content-specific adaptations of the scale in order to increase the validity of the construct of perceived realism (Rubin, 1981). Therefore, this research used the scale twice—substituting “Twitter” and “Les Miserables” for television. This adaption was applied to the original five-item test measuring agreement with various statements using a five-point Likert scale—ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree. With a Cronbach of .85 (Rubin et al., 1985), the PRS has been proven internally consistent. Rubin (1981) also found that perceived realism accompanies increased motivation to watch television. Therefore, the assumption in this study is that increased perceived realism of the Les Miserables characters will predict greater behavioral intention to attend the live production.

This study found that the adaptation of the 5-item scale used to compute the new variable “Perceived Realism_Twitter” had an alpha of .73 (see Table 3A). The 5-item scale used to
compute the new variable “Perceived_Realism_LesMiserables” had an alpha of .74 (see Table 4A).

**Personal Involvement**

In order to test individuals’ involvement with *Les Miserables*, the unidimensional Personal Involvement Inventory (PII) created by Zaichkowsky (1985) was used. This scale measures various objects’ perceived relevance to an individual based on personal needs and interests—signifying arousal and motivation (Zaichkowsky, 1985). The original test measured personal involvement through the use of 20 items on a seven-point semantic differential scale. For the purpose of this study, the scale was adapted to a five-point semantic differential scale—ranging from (1) *low involvement* to (5) *high involvement*.

Mobley and colleagues (1988) have shown the PII consistent and reliable—reporting alphas of .96 and .97 for various products tested. Zaichkowsky supported content, construct, as well as criterion-related validity—finding that PII tapped the involvement construct concerning individuals’ search for product information, evaluation of competing brands, perceptions of differences among brands and overall brand preference. Ram and Jung (1989) also found that involvement, measured by the PII, related positively to frequency of product use.

This study used factor analysis to also identify the aforementioned, original two factor loadings of *personal needs* and *interests*. Both factors had a minimum loading of .50 on a primary factor. *Personal needs* explained 39.64 percent of the total variance (alpha = .95, *N* of items = 13); and *Interests* explained 25.18 percent of the total variance (alpha = .91, *N* of items = 7). Each factor and its respective items were computed to the new dependent variables (DVs) of “Involvement_Needs” and “Involvement_Interests”—wherein data analysis showed significant
predictive relationships with both aspects of this concept of personal involvement (see Table 5A).

**Behavioral Intention**

In order to measure individuals’ behavioral intentions towards attending the live production of *Les Miserables*, this study used the Behavioral Intention Scale developed by Cronin, Brady and Hult (2000). The original test uses three items with a nine-point semantic differential scale to measure likeliness of future behaviors regarding a product or subject at hand. For the purpose of this study, the scale has been adapted to a five-point semantic differential scale—ranging from (1) *very low* to (5) *very high*. Cronin et al. (2000) reported a construct reliability of .87 for the scale.

The scale has been used to measure individuals’ intentions to attend or recommend attendance at future *Les Miserables* performances. The 3-item scale had an alpha of .84 and was computed as the new dependent variable (DV) “Behavioral_Intention” (see Table 6A).

**Attitudes toward Les Miserables**

In order to measure individuals’ attitude toward *Les Miserables*, this study used an adaptation of the Attitude Toward Movie Scale developed by Pechmann and Shih (1999). The original test used nine items with a nine-point semantic differential scale to measure the extent to which a movie was considered to have delivered a good story. For the purpose of this study, the scale has been adapted to a five-point semantic differential scale—ranging from (1) *unfavorable* to (5) *favorable*. The original scale was found to have an alpha of .94 (Pechmann & Shih, 1999).

The scale has been used to measure participants’ favorability toward the characters and narratives of *Les Miserables*. The 9-item scale had an alpha of .95 and was computed as the new dependent variable (DV) “Attitude_LesMiserables” (see Table 7A).
**Familiarity with Les Miserables**

In order to measure how familiar an individual was with *Les Miserables* and to what extent they have had previous “fan experiences,” this study computed a new variable based on five questions regarding the frequency of exposure to different formats of the fan work. The five items used a five-point Likert scale—ranging from (1) *never* to (5) *very often*. The *Les Miserables* reproduction formats inquired about included the following: the novel, the play, the stage production, the music/score/soundtrack, the film. Each participant’s answers to these questions was totaled across the group of items and scored in a range between 5-25, illustrating the extent to which they have had previous fan experiences with *Les Miserables* (see Table 8A).

**Twitter Use**

In order to measure participants weekly Twitter use, this study for the mean of the responses to two questions regarding how often in a week does the individual post Tweets and also how many times in a week the participant views Twitter without posting. Both items were measured with a 5-item scale—wherein (1) *0*; (2) *1-5*; (3) *6-15*; (4) *16-30*; (5) *31 or more*. The average of these two questions helped to assign each participant a score for the extent to which they are active on Twitter in a typical week.

**Procedures**

The core of this quasi-experimental research focused on conducting a “Twitter performance” in real-time through the voices of the fictional, theatrical characters from the musical *Les Miserables*—coinciding with the live show produced by Theatre Baton Rouge during summer 2013. The experiment launched June 1, 2013, and remained active until June 28, 2013—the opening night of the live production. Simulated, real-life Twitter accounts for the nine primary characters from the production, as well as the original book’s author, Victor Hugo, were
used to distribute the stimulus materials—or tweets—to participants. The experiment continued to operate with limited stimulus material through the end of the run of the live production. After the close of the production, an online Qualtrics questionnaire was distributed electronically to the 5,000 email addresses of patrons who attended a live performance of *Les Miserables*, as well as all individuals who interacted with, viewed and/or participated in the “Twitter performance.” The questionnaire took participants no more than 20 minutes to complete.
RESULTS

Data collected from the questionnaire was examined using simple linear and multiple regression analyses in SPSS—with stepwise method in cases with multiple factors within one computed scale index. Stepwise criterion for insertion was the probability $F \leq .05$ and the criterion for removal of factors was the probability $F \geq .100$.

Parasocial Interactions (PSIs)

To address H1 with regard to predicting attitudes, behavioral intention, and personal involvement (DVs) based on parasocial interactions (IV), simple linear regressions were calculated.

H1a: A simple linear regression was calculated to predict favorable attitudes toward Les Miserables based on parasocial interactions (PSIs). Participants’ PSIs proved significantly correlated with “Attitudes_LesMiserables” ($p < .01, r = .316$). A significant regression equation was found ($F(1,107) = 11.844, p < .01$), with an $R^2$ of .100. Thus, increased PSIs are a significant predictor of more favorable attitudes toward Les Miserables (see Table 1B).

H1b: A simple linear regression was calculated to predict behavioral intention to view the live production of Les Miserables based on parasocial interactions (PSIs). Participants’ PSIs proved significantly correlated with “Behavioral_Intention” ($p < .01, r = .293$). A significant regression equation was found ($F(1,107) = 10.028, p < .01$), with an $R^2$ of .086. Thus, increased PSIs are a significant predictor of behavioral intention to view the live production of Les Miserables (see Table 2B).

H1c: A simple linear regression was calculated to predict personal involvement with Les Miserables based on parasocial interactions (PSIs). Personal involvement was measured in the two factors (DVs) of personal needs and interests. Participants’ PSIs proved significantly
correlated with “Involvement_Needs” \( p < .001, r = .452 \) and “Involvement_Interests” \( p < .001, r = .491 \). With regard to PSIs and “Personal needs,” a significant regression equation was found \( F(1,107) = 27.469, p < .001 \), with an \( R^2 \) of .204. With regard to PSIs and “Personal interests,” a significant regression equation was found \( F(1,107) = 33.933, p < .001 \), with an \( R^2 \) of .241. Thus, increased PSIs are significant predictors of individuals’ personal needs and interests as an indicator of their involvement with Les Miserables (see Table 3B).

**Audience-Persona Interactions**

To address H2 with regard to predicting attitudes, behavioral intention, and personal involvement (DV$s$) based on audience-persona interactions (IV), multiple linear regressions were calculated using a stepwise method of entering the four factors of the Audience-Persona Interaction scale (IV).

H2a: A multiple linear regression was calculated to predict favorable attitudes toward Les Miserables based on audience-persona interactions. Of the four factors of the API scale entered, only “Interest in favorite character” proved significantly correlated with “Attitudes_LesMiserables” \( p < .01, r = .241 \) and was included in regression analysis. A significant regression equation was found \( F(1,107) = 6.573, p < .05 \), with an \( R^2 \) of .058. Thus, increased “Interest in favorite character” is a significant predictor of more favorable attitudes toward Les Miserables (see Table 1B).

H2b: A multiple linear regression was calculated to predict behavioral intention to view the live production of Les Miserables based on audience-persona interactions. Of the four factors of the API scale entered, only “Interest in favorite character” proved significantly correlated with “Behavioral_Intention” \( p < .01, r = .249 \) and was included in regression analysis. A significant regression equation was found \( F(1,107) = 7.096, p < .01 \), with an \( R^2 \) of .062. Thus,
increased “Interest in favorite character” is a significant predictor of behavioral intention to view the live production of Les Miserables (see Table 2B).

H2c: A multiple linear regression was calculated to predict personal involvement with Les Miserables based on audience-persona interactions. Personal involvement was measured in the two factors (DV) of personal needs and interests. Of the four factors of the API scale entered, “Interest in favorite character” (p < .001, r = .410) and “Identification with the group of characters” (p < .01, r = .296) proved significantly correlated with “Involvement_Needs” and was included in regression analysis. In the first model where only “Interest in favorite character” is held constant, a significant regression equation was found (F(1,107) = 21.647, p < .001), with an R² of .168. In the second model where “Interest in favorite character” and “Identification with the group of characters” is held constant, a significant regression equation was found (F(2,106) = 13.956, p < .001), with an R² of .208. Thus, increased “Interest in favorite character” and “Identification with the group of characters” are both significant predictors of individuals’ personal needs as an indicator of their positive involvement with Les Miserables.

Of the four factors of the API scale entered, only “Interest in favorite character” (p < .001, r = .364) proved significantly correlated with “Involvement_Interests” and was included in regression analysis. A significant regression equation was found (F(1,107) = 16.361, p < .001). Thus, increased “Interest in favorite character” is a significant predictor of individuals’ personal interests as an indicator of their positive involvement with Les Miserables (see Table 3B).

**Twitter Use**

To address H3 with regard to predicting attitudes, behavioral intention, and personal involvement (DV) based on how active participants were on Twitter during the “Twitter Performance,” simple linear regressions were calculated.
H3a: A simple linear regression was calculated to predict favorable attitudes toward *Les Miserables* based on individuals’ Twitter use. The regression equation was not significant ($F(1,106) = .181, p > .05$) with an $R^2$ of .002. Thus, active weekly Twitter use is not a significant predictor of more favorable attitudes toward *Les Miserables* (see Table 1B).

H3b: A simple linear regression was calculated to predict behavioral intention to view the live production of *Les Miserables* based on individuals’ Twitter use. The regression equation was not significant ($F(1,106) = 3.335, p > .05$) with an $R^2$ of .031. Thus, active weekly Twitter use is not a significant predictor of behavioral intention to view the live production of *Les Miserables* (see Table 2B).

H3c: A simple linear regression was calculated to predict personal involvement with *Les Miserables* based on individuals’ Twitter use. The regression equation for “Involvement_Needs” was not significant ($F(1,106) = .017, p > .05$) with an $R^2$ of .000, while the equation for “Involvement_Interests” was also not significant ($F(1,106) = .087, p > .05$) with an $R^2$ of .001. Thus, active weekly Twitter use is not a significant predictor of personal needs or interests as an indicator of involvement with *Les Miserables* (see Table 3B).

**Perceived Realism of Twitter**

To address H4 with regard to predicting perceived realism of *Les Miserables*, audience-persona interactions, and parasocial interactions (DVs) based on participants perceived realism of Twitter, simple linear regressions were calculated.

H4a: A simple linear regression was calculated to predict perceived realism of *Les Miserables* based on individuals’ perceived realism of Twitter. The regression equation was not significant ($F(1,107) = .781, p > .05$) with an $R^2$ of .007. Thus, perceived realism of Twitter is
not a significant predictor of perceived realism of the characters of *Les Miserables* (see Table 4B).

**H4b:** A simple linear regression was calculated to predict feelings of connectedness and identification with the characters of *Les Miserables* based on individuals’ perceived realism of Twitter—whereby the four factors of the API scale were used as dependent variables. All four of the following regression equations were not significant: “Identification with favorite character” \( (F(1,107) = .697, p > .05) \) with an \( R^2 \) of .006; “Identification with the group of characters” \( (F(1,107) = .448, p > .05) \) with an \( R^2 \) of .004; “Preference for favorite characters’ problem solving abilities” \( (F(1,107) = .091, p > .05) \) with an \( R^2 \) of .001; and “Interest in favorite character” \( (F(1,107) = .048, p > .05) \) with an \( R^2 \) of .000. Thus, perceived realism of Twitter is not a significant predictor of feelings of connectedness and identification with the characters of *Les Miserables* (see Table 5B).

**H4c:** A simple linear regression was calculated to predict parasocial interactions (PSIs) with the characters of *Les Miserables* based on individuals’ perceived realism of Twitter. The regression equation was not significant \( (F(1,107) = .231, p > .05) \) with an \( R^2 \) of .002. Thus, perceived realism of Twitter is not a significant predictor of parasocial interactions (PSIs) with the characters of *Les Miserables* (see Table 6C).

**Perceived Realism of Les Miserables**

To address H5 with regard to predicting attitudes, behavioral intention, and personal involvement (DV) based on individuals’ perceived realism of *Les Miserables* (IV), simple linear regressions were calculated.

**H5a:** A simple linear regression was calculated to predict favorable attitudes toward *Les Miserables* based on individuals’ perceived realism of *Les Miserables*. Participants’ perceived
realism of *Les Miserables* proved significantly correlated with “*Attitudes_LesMiserables*” ($p < .05, r = .244$). A significant regression equation was found ($F(1,107) = 6.770, p < .05$), with an $R^2$ of .060. Thus, greater perceived realism of *Les Miserables* is a significant predictor of more favorable attitudes toward *Les Miserables* (see Table 1B).

H5b: A simple linear regression was calculated to predict behavioral intention to view the live production of *Les Miserables* based on individuals’ perceived realism of *Les Miserables*. Participants’ perceived realism of *Les Miserables* proved significantly correlated with “*Behavioral_Intention*” ($p < .05, r = .224$). A significant regression equation was found ($F(1,107) = 5.628, p < .05$), with an $R^2$ of .050. Thus, greater perceived realism of *Les Miserables* is a significant predictor of behavioral intention to view the live production of *Les Miserables* (see Table 2B).

H5c: A simple linear regression was calculated to predict personal involvement with *Les Miserables* based on individuals’ perceived realism of *Les Miserables*. Personal involvement was measured in the two factors (DV) of *personal needs* and *interests*. Participants’ perceived realism of *Les Miserables* proved significantly correlated with “*Involvement_Needs*” ($p < .001, r = .373$) and “*Involvement_Interests*” ($p < .01, r = .281$). With regard to individuals’ perceived realism of *Les Miserables* and “*Personal needs*,” a significant regression equation was found ($F(1,107) = 17.248, p < .001$), with an $R^2$ of .139. With regard to individuals’ perceived realism of *Les Miserables* and “*Personal interests*,” a significant regression equation was found ($F(1,107) = 9.206, p < .01$), with an $R^2$ of .079. Thus, greater perceived realism of *Les Miserables* is a significant predictor of individuals’ *personal needs* and *interests* as an indicator of their increased involvement with *Les Miserables* (see Table 3B).
Familiarity and Fan Activity

To address H6 with regard to predicting audience-persona interactions, perceived realism of *Les Miserables*, and parasocial interactions (DV) based on participants perceived familiarity and past fan activity with *Les Miserables*, simple linear regressions were calculated.

H6a: A simple linear regression was calculated to predict feelings of connectedness and identification with the characters of *Les Miserables* based on individuals’ familiarity with *Les Miserables*. Of the four factors of the API scale entered, only “Interest in favorite character” proved significantly correlated with “Familiarity_LesMiserables” ($p < .01, r = .292$). A significant regression equation was found ($F(1,107) = 9.973, p < .01$), with an $R^2$ of .085. Thus, greater familiarity with *Les Miserables* is a significant predictor of improved feelings of connectedness and identification with the characters of *Les Miserables* (see Table 5B).

H6b: A simple linear regression was calculated to predict perceived realism of *Les Miserables* based on individuals’ familiarity with *Les Miserables*. The regression equation was not significant ($F(1,107) = .132, p > .05$) with an $R^2$ of .003. Thus, familiarity with *Les Miserables* is not a significant predictor of perceived realism of the characters of *Les Miserables* (see Table 4B).

H6c: A simple linear regression was calculated to predict parasocial interactions (PSIs) with the characters of *Les Miserables* based on individuals’ familiarity with *Les Miserables*. Individuals’ familiarity with *Les Miserables* proved significantly correlated with “Parasocial_Interaction” ($p < .01, r = .317$). A significant regression equation was found ($F(1,107) = 11.975, p < .01$), with an $R^2$ of .101. Thus, greater familiarity with *Les Miserables* is a significant predictor of increased parasocial interactions (PSIs) with the characters of *Les Miserables* (see Table 6B).
DISCUSSION

Discussion of Results

This study affirmed the connection between individuals’ perceived relationships with personas and their attitudes, behavioral intentions and personal involvement. The results of this study also show that perceived realism plays a role in how readily individuals will or will not choose to engage with mediated personas. Feelings of connectedness, empathy and identification with the characters of Les Miserables signaled a significant predictive relationship with audiences’ attitudes toward the characters, how likely they were to attend a live production and how involved they were with the characters. Additionally, this study explored the extent to which audiences’ familiarity with a fan piece signifies how connected and empathetic they are with their favorite characters. This study concurs with pre-existing claims that mediated personas are most effective at establishing PSIs once breaking the fourth wall and engaging with audiences directly (Davisson & Booth, 2007) and integrating the characters into users’ everyday lives—thereby remaining continuous and ever-present (Horton & Wohl, 1956).

The design of the stimulus materials shadowed Horton and Wohl’s (1956) initial claims regarding the format and structure of television programs that achieved PSIs with television viewers’ through the narratives of their favorite personalities. This study applied their theory and created a digital space for audiences to experience a “continuing relationship…a regular and dependable event, to be counted on, planned for, and integrated into the routines of daily life” (Horton & Wohl, 1956, p. 216). However, when applying the same logic and methodology to the characters of Les Miserables, the results actually argue in opposition to Horton and Wohl’s (1956) additional claims that theatrical works cannot achieve any forms of PSIs—noting “the only illusion maintained is that of directness and immediacy of participation” (p. 219).
study not only found a statistically significant predictive relationship between perceived realism of the characters of *Les Miserables* and how motivated they are to meet their characters in person, but it also showed how parasocial interactions (PSIs) are in fact possible between fictional theatrical characters and audience members.

However, the study also noted statistically insignificant results when examining audience’s perceived realism of the digital space of Twitter and perceived relationships with the characters. The expectation was to affirm what Ballantine and Martin (2005) noted regarding the power of online communities on influencing attitudes, behaviors and perceived realism. This data shows that regardless of how active an individual may be on Twitter, there is no significant positive relationship with how strong potential PSIs may exist between audiences and characters. While greater Twitter activity with actual peers may lead to increased relationships offline, this study did not find the connection between perceived realism of the digital space with perceived realism of the characters.

Furthermore, this study also did not find statistical significance between individuals’ familiarity with *Les Miserables* and their perceived realism of the characters. The two aforementioned findings echo Horton and Wohl’s (1956) notions that audiences, on some level, will always remain aware of the illusion of theatrical characters. While the data shows that fan activity with *Les Miserables* predicted greater empathy, connectedness and identification with the characters, the data also shows that this does not translate to a sustained illusion that the characters are actually real. In this way, the data affirms some of what Horton and Wohl (1956) set out to posit with their research regarding PSIs.
Limitations and Future Research

This study sought to serve as a creative approach to a topic all too infrequently examined—the niche of research looking at the effect of Twitter on the theatrical experience. However, there were a few limitations that hindered results and should be controlled for in future research. First, the market of users in this study may not have been the ideal audience to test the effect of the stimulus materials. This study was essentially a recreation of the Next to Normal campaign created by Damian Bazadona to promote the new Broadway show (Newman, 2009). While the stimulus materials were initially modeled after this campaign before being examined through a lens of mass communication theories, the local theatre community used in this study may not be ready for this type of “revolution” with regards to their theatre experience. While the artistic staff at Theatre Baton Rouge was hopeful that this mini-campaign would recruit younger, more tech-savvy audiences to their shows—much like the work done by Katy Otto, connectivity coordinator for the Philadelphia-based company New Paradise Laboratories (NPL) (Pan, 2012)—the results from the demographics of these Baton Rouge patrons showed they are simply not active Twitter users. Future implementation of this type of research would most likely gain more traction and yield more data if conducted in a larger, more digital-friendly, metropolitan city with a more theatre-centric focus—perhaps catering to audiences with a similar campaign on other social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, or YouTube. This study also proved to have a more conservative, older audience of users—which aligns with the typical user demographics of Facebook.

Second, the Next to Normal campaign was shocking and effective in large part due to the type of content being sent to audiences via Twitter. The approachable, modern-day, almost conversational Tweets lead to audiences truly perceiving the unknown characters as real people.
This realism was lost in this experiment for two main reasons—audiences knew it was a campaign for a well-known fictional stage production and the manner with which the characters communicated was in the period of *Les Miserables*. While *Les Miserables* did prove to be an advantageous theatrical work to interact with—especially in a smaller theatre community—it may have limited the potential for more subtle and “realistic” nuances in the way the characters communicated. The well-known content of such a large fan piece may have garnered attention, but it may have also limited the spontaneity of the stimulus due to the time period and delivery styles of the characters.

The theories of PSIs and online communities also encouraged maintaining the illusions of the characters, but future research should abandon the creative restrictions to maintain author’s intent and immerse the personas in modern dialect and conversation styles. This also includes more interactive functionality of the characters—both between one another as well as with audiences. Further research could look at the Royal Shakespeare Company’s *Romeo and Juliet* Twitter adaptation called *Such Tweet Sorrow* that was performed on Twitter over a five-week period (Suilebhan, 2011). This version modernized the characters and had them interacting on numerous social media platforms. This allowed for more of a true social experiment to take place, rather than a one-way dissemination of Tweets from the characters in isolation from each other and the audience.

Third, this experiment relied heavily on a nonprofit theatre to not only communicate about the “Twitter Performance” through their limited resources, but Theatre Baton Rouge patrons were able to select their own level of exposure and self-reporting. Overall, this quasi-experimental design yielded a considerably lower number of participants than attendees and patrons of the *Les Miserables* production (N = 109). This low level of participants also made it
difficult to aggregate any practical metrics from Twitter or HootSuite regarding the interaction of participants with the stimulus materials—i.e. frequency, type of post, content of Tweets, retweets and mentions, etc. These metrics would serve both theoretical and practical functions as they further explore the effect of this mediated experience on audiences’ involvement and engagement with the *Les Miserables* characters as well as interest in the local production.

Lastly, the scale used with the intention of measuring users’ perceived realism of the Twitter characters was found to not be the most effective for measuring this variable. The scale was broadly asking about individuals’ realism of Twitter, rather than specifically asking about how realistic they may have perceived these specific characters. This was oversight in the design of this experiment and thereby limited the ability to measure the effects of this variable.

Future research should create a more controlled, true experimental design, wherein selected individuals—preferably both digital-savvy and patrons of the performing arts—are pretested, force-exposed to the stimulus materials over time and post-tested after their interaction with the stimuli. This dissemination could still take place on Twitter and in a natural integration in the participants’ lives. Future adaptations of this study could benefit from a more compact timeline, more modern conversational style of delivery and controlling for every participant to have interacted with the stimulus. This area of research is very difficult to maneuver in that the more the researcher controls for exposure to “realistic” personas, the greater the risk of minimizing effects from priming participants—whereby they may not report authentic effects because they know from the beginning of the experiment that the characters are not real or authentic.
Theoretical Implications

The data found in this study speaks to implications for both the relationship between theatre and Twitter as well as the larger area of PSI research. While Suilebhan (2011) may have a valid perspective on the revolutionizing effect on audiences’ theatre experience, this study shows that Twitter may have minimal effects if theatre-goers are not actively in that digital space. Without individuals’ involvement and interest in Twitter as a socially integrated communication tool, there is limited potentiality for real interactivity and perceived realism of the creative work at hand.

Furthermore, this study examines the use of translating the stories and characters found in dramatic literature and delivering the lines through digital personas. While the measurement of the impact of this “Twitter Performance” was limited (N = 109), the challenge of developing “the narration of social media...how to convey something about a person” and translating “theatre into an online space” remained present throughout the study (Pan, 2012, para. 8). Successful content-development for Twitter as an extension of an original fan piece is an experiment in and of itself for theatre experts such as Pan (2012). In summary, the implications for Twitter use with regards to theatre are that the digital environment must first be established with theatre-goers in order to sustain participatory interactivity between audiences and mediated personas and that the narratives told by mediated personas must be ever more carefully crafted and translated for a digital space in order to communicate effectively with audiences.

This study also observed implications regarding the larger area of Parasocial Interaction (PSI) research as well. The effect of PSIs on predicting attitudes, behaviors, and involvement in this study parallel the findings of previous researchers with regard to how these perceived relationships can influence audiences to engage with their favorite personas in different ways.
(Giles, 2002; Horton & Wohl, 1956; Levy, 1979; Rosengren & Windahl, 1972). The implication of these findings is that PSI effects, unlike the authors’ initial assumptions (Horton & Wohl, 1956), are no longer limited to only television personalities. The digital media landscape allows audiences to “redefine relationships in general” (Giles, 2002, p. 285)—whereby offering a new space for audiences to interact with their favorite personas and perceive them as “real people and places” (Reeves & Nass, 1996, p. 12).

Additionally, this study explores the implications of broader theories of fan activity with regards to interactivity potential in this new and different way (Beilby et al., 1999). While measurement of the stimulus was not done so in a controlled, true experimental design, the data reflects that realism and familiarity with the theatrical work predicted increased feelings of connectedness and PSIs with the characters. This realism was in large part achievable due to the familiarity and fan interactions with the characters of Les Miserables. However, the method of communicating via Twitter could be improved with regard to “break[ing] the fourth wall and engag[ing] with audiences directly” (Davisson & Booth, 2007, p. 35). This method of speaking directly to audiences was only done in such a way that the characters were brought online, but the characters never directly referred to audience members or suspended their creative boundaries beyond the story of Les Miserables. This adverse implication shows how Twitter use in this creative way could have greater effect if developed even further in the directions suggested in the aforementioned literature.

**Practical Implications**

Despite the limited number of participants and data collected, the Twitter campaign at the center of this quasi-experiment was very advantageous for Theatre Baton Rouge. It was not only on trend with what the existing literature referred to in terms of how Twitter is being used in
promoting and reimagining the theatre experience, but it also catapulted an organization’s presence in the digital space of Twitter. This is a tool never before used in tandem with the theatre experience in this manner within the Greater Baton Rouge area. More campaigns similar to this one could further innovate the live theatre experience for audiences as well as build online communities that could sustain and support the organization for future endeavors. However, in addition to correcting for the aforementioned limitations, future campaigns similar to this one could greatly benefit from more extensive research regarding the types of media with which patrons actually engage and interact. This organization proved to have a small population of patrons active on Twitter—therefore the impact may have been greater in a different media such as Facebook or Instagram. This information not only reimages the application of this quasi-experimental design, but it also more effectively caters the messaging and stimulus to the audiences—wherein meeting them where they are online.

**Conclusion**

This study ultimately sought to challenge traditional PSI research and reinterpret theories primarily applied to television and video game studies with audiences. This research was able to show the predictive power of audience-persona interactions, parasocial interactions and perceived realism of the characters from *Les Miserables* on audience attitudes, behaviors and involvement. It also affirmed the predictive relationship between fan activity and feelings of connectedness, empathy and identification with the mediated character personas over Twitter. While this area of research leaves room for development with regard to methods and experimental design, this study takes a bold and creative approach to revolutionizing the theatrical experience through digital media. As the climate of the digital landscape evolves, and the live theatrical experience struggles to adapt and sustain itself, so too do the methods used to
measure new media’s effects on audiences need to innovate—thus, this study signifies a starting point for much needed future research.
REFERENCES


# APPENDIX A
## MEASURES

**Table 1A**

*Summary of Factor Analysis Results for Parasocial Interaction Measure (N = 109)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Factor Loadings</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Empathy with</td>
<td>Attraction to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Favorite Character</td>
<td>Favorite Character</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt sorry for my favorite character when he or she made a mistake.</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My favorite character made me feel comfortable, as if I am with friends.</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I see my favorite character as a natural, down-to-earth person.</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I looked forward to watching my favorite character.</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If my favorite actor appeared in a different production, I would attend that production.</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When my favorite character tells a story, he or she seems to understand the kinds of things I want to know.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I miss seeing my favorite character when he or she is not on the stage.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I find my favorite character to be attractive.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Eigenvalues | 3.62 | 1.09 |
| % of variance | 36.58 | 22.33 |
| Range       | 1-5  | 1-5  |
| α           | .82* | .56  |
| N of items  | 5    | 3    |

*Note: Factor loadings with a minimum loading of .50 on a primary factor appear in bold.*


*α > .70, therefore these items were used to compute variable Parasocial_Interactions*
Table 2A

*Summary of Factor Analysis Results for Audience-Persona Interaction Measure (N = 109)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Factor Loadings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Identification with Favorite Character</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My favorite character reminds me of myself.</td>
<td>.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have the same qualities as my favorite character.</td>
<td>.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I seem to have the same beliefs or attitudes as my favorite character.</td>
<td>.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have the same problems as my favorite character.</td>
<td>.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can imagine myself as my favorite character.</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can identify with my favorite character.</td>
<td>.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I wanted to meet the actor who played my favorite character.</td>
<td>.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I enjoyed trying to predict what my favorite character would do.</td>
<td>.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I hoped my favorite character would achieve his or her goals.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I care about what happens to my favorite character.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like hearing the voice of my favorite character.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The characters’ interactions are similar to mine with friends.</td>
<td>.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The characters’ interactions are similar to mine with family.</td>
<td>.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My friends are like the characters.</td>
<td>.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’d enjoy interacting with the characters and my friends at the same time.</td>
<td>.69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2A

Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Factor Loadings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Identification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>with Favorite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Character</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>While watching, I felt included in the group.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can relate to the characters’ attitudes.</td>
<td>.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I wish I could handle problems as well as my favorite character.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like the way my favorite character handles problems.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would like to be more like my favorite character.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I usually agreed with my favorite character.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eigenvalues</td>
<td>19.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of variance</td>
<td>1.5-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
<td>.86*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>α</td>
<td>.86*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N of items</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Factor loadings with a minimum loading of .50 on a primary factor appear in bold.

*α > .70, therefore these items were used to compute variable API_ID_FavCharacter
**α > .70, therefore these items were used to compute variable API_ID_GroupCharacters
***α > .70, therefore these items were used to compute variable API_ProblemSolving_FavCharacter
****α > .70, therefore these items were used to compute variable API_Interest_FavCharacter
Table 3A

*Descriptive Statistics for Perceived Realism of Twitter Measure (N = 109)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale Items</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Twitter presents things as the really are in life.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If I see something on Twitter, I can’t be sure it really is that way. **</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter lets me really see how other people live.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter does not show life as it really is. **</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter lets me see what happens in other places as if I were really there.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>$M$</th>
<th>2.66</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$SD$</td>
<td>.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
<td>1-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\alpha$</td>
<td>.73*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$N$ of items</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* $\alpha > .70$, therefore these items were used to compute variable *Perceived Realism* _Twitter_

**Items 2 and 4 are reverse-coded for analysis**
Table 4A

*Descriptive Statistics for Perceived Realism of Les Miserables Measure (N = 109)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale Items</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>α</th>
<th>N of items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Les Miserables presents things as the really are in life.</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>.74*</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If I see something in Les Miserables, I can’t be sure it really is that way.**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Les Miserables lets me really see how other people live.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Les Miserables does not show life as it really is.**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Les Miserables lets me see what happens in other places as if I were really there.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: *α > .70, therefore these items were used to compute variable Perceived_Realism_LesMiserables
**Items were reverse-coded for analysis
### Table 5A

**Summary of Factor Analysis Results for Personal Involvement Measure (N = 109)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Factor Loadings</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Important : Unimportant***</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of no concern to me : Of concern to me</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irrelevant : Relevant</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Means a lot to me : Means nothing to me***</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Useless : Useful</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valuable : Worthless***</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trivial : Fundamental</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficial : Not beneficial***</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matter to me : Doesn't matter***</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uninterested : Interested</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significant : Insignificant***</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vital : Superfluous***</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boring : Interesting</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unexciting : Exciting</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appealing : Unappealing***</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mundane : Fascinating</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essential : Nonessential***</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undesirable : Desirable</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wanted : Unwanted**</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not needed : Needed</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Eigenvalues                                              | 10.49                    | 2.48 |
| % of variance                                            | 39.64                    | 25.18 |
| Range                                                   | 1-5                      | 1-5  |
| α                                                       | .95*                     | .91** |
| N of items                                               | 13                       | 7    |

*Note: Factor loadings with a minimum loading of .50 on a primary factor appear in bold.*


*α > .70, therefore these items were used to compute variable Involvement_Needs

**α > .70, therefore these items were used to compute variable Involvement_Interests

***Items were reverse-coded for analysis
Table 6A

*Descriptive Statistics for Behavioral Intention Measure (N = 109)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale Items</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>α</th>
<th>N of items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I would attend the live production of Les Miserables.</td>
<td>4.61</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would recommend attending the live production of Les Miserables to a friend.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If I had to do it over again, I would make the same choice to attend the live production of Les Miserables.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* $\alpha > .70$, therefore these items were used to compute variable *Behavioral Intention*. 
Table 7A

*Descriptive Statistics for Attitude Toward Les Misérables Measure (N = 109)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale Items</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good characters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well-acted</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good story</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good taste</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imaginative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not confusing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not offensive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not corny</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not stupid</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>4.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
<td>1-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>α</td>
<td>.95*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N of items</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: *α > .70, therefore these items were used to compute variable Attitude_LesMisérables
Table 8A

*Descriptive Statistics for Familiarity of Les Miserables Measure (N = 109)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale Items</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I read or have read the Les Miserables novel.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I read of have read the Les Miserables play.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I see or have seen the Les Miserables stage production.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I listen or have listened to the Les Miserables music (score, songs, lyrics, etc.).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I watch or have watched the Les Miserables film.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>13.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>4.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
<td>5-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N of items</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: These items were used to compute variable Familiarity_LesMiserables*
**APPENDIX B**

**REGRESSION TABLES**

Table 1B – H1a, H2a, H3a, H5a

*Summary of Simple Regression Analyses for Predicting Attitudes Toward Les Miserables based on Parasocial Interactions, Audience-Persona Interactions, Twitter Use, and Perceived Realism of Les Miserables (N = 109)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor (IV)</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE B</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>R²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parasocial Interactions (PSIs)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parasocial_Interaction</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>1,107</td>
<td>11.844*</td>
<td>.100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Audience-Persona Interactions</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>API_Interest_FavCharacter</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>1,107</td>
<td>6.573*</td>
<td>.058</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Twitter Use</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter_Use</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>1,106</td>
<td>.181</td>
<td>.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Perceived Realism of Les Miserables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived_Realism_LesMiserables</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>1,107</td>
<td>6.77*</td>
<td>.060</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.*
Table 2B – H1b, H2b, H3b, H5b

Summary of Simple Regression Analyses for Predicting Behavioral Intention to attend Les Miserables based on Parasocial Interactions, Audience-Persona Interactions, Twitter Use, and Perceived Realism of Les Miserables (N = 109)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor (IV)</th>
<th>Behavioral_Intention (DV)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parasocial Interactions (PSIs)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parasocial_Interaction</td>
<td>.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audience-Persona Interactions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>API_Interest_FavCharacter</td>
<td>.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter Use</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter_Use</td>
<td>.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Realism of Les Miserables</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived_REALISM_LesMiserables</td>
<td>.23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.
### Summary of Simple Regression Analyses for Predicting Personal Involvement with the Characters of Les Miserables based on Parasocial Interactions, Audience-Persona Interactions, Twitter Use, and Perceived Realism of Les Miserables (N = 109)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor (IV)</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE B</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>R²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Involvement_Needs (DV)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parasocial Interactions (PSIs)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parasocial_Interaction</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>1,107</td>
<td>27.469**</td>
<td>.204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Audience-Persona Interactions</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>API_Interest_FavCharacter</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>1,107</td>
<td>21.647***</td>
<td>.168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>API_Interest_FavCharacter (constant), API_ID_GroupCharacters</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>2,106</td>
<td>13.956***</td>
<td>.208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Twitter Use</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter_Use</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>1,106</td>
<td>.017</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Perceived Realism of Les Miserables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived_Realism_LesMiserables</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>1,107</td>
<td>17.248***</td>
<td>.139</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor (IV)</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE B</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>R²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Involvement_Interests (DV)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parasocial Interactions (PSIs)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parasocial_Interaction</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>1,107</td>
<td>33.933***</td>
<td>.241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Audience-Persona Interactions</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>API_Interest_FavCharacter</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>1,107</td>
<td>16.361**</td>
<td>.133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Twitter Use</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter_Use</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>1,106</td>
<td>0.087</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Perceived Realism of Les Miserables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived_Realism_LesMiserables</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>1,107</td>
<td>9.206**</td>
<td>.139</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .05. ** p < .01. *** p < .001.
Table 4B – H4a, H6b

Summary of Simple Regression Analyses for Predicting Perceived Realism of the Characters of Les Miserables based on Perceived Realism of Twitter and Familiarity with Les Miserables (N = 109)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor (IV)</th>
<th>Perceived Realism of Les Miserables (DV)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Realism_Twitter</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Familiarity_LesMiserables</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.
Table 5B - H4b, H6a

Summary of Simple Regression Analyses for Predicting Audience-Persona Interactions with the Characters of Les Misérables based on Perceived Realism of Twitter and Familiarity with Les Misérables (N = 109)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor (IV)</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE B</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>R²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Factor 1: Identification with Favorite Character</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived_Realism_Twitter</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>1,107</td>
<td>.697</td>
<td>.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Familiarity_LesMiserables</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>1,107</td>
<td>1.553</td>
<td>.014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor 2: Identification with Group of Characters</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived_Realism_Twitter</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>1,107</td>
<td>.448</td>
<td>.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Familiarity_LesMiserables</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>1,107</td>
<td>.062</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor 3: Preference for Favorite Character’s Problem-solving</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived_Realism_Twitter</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>1,107</td>
<td>.091</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Familiarity_LesMiserables</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>1,107</td>
<td>2.357</td>
<td>.022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor 4: Interest in Favorite Character</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived_Realism_Twitter</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>1,107</td>
<td>.048</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Familiarity_LesMiserables</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>1,107</td>
<td>9.973</td>
<td>.085</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05.  **p < .01.  ***p < .001.
Table 6B – H4c, H6c

*Summary of Simple Regression Analyses for Predicting Parasocial Interactions (PSIs) with the Characters of Les Miserables based on Perceived Realism of Twitter and Familiarity with Les Miserables (N = 109)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor (IV)</th>
<th>Parasocial Interactions (DV)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Percieved Realism of Twitter</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived_Realism_Twitter</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Familiarity with Les Miserables</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Familiarity_LesMiserables</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05.  **p < .01.  ***p < .001.*
Les Miserables: The Twitter Revolution

Thank you for your interest in this survey! Your responses are a meaningful contribution to the study "Les Miserables: The Twitter Revolution—A study of fan activity, parasocial relationships, and audience-persona interactions.” The purpose of this study is to learn about what drives fan activity. This study will examine individuals’ interaction with Les Miserables characters in a Twitter adaptation, called the “Twitter Revolution” promoted by Theatre Baton Rouge this summer, as well as patrons’ experiences with the coinciding, live production. Please proceed to the informed consent form on the next screen.
Informed Consent Form

**Procedures:** Participants will be asked to answer questions related to Les Miserables. The entire study should take no more than 15 minutes. Participants include Theatre Baton Rouge’s Les Miserables patrons as well as potential “Twitter Revolution” followers/participants. This questionnaire will be conducted with this online Qualtrics-created survey.

**Risks/Discomforts:** Respondents are not expected to participate in any treatments that would incur the risk of physical or mental injury during their participation in this study.

**Benefits & Compensation:** There are no direct benefits or compensation to participants. However, the study may yield valuable information that helps build knowledge in mass communication research. Participants can opt to enter a drawing for a pair of tickets to any upcoming Theatre Baton Rouge production of their choice.

**Confidentiality:** All data obtained from participants will be kept confidential and will only be reported in an aggregate format (by reporting only combined results and never reporting individual ones). All questionnaires will be concealed, and no one other than then primary investigator and assistant researcher listed below will have access to them. The data collected will be stored in the HIPPA-compliant, Qualtrics-secure database until it has been deleted by the primary investigator. All responses will remain confidential unless disclosure is required by law. Results of the study may be published, but no names or identifying information will be used in the reporting of results. Participant email addresses will not be linked to responses in this survey. Email addresses collected at the end of the survey will only be used to contact the three winning participants in the drawing for a pair of tickets to any upcoming Theatre Baton Rouge production of their choice.

**Participation:** Participation in this research study is completely voluntary. Participants may choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or loss of any benefit to which they might otherwise be entitled. However, if participants do not complete study, they will not be eligible to enter the drawing for a pair of tickets to any upcoming Theatre Baton Rouge production of their choice. Participation in this questionnaire is intended for individuals over the age of 18. You must check the box below to acknowledge that you understand this policy and verify that they meet the age requirement.

**Questions about the Research:** For any questions about this study, participants may contact investigator: Lance Bordelon (lbord11@lsu.edu). They may also contact the LSU faculty sponsor of this study, Dr. Jensen Moore-Copple (jmoore5@lsu.edu).

**Conclusion:** You may direct questions regarding study specifics to the investigator(s). By completing this online survey, you are agreeing to take part in the research described above.

I have read and understood the above consent form. By checking this box, I am verifying that I am over the age of 18 and desire of my own free will to participate in this study.

- Yes
- No

*If No Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey*
Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study!

During the summer 2013, Theatre Baton Rouge launched a Twitter adaptation of their upcoming "Les Miserables" production. This virtual performance was called the “Twitter Revolution” and included many characters from the show as they Tweeted their inner thoughts, emotions, and interactions. The following brief survey will ask you about "Les Miserables," the accompanying “Twitter Revolution”, as well your interactions with Twitter in general. Upon completion of the survey, you can enter your email address for a chance to win a pair of free tickets to any upcoming production of your choice at Theatre Baton Rouge this year. Three winners will be drawn at random and your responses will remain anonymous and not identified. Your email address will only be used to contact you if you are one of the three winning participants in the drawing. Please proceed to the next screen to begin the survey.

Please indicate your participation in each of the following.

Did you attend a performance of Les Miserables at Theatre Baton Rouge this summer?
- Yes
- No

Have you ever heard of or participated (followed, viewed, or interacted) with any of the Les Miserables “Twitter Revolution” characters on Twitter?
- Yes
- No

Which, if any, of the Les Miserables characters in the “Twitter Revolution” did you follow, interact with, or view on Twitter at any time? Please check all that apply.
- Victor Hugo
- Jean Valjean
- Javert
- Fantine
- Cosette
- Marius
- Eponine
- Thenardiers
- Enjorlas
- Gavroche
- I did not follow, interact with, or view any of the characters.

Please rank the following Les Miserables characters, from most viewed (1) to least viewed (10) on Twitter. Indicate your ranks using one number between (1-9) in each blank. Use each rank only once—please do not indicate any ties.

_____ Victor Hugo
_____ Jean Valjean
_____ Javert
_____ Fantine
_____ Cosette
_____ Marius
_____ Eponine
_____ Thenardiers
_____ Enjorlas
_____ Gavroche
If applicable, had you heard about Theatre Baton Rouge’s “Twitter Revolution” before attending the live production of Les Miserables?

- Yes
- No
- I did not attend a live performance.

Did the “Twitter Revolution” motivate you to want to attend the Les Miserables production at Theatre Baton Rouge in any way?

- Yes
- No
- I did not attend a live performance.

Have you ever used the hashtag “#revolutionTBR” on Twitter?

- Yes
- No

When you used the hashtag “#revolutionTBR” on Twitter, check all the reasons that apply:

- Because I saw a Les Miserables character use it.
- Because a Les Miserables character told me to use it.
- Because I saw a friend use it.
- Because a friend told me to use it.
- Because I saw that Theatre Baton Rouge used it.
- Because I read about it online.
- Other (please briefly explain reason): ____________________

Based on what you know about Les Miserables, please rank the following Les Miserables characters, from most favored (1) to least favored (9). Indicate your ranks using one number between (1-9) in each blank. Use each rank only once—please do not indicate any ties.

_____ Jean Valjean
_____ Javert
_____ Fantine
_____ Cosette
_____ Marius
_____ Eponine
_____ Thenardiers
_____ Enjolras
_____ Gavroche

If applicable, did interacting with the characters of Les Miserables on Twitter impact your live theatre experience in any way? For example, did you have a greater understanding of Les Miserables? Did you feel more connected to the characters? Were you more involved with Les Miserables? If so, please briefly explain how your live theater-going experience was impacted by your exposure to the “Twitter Revolution.”
Please select the answer that best expresses how often you participate in, or have participated in each of the following activities regarding different adaptations of Les Miserables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Quite Often</th>
<th>Very Often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I read or have read the Les Miserables novel:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I read or have read the Les Miserables play:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I see or have seen the Les Miserables stage production:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I listen or have listened to the Les Miserables music (score, songs, lyrics, etc.):</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I watch or have watched the Les Miserables film:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here are some statements people may make about their favorite Les Miserables character. Please select the bubble that best expresses how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My favorite character reminds me of myself.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have the same qualities as my favorite character.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I seem to have the same beliefs or attitudes as my favorite character.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have the same problems as my favorite character.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can imagine myself as my favorite character.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can identify with my favorite character.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I wanted to meet the actor who played my favorite character.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I enjoyed trying to predict what my favorite character would do.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I hoped my favorite character would achieve his or her goals.  
I care about what happens to my favorite character.  
I like hearing the voice of my favorite character.  
The characters’ interactions are similar to mine with friends.  
The characters’ interactions are similar to mine with family.  
My friends are like the characters.  
I’d enjoy interacting with the characters and my friends at the same time.  
While watching, I felt included in the group.  
I can relate to the characters’ attitudes.  
I wish I could handle problems as well as my favorite character.  
I like the way my favorite character handles problems.  
I would like to be more like my favorite character.  
I usually agreed with my favorite character.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Les Miserables presents things as the really are in life.</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If I see something in Les Miserables, I can’t be sure it really is that way.</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Les Miserables lets me really see how other people live.</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Les Miserables does not show life as it really is.</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Les Miserables lets me see what happens in other places as if I were really there.</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here are some additional statements people may make about Les Miserables. Please select the bubble that best expresses how much you agree or disagree with each statement.
My favorite character made me feel comfortable, as if I am with friends.

I see my favorite character as a natural, down-to-earth person.

I looked forward to watching my favorite character.

If my favorite actor appeared in a different production, I would attend that production.

When my favorite character tells a story, he or she seems to understand the kinds of things I want to know.

I missed seeing my favorite character when he or she is not on the stage.

I find my favorite character to be attractive.

If my favorite character had a Twitter account, I would follow it.

Here are some adjectives people may use to describe Les Miserables. For each statement, please select the bubble that best expresses your own feelings about Les Miserables.
Here are some adjectives people may use to describe Les Miserables. Please select the bubble that best expresses how much you agree or disagree with each adjective with regards to Les Miserables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good characters</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well-acted</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good story</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good taste</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imaginative</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not confusing</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not offensive</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not corny</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not stupid</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please select the bubble that best expresses how likely you are to attend the live production of Les Miserables (either again or for the first time).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very Unlikely</th>
<th>Unlikely</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Likely</th>
<th>Very Likely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I would attend the live production of Les Miserables.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would recommend attending the live production of Les Miserables to a friend.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If I had to do it over again, I would make the same choice to attend the live production of Les Miserables.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Here are some statements people may make about Twitter. Please select the bubble that best expresses how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Twitter presents things as the really are in life.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If I see something on Twitter, I can’t be sure it really is that way.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter lets me really see how other people live.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter does not show life as it really is.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter lets me see what happens in other places as if I were really there.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please answer the following questions regarding your general theater (play or musical) experiences.

How many theater performances (play or musical) have you attended in the last year?
Please type number below.

________

If applicable, when do you usually purchase your tickets to a live theater performance (play or musical)?
○ Several months before the show.
○ About a month before the show.
○ About a week before the show.
○ The day of the show.
○ I don’t purchase theater tickets.

In general, when buying tickets to theater performances (play or musical), do usually you purchase them online?
○ Yes
○ No
○ I do not purchase tickets to live theater performances.

Please answer the following questions regarding your general Twitter use.

Do you have a Twitter account? Please check all that apply.
☑ Yes, I view and post tweets.
☑ Yes, I mostly view tweets.
☑ Yes, I mostly post tweets.
☑ Yes, but I have stopped using it altogether.
☑ No, I have never used it before.
☑ No, and I don’t know what Twitter is.
In a usual week, how many Tweets do you post?

- 0
- 1-5
- 6-15
- 16-30
- 31+

In a usual week, how many times do you view Twitter but do not post Tweets? (i.e. surfing profiles, viewing threads, etc.)

- 0
- 1-5
- 6-15
- 16-30
- 31+

Please answer the following demographic questions.

What is your gender?
- Male
- Female

What is your age today (in years)?

What is your ethnicity?
- American Indian/Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black/African American
- Hispanic/Latino
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- White
- Multi-racial
- Other: ____________________

What is your education level?
- Less than high school
- Graduated from high school
- Some education after high school
- Graduated from college
- Postgraduate or above

What is your income level (please combine if married)?
- Less than $9,999
- $10,000 - $19,999
- $20,000 - $29,999
- $30,000 - $49,999
- $50,000 - $74,999
- $75,000 - $99,999
- $100,000 - $149,999
- $150,000 - $199,999
- $200,000 - $499,999
- $500,000 or more
Are you available for a brief follow-up interview about your experience(s) with Les Miserables and/or the “Twitter Performance” promoted by Theatre Baton Rouge this summer? If so, please leave a preferred contact method below. Your answers to this survey will remain anonymous and your identity will not be attached to your answers in any way.

I prefer to be contacted via email:
I prefer to be contacted via phone:
If so, during what time of day would you most like to be contacted via phone?

Thank you for your participation.
Don’t forget to enter the drawing below for a chance to win FREE TICKETS to any upcoming Theatre Baton Rouge show of your choice.

Please enter your email address below for a chance to win a pair of free tickets to any upcoming production of your choice at Theatre Baton Rouge this year. Three winners will be drawn at random and your responses will remain anonymous and not identified. Your email address will only be used to contact you if you are one of the three winning participants in the drawing.

Email address: ______________________

Thank you for your participation in this survey! Your responses are important for meaningful research in the area of digital media and theater communications.

We extend a sincere THANK YOU for taking the time to complete this questionnaire!

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APPENDIX D
STIMULUS MATERIALS
Jean Valjean @ValjeanTBR - Jun 24
LISTEN - snd.sc/1r18tBG
View media
Reply 3 Retweeted Favorite More

Javert @JavertTBR - Jun 23
LISTEN - snd.sc/1r18tBG
Hide media

SoundCloud
HugoTBR
RevolutionTBR - Bridge over the Seine

Official Soundcloud of the RevolutionTBR at Theatre Baton Rouge.

RevolutionTBR - Bridge over the Seine

9:04 PM - 29 Jun 2013 - Details
Flag media
Reply to @JavertTBR

Jean Valjean @ValjeanTBR - Jun 23
He's standing in his grave,
Expand
Reply 3 Retweeted Favorite More

Javert @JavertTBR - Jun 23
The man of mercy comes again,
Expand
Reply 3 Retweeted Favorite More

The man of mercy comes again.

Jean Valjean @ValjeanTBR - Jun 23
You talk too much.
Expand
Reply 3 Retweeted Favorite More

Jean Valjean @ValjeanTBR - Jun 23
For his presence of mind, I will thank him - once I have won.
Expand
Reply 3 Retweeted Favorite More

74
Jean Valjean (WJ acneinBBD - Jun 18
LISTEN - snd.sc/11G966U
SoundCloud
RevolutionTBR - One Day More
Official Soundcloud of the #RevolutionTBR at Theatre Bton Rouge.
View on web
RETWEETS FAVORITE
3 1
1:02 PM - 18 Jun 2013 - Details
Reply to @WJ acneinBBD

Eponine @EponineTBR - Jun 17
LISTEN - snd.sc/11G9C7B
SoundCloud
RevolutionTBR - Plume...
HugoTBR
Marius @MariusTBR - Jun 17
Not a dream after all.
Expand
Cosette @CosetteTBR - Jun 17
For it isn't a dream.
Expand
Cosette @CosetteTBR - Jun 17
I am found.
Expand
Marius @MariusTBR - Jun 17
I am lost.
Expand
Cosette @CosetteTBR  Jun 17
And mine’s Cossetta.

Marius @MariusTBR  Jun 17
My name is Marius Pontmercy.

Marius @MariusTBR  Jun 17
LISTEN - smil.sc/11t7VV

Cosette @CosetteTBR  Jun 16
LISTEN - smil.sc/11W9Pq7

Jean Valjean @ValjeanTBR  Jun 16
You’re such a lonely child. How quiet it must be with only me for company.

Cosette @CosetteTBR  Jun 16
LISTEN - smil.sc/11W9Pq7

SoundCloud

RevolutionTBR - A Heart Full of Love
Official Soundcloud of the #RevolutionTBR at Theatre Baton Rouge.

View on web

Eponine @EponineTBR  Jun 16
Every word he says is a dagger in me - if he’s ask, I’d be his.

Marius @MariusTBR  Jun 16
She has burst like the music of angels. Thanks to you, Eponine, heaven is near!

Jean Valjean @ValjeanTBR  Jun 16
Truth is given by God to us all in our time.

Cosette @CosetteTBR  Jun 16
I am no longer a child. I yearn for the truth.

Jean Valjean @ValjeanTBR  Jun 16
There are words that better unheard - better unsaid.

Cosette @CosetteTBR  Jun 16
I’m longing to know of the child that I was in those years, long ago.

RevolutionTBR - The People’s Song
Official Soundcloud of the #RevolutionTBR at Theatre Baton Rouge.

View on web
Enjolras @EnjolrasTBR - Jun 15
His death is the sign we await - they will come when we call.

Marius @MariusTBR - Jun 15
LISTEN TO ME! LISTEN! GENERAL LAMARQUE IS DEAD!

Enjolras @EnjolrasTBR - Jun 15
The call is higher than our lonely souls. We strive towards a larger goal.

Marius @MariusTBR - Jun 15
How the world may be changed in just one burst of light.

Eponine @EponineTBR - Jun 15
Got him all excited now. God knows what he sees in her.

Marius @MariusTBR - Jun 14
Ponine! I'm lost until she's found!

Eponine @EponineTBR - Jun 14
Just some bourgeois two-a-penny thing!

Eponine @EponineTBR - Jun 14
That girl - who can she be? What is her name?

Eponine @EponineTBR - Jun 14
Now I remember... We were children together - look what's become of me.

Gavroche @GavrocheTBR - Jun 14
That inspector thinks he's something, but it's me who runs this town. Trust Gavroche and have no fear - you will always find me here!

Javert @JavertTBR - Jun 14
You TALK of battles to be won - this is like some opera. You need to decide who you are. Where's your head, Marius?

Marius @MariusTBR - Jun 15
She was just like a ghost to me. One minute there, then she was gone.

You're late - you look as if you've seen a ghost.

Javert @JavertTBR - Jun 14
God be my witness. I never shall yield til we come face to face.

Thenardiers @ThenardiersTBR - Jun 14
Inspector, remember when you've nicked him, it was us who told you so!
Javert @JavertTBR - Jun 14
Where is this gentleman gone? Why on earth did he run?
[Read more]...

Thenardiers @ThenardiersTBR - Jun 14
WAIT A BIT, KNOW THAT FACE — WE DON'T FORGET.
[Read more]...

Eponine @EponineTBR - Jun 13
It's not your concern. Leave me alone!
[Read more]...

Marius @MariusTBR - Jun 13
Who is that man? Why is he here?
[Read more]...

Eponine @EponineTBR - Jun 13
I like the way he grows his hair. Little he knows, little he sees.
[Read more]...

Marius @MariusTBR - Jun 13
The things you know wouldn't be found in books like these.
[Read more]...

Eponine @EponineTBR - Jun 13
Don't judge a girl on how she looks—I know a lot of things, I do!
[Read more]...

Thenardiers @ThenardiersTBR - Jun 13
THESE BLOODY STUDENTS ARE EVERYWHERE! Eponine WOULD KISS THEIR FEET! SHE NEVER HAD A SCRAMP OF BRAINS!
[Read more]...

gavroche @gavrocheTBR - Jun 13
Don't make a mistake. Even his daughter does her share—that's Eponine.
[Read more]...

Marius @MariusTBR - Jun 12
Before the barricades arise!
[Read more]...

Enjolras @EnjolrasTBR - Jun 12
How long before we cut the fat ones down to size?
[Read more]...

Marius @MariusTBR - Jun 12
But Lamarque is ill and fading fast.
[Read more]...

Enjolras @EnjolrasTBR - Jun 12
Only one man speaks for the people here below.
[Read more]...

Marius @MariusTBR - Jun 12
Where are the leaders of the land?
[Read more]...

gavroche @gavrocheTBR - Jun 12
Think you're poor? Think you're free? FOLLOW ME!
[Read more]...

gavroche @gavrocheTBR - Jun 12
How do you do? My name's Gavroche. These are my people. Here's my patch.
[Read more]...

gavroche @gavrocheTBR - Jun 12
LISTEN - aud.io/11WRoKZ
[Read more]...

RevolutionTBR - Look Down
Official Soundcloud of the #RevolutionTBR at Theatre Baton Rouge.

View on web
Retweet 1
2:01 PM - 12 Jun 2013 - Details
Reply to @gavrocheTBR

Jean Valjean @ValjeanTBR - Jun 11
There's a cause just waiting for you.
[Read more]...

Cosette @CosetteTBR - Jun 11
Will there be castles and children to see?
[Read more]...

Jean Valjean @ValjeanTBR - Jun 11
Where I go, you will be.
[Read more]...

Jean Valjean @ValjeanTBR - Jun 11
It won't take you too long to forget.
[Read more]...

Thenardiers @ThenardiersTBR - Jun 11
IT'S NO MORE THAN WE CHRISTIANS MUST DO!
[Read more]...

Jean Valjean @ValjeanTBR - Jun 11
I will ease the parting blow.
[Read more]...

Thenardiers @ThenardiersTBR - Jun 11
WHAT TO DO? WHAT TO SAY?! BEYOND RUBIES IS OUR LITTLE GIRL!
APPENDIX E
PROMOTIONAL ITEMS

@HugoTBR

#RevolutionTBR

@ValjeanTBR  @JavertTBR  @FantineTBR
@CosetteTBR  @MariusTBR  @EponineTBR
@EnjolrasTBR  @ThenardiersTBR  @gavrocheTBR
Theatre Baton Rouge email marketing to patrons
Theatre Baton Rouge is excited to announce the launch of its first-ever musical...on Twitter. Yep, that's right. We are taking your favorite characters from our revolutionary summer musical Les Miserables and dropping them in the Twitterverse. We are calling our Twitter adaptation of the show #RevolutionTBR. The project launches June 1, and your characters will keep Tweeting right up to opening night of the show on June 28. Be a part of the Twitter Revolution by following all your favorite characters...then interact with the characters and experience the show in a way you never thought you could! What do you say....will you stand up and take your chance?

How Do You Join The Revolution?

- Follow Victor Hugo @HugoTBR for the latest commentary and updates from his characters.
- Start following your favorite characters from Les Miserables.
- Search for the hashtag #RevolutionTBR to see what others are saying.
- Retweet, reply and share your favorite Tweets of the Revolution.
- And don't forget to follow @TheatreBR for the latest news about the season.

Start following your favorite characters today!
Click on one of the icons below:
Twitter use (Characters, followers, #RevolutionTBR)
Facebook promotion (Theatre Baton Rouge and personal page)
Print poster promotion— QR code links to web
(Displayed at Theatre Baton Rouge and across the Greater Baton Rouge area)
Theatre Baton Rouge takes on 'Les Miserables;' director says it's 'better than the movie'

To help draw a new audience to the theater, Dixon said Theater Baton Rouge has partnered with a marketing communications student at LSU who is managing a series of Twitter accounts linked to the musical's characters.

"You've got the characters speaking about the show, about what (the) character is doing," Dixon said. "It's a neat way to let people experience the show or, for those who are familiar, to feel a little excitement and a glimpse of what the story is about and what those characters go through."

Theatre Baton Rouge's production of "Les Miserables" opens June 28 with performances through July 31. For more details and ticketing information, see the Theatre Baton Rouge website.
Theatre Baton Rouge email marketing to patrons—Online questionnaire distribution
APPENDIX F
IRB APPROVAL

Application for Approval of Projects Which Use Human Subjects

This application is used for projects/studies that cannot be reviewed through the exemption process.

-- Applicant, please fill out the application in its entirety and include two copies of the completed application as well as parts A-E, below. Once the application is completed, please submit to the IRB Office for review and please allow ample time for the application to be reviewed. Expedited reviews usually takes 2 weeks. Carefully completed applications should be submitted 3 weeks before a meeting to ensure a prompt decision.

-- A Complete Application Includes All of the Following:
(A) Two copies of this completed form and two copies of part B thru F.
(B) A brief project description (adequate to evaluate risks to subjects and to explain your responses to Parts 1 & 2).
(C) Copies of all instruments to be used.
(D) The consent form that you will use in the study (see part 3 for more information.)
(E) Certificate of Completion of Human Subjects Protection Training for all personnel involved in the project, including students who are involved with testing or handling data, unless already on file with the IRB. (Link: http://ehs.vehsresearch.com/users/login.php)
(F) IRB Security of Data Agreement (http://research.losu.edu/files/item20724.pdf)

1) Principal Investigator: Jensen Moore-Copple, Ph.D.
*PI must be an LSU Faculty Member

Dept: Mass Communication
Ph: (225) 578-6686
Email: jmoore5@lsu.edu

2) Co Investigator(s): please include department, rank, phone and e-mail for each

Lance Bordelon
MMC Graduate Student (Thesis research)
Manship School of Mass Communication
Phone: 337-254-4039
Email: bordelonn@lsu.edu

3) Project Title: "Les Miserables: The Twitter Revolution—A study of fan activity, parasocial relationships, and audience-persona interactions"

4) Proposal Start Date: 9/10/13
5) Proposed Duration Months: 1 month

6) Number of Subjects Requested: 500

8) Funding Sought From: N/A

ASSURANCE OF PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR named above:
I accept personal responsibility for the conduct of this study (including ensuring compliance of co-investigators/co-workers) in accordance with the documents submitted herewith and the following guidelines for human subject protection: The Belmont Report, LSU's Assurance (FWA00003892) with OHRP and 45 CFR 46 (available from https://www.losu.edu/obd). I also understand that copies of all consent forms must be maintained at LSU for three years after the completion of the project. If I leave LSU before that time, the consent forms should be preserved in the Departmental Office.

Signature of PI:
Date 9/10/13

ASSURANCE OF STUDENT/PROJECT COORDINATOR named above, if multiple Co-Investigators, please create a "signature page" for all Co-Investigators to sign. Attach the "signature page" to the application.

I agree to adhere to the terms of this document and am familiar with the documents referenced above.

Signature of Co-PI (s):
Date 9/10/13

STUDY APPROVED BY:
Dr. Robert C. Mathews, Chairman
Institutional Review Board
Louisiana State University
130 David Boyd Hall
225-578-8692 / www.lsu.edu/irb
Approval Expires: 9/24/2014

LSU Proposal # 3416
THE VITA

Lance Bordelon earned his Bachelors in Mass Communication from Louisiana State University in May 2012. With a background in theatre and performance studies, his research interests focus on the impact of new media technologies on audiences’ theatre experiences. He will earn his Masters of Mass Communication with a concentration in strategic communication in May 2014.