



MONTCLAIR STATE
UNIVERSITY

Montclair State University
**Montclair State University Digital
Commons**

Theses, Dissertations and Culminating Projects

1-2024

Beyond Print : The Web of Egan's Narrative Universe

Cassandra Sardo

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.montclair.edu/etd>



Part of the [English Language and Literature Commons](#)

Abstract

Jennifer Egan's website greatly rewards readers and literary critics interested in *A Visit from the Goon Squad* and *The Candy House*. It hosts an interactive timeline filled with details like when and where she wrote each chapter of *Goon Squad*, a digital counterpart to her famous PowerPoint chapter, and excerpts from her handwritten first drafts of *The Candy House*. These digital epitexts, however, have been largely overlooked by critics, and a comprehensive analysis and close reading of Egan's work in this important context remains uncharted territory. My thesis aims to bridge this gap by exploring the technological elements within Egan's narrative and, perhaps more importantly, how she extends the narrative beyond the printed page through the strategic use of digital epitexts and paratextual materials on her website. I analyze how these digital elements serve as extensions of the text, shaping readers' engagement with it and augmenting their experience.

MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY

Beyond Print: The Web of Egan's Narrative Universe

by

Cassandra Sardo

A Master's Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of

Montclair State University

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

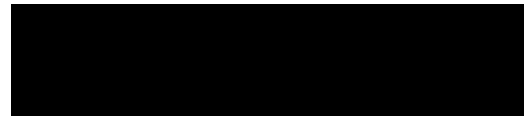
Master of Arts

May 2022

College of Humanities and Social Sciences

Department of English

Thesis Committee:



Dr. Jeffrey Gonzalez

Thesis Sponsor



Dr. Jonathan Greenberg

Committee Member



Dr. Lee Behlman

Committee Member

BEYOND PRINT: THE WEB OF EGAN'S NARRATIVE UNIVERSE

A THESIS

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements

For the degree of Master of Arts

by

Cassandra Sardo

Montclair State University

Montclair, NJ

January 2024

Copyright © 2024 by Cassandra Sardo. All rights reserved.

Acknowledgments

This thesis would not have been possible without Dr. Jeffrey Gonzalez, whose mentorship has been indispensable throughout this journey. I am grateful to have worked with such a dedicated and patient advisor. His confidence in me and my writing has shaped both my academic and personal growth.

Many thanks to Dr. Jonathan Greenberg for his readership, sharp attention to detail, and valuable contributions to this project. His insights have enriched the depth and scope of my research.

I am indebted to Dr. Lee Behlman, whose thoughtful comments and encouraging words have seen me through my undergraduate and graduate endeavors. His contagious passion has been a powerful motivator throughout the years, infusing my work with enthusiasm.

Finally, a heartfelt thank you to my family and my partner Patrick, whose unwavering support has been my anchor. I am grateful for countless late nights, insightful conversations, and encouragement that propelled me forward. My sounding board and biggest champion, this accomplishment would not have been possible without his steadfast presence.

Contents

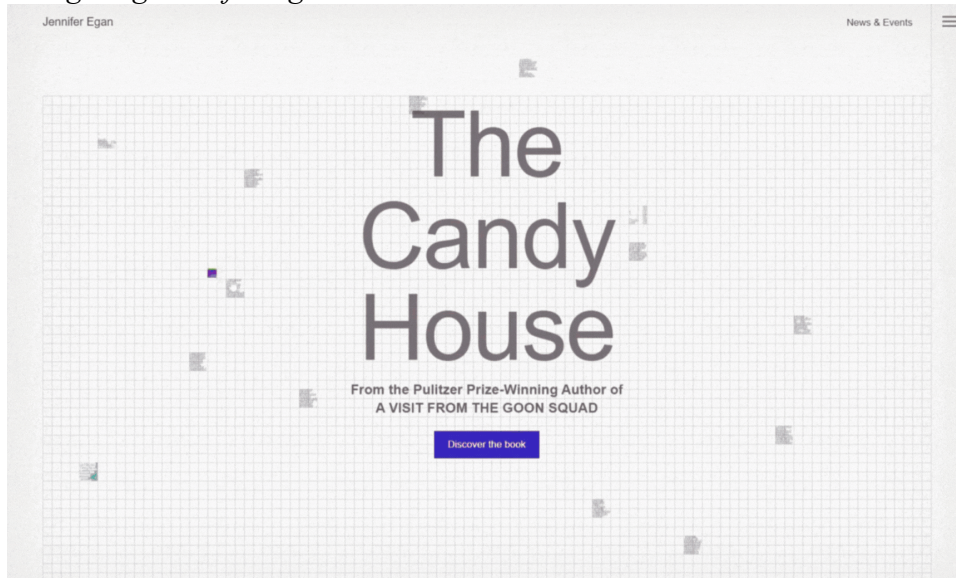
1. Introduction	8
2. Digital Discord	14
3. Egan's Digital Epitexts	24
4. Conclusion	38

List of Figures

Figure 1	8
Figure 2	22
Figure 3	25
Figure 4	26
Figure 5	28
Figure 6	29
Figure 7	33
Figure 8	37

1. Introduction

It is surprising, in this digital age, that Jennifer Egan—author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning *A Visit from the Goon Squad*—writes all of her first drafts by hand. In an interview with Lynn Neary for National Public Radio (NPR), Egan as admitted that she even tried to draft the famous PowerPoint chapter from *Goon Squad*, “Great Rock and Roll Pauses,” “by hand on legal pad...and as you can imagine, that was really a non-starter.” On jenniferegan.com, Egan has shared a few glimpses of her first drafts of *The Candy House*, her 2022 sequel to *Goon Squad*, which is now front and center on her ever-evolving site. At a glance, the site’s homepage looks unassuming and mainly features the novel’s title and a prompt to “Discover the book.” The prompt links to a page where you can purchase the book, access a reading group guide, and read reviews like Christina Bieber Lake’s, where Lake asserts that “*The Candy House* is an epic slap down of any notion that ChatGPT could write a novel.” But the site’s homepage allows readers to “discover the book” in another, unexpected way: if you move your cursor across the page, it will function like something between a magnifying glass and a glitchy pair of night goggles, revealing a variety of passages from the novel, depending on where you hover (see Figure 1).

Figure 1*Navigating Jennifer Egan's Website*

Source: jenniferegan.com

Selecting one of these hidden excerpts teleports you to the published version, edited draft, and first draft—each one layered on top of the other. Egan's first handwritten drafts are all but illegible, though she takes great care to note their date and time as well as the number of physical pages she wrote. It is a paradoxical juxtaposition of analog and digital technologies, much like the subject and substance of her novels. The paradox lies in Egan's simultaneous embrace and defiance of technology and the norms surrounding technological advances. While her novels delve into the complexities of a digitally-driven world, her idiosyncratic approach to drafting challenges the notion that progress in literature must strictly adhere to the digital domain; however, her website material defies the romantic notion that the novel should remain solely within the analog realm by integrating her creative process with digital media and the Internet.

The Internet's impact on all of us in general is itself paradoxical. It affords unprecedented potential for both connection and isolation. There are limitless avenues to community on social media, yet spending time online can cause people to become disconnected from the physical

world around them. Technology's landscape is marked by an ongoing struggle between the preservation of privacy and the encroachment of surveillance. There is an interplay between artifice and authenticity, where the tension between the online self and the offline self poses profound questions about the nature of identity in the digital age.

Goon Squad grapples with these tensions—and at times contradictions—of technology as well as the ethical landscape and anxieties surrounding it. Regina Schober analyzes the ways that *Goon Squad* “explores the impact of digital media on human (self)conceptualizations, cultural values, and the function of language and knowledge in a contemporary media environment” (360). Katherine D. Johnston probes the ways in which *Goon Squad* “keenly depicts the politics of positionality with regards to surveillance, metadata, and metafiction” (156) and “the link between state surveillance and rampant consumer surveillance” (161) in the shape of social media. While some of Egan's characters like Bennie Salazar (a record executive grappling with the anxiety of aging) and Rebecca (an “academic star” who scrutinizes the impact of technology on language) reject digital media, others like Lulu (a social media marketer) and Alison (a twelve-year-old PowerPoint diarist) embrace it. Collectively, Egan's characters illustrate the tension between fear of technology's “dehumanizing effects” and what Schober describes as “a particularly ‘American’ affinity to new technology in embracing the new media's potential” (360). Egan's exploration of and experimentation with new media may reflect the anxieties circling technology and its impact on language and communication; but, as I will argue, Egan simultaneously reveals the emotional and intellectual payoff of working with these mediums through her printed work and outside of it, exploring the potential depths of our interactions with digital channels that can otherwise seem devoid of emotional depth. Egan encourages us to consider both the potential and drawbacks of those interactions in an increasingly digital world.

Goon Squad and its successor, *The Candy House*, also raise questions about how readers' engagement with paratexts and what Virginia Pignagnoli describes as "digital epitexts"—or digital material that exists outside of a text, such as websites and social media feeds, that expand the literary narrative (11)—differ from conventional, text-based narratives. Gérard Genette coined the term "paratext" in 1987, defining it as "a heterogenous group of practices and discourses of all kinds and dating from all periods" or "the external presentation of a book" (2-3). As Bradley Reina points out, "special pages for new chapters, graphic frontispieces, ornaments to denote space breaks, and drop caps or large initials," have "long existed in the novel" (14). We can think, for example, of Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*, a pioneering work of experimental fiction that, according to Peter de Voogd, includes "four typographical features that stand out," which consist of "two black pages, a hand-marbled coloured leaf, a series of squiggly woodcuts, and a woodcut depicting a flourish" (74). Sterne leveraged the advances in printing technology of his time to challenge narrative conventions, just as Egan does through digital print technology.

Where Egan departs from Sterne is her ability to extend her paratextual elements beyond print. Pignagnoli argues that "extratextual author-audience interactions" and digital epitexts have "gained exceptional centrality in the last few years. The variety of forms and modalities at an author's disposal to exploit the material affordances of new media—from websites to social media platforms—has been multiplying exponentially within today's context of media convergence" (1). Egan's website is an example of this author-audience interaction, as the reader is invited into her writing process in a way that is almost reminiscent of Bix Bouton's "Own Your Unconscious"—a technology in *The Candy House* that allows people to upload and experience their memories with the caveat that others can view their memories as well. This act

of sharing her nascent ideas and works-in-progress goes beyond the realm of transparency, signifying Egan's willingness to perform vulnerability and, like her characters who engage with "Own Your Unconscious," her openness to forfeiting privacy. By sharing her first drafts, Egan reveals uncertainties, rewrites, and moments of doubt while underscoring the temporal aspect of the writing process and the fluidity of storytelling, where narratives are not static entities but evolve over time.

In a 2010 email to Christopher Cox for *The Paris Review*, Egan wrote, "Simply maintaining the illusion of conventional fiction doesn't really interest me; since it's all artifice to begin with, I like to play with that dimension, if possible." Egan's work continues a tradition of metafiction associated with postmodern literature, though, as I've indicated, the convention predates the twentieth century in early works of fiction like *Tristram Shandy*, a text that Patricia Waugh argues "can be seen as the prototype for the contemporary metafictional novel" (70). She describes metafiction as "fictional writing which self-consciously and systematically draws attention to its status as artefact in order to pose questions about the relationship between fiction and reality. In providing a critique of their own methods of construction, such writings not only examine the fundamental structures of narrative fiction, they also explore the possible fictionality of the word outside the literary fictional text" (2). Just as Egan pushes the limits of print into the epitextual, Egan pushes the boundaries of fiction into metafiction, not only acknowledging fiction as artifice but also exposing, for her readers, aspects of her writing and editing processes and the unfolding relationship between fiction and technology in the twenty-first century.

Egan's website materials highlight that degree of artifice while *Goon Squad* and *The Candy House* embody Mikhail Bakhtin's concept of the novel as a "heteroglossic" form, one that embraces a multiplicity of voices and linguistic styles. In "Discourse on the Novel," Bakhtin

argues that “[t]he novelist...welcomes the heteroglossia and language diversity of the literary and extraliterary language into his own work not only weakening them but even intensifying them...It is in fact out of this stratification of language, its speech diversity, and even language diversity, that he constructs his style, while at the same time, he maintains the unity of his own creative personality and the unity...of his own style” (1104). *Goon Squad and The Candy House* employ not only a multiplicity of voices—each chapter is written from a different character’s perspective—but a multiplicity of forms as well. Caroline Levine argues that “Our preferred literary texts these days have not been well-wrought unities but texts that stage discontinuities and disruptions to resist containing form” (26). *Goon Squad* binds together multiple forms and voices within the novel—such as a magazine article, PowerPoint, and text messages—but also through author-audience interactions outside of the novel. It is in this way that Egan’s texts act like “sites...where multiple forms cross and collide” (Levine 122). However, it’s crucial to recognize that engaging with Egan’s digital epitexts is voluntary. While readers may choose to read the novel selectively (they could reconstruct and read *Goon Squad*’s chapters in chronological order), many readers may not be aware of the option to interact with digital epitexts, let alone know of their existence. The act of navigating Egan’s narrative extends beyond the printed text, encompassing the potential discovery of hidden layers that require active exploration and awareness.

Nowhere in *Goon Squad* is a mention of the digital counterpart to Chapter 12, “Great Rock and Roll Pauses,” even though in an interview with Emma Brockes of *The Guardian*, Egan says that she was “perfectly prepared to have that chapter be a [URL],” as she worried that her publishers might say “no, this is too expensive, or too far out.” The only mention of her website is in the book’s front matter, sandwiched between her brief biography and a note about

scheduling lectures and readings. Similarly, in *The Candy House*, her website is only briefly mentioned at the back of the book as part of the “About the Author” section. It seems like a missed opportunity that neither book draws attention to the wealth of supplementary material available on her website, which offers a great reward to readers who find their way there. Daniel Fladager points out that “many academic treatments of Egan’s novel that focus on the PowerPoint chapter have so far overlooked the online presentation” (313). Other elements of Egan’s *Goon Squad* website, goonsquad.jenniferegan.com (which is archived on her main website), have also been overlooked, including an interactive timeline filled with details like where and when she wrote each chapter of *Goon Squad*, explanations of why she wrote them, and notes of the music she was listening to at the time. Consequently, a comprehensive analysis and close reading of Egan’s work in this context remains largely uncharted territory. This essay aims to bridge this gap by exploring the technological elements within Egan’s narratives, but perhaps more importantly, how she extends the narrative beyond the printed page through the strategic use of digital epitexts and paratextual materials available on her website. I will analyze the ways in which these digital elements serve as extensions of the text, shaping readers’ engagement with it and augmenting their experience.

2. Digital Discord

In *Goon Squad*, many of Egan’s characters embody what Kathleen Fitzpatrick describes as “the anxiety of obsolescence.” This theme, woven throughout the novel, encompasses expressions of discontent with digitization, modernization, and technological advancements, only to subsequently undermine these complaints. Egan achieves this nuanced exploration by delving into her characters’ blind spots and presenting alternative perspectives within the text. For example, Bennie Salazar, the president of Sow’s Ear Records, laments the evolution he’s seen

music endure from the time he was a teenager in 1979, playing bass in a San Francisco garage punk band. On his way to pick up his son Chris from school, Bennie plays bands he grew up listening to—the Sleepers and the Dead Kennedys—trying to distinguish the characteristics that set them apart from contemporary popular music:

He listened for muddiness, the sense of actual musicians playing actual instruments in an actual room. Nowadays, that quality (if it existed at all) was usually an effect of analogue signaling rather than bona fide tape—everything was an effect in the bloodless constructions Bennie and his peers were churning out. He worked tirelessly...above all, to satisfy the multinational crude-oil extractors he'd sold his label to five years ago. But Bennie knew that what he was bringing into the world was shit. Too clear, too clean. The problem was precision, perfection; the problem was *digitization*, which sucked the life out of everything that got smeared through its microscopic flesh. Film, photography, music: dead. *An aesthetic holocaust!*" (22-23)

Bennie accuses digitization of interfering with music's authenticity, experiencing what Ivan Kreilkamp describes as a "sense of diminishment." For Kreilkamp, the "novel's rock-music world...serves as an occasion for broader thinking about the role of art—and specifically the novel—in contemporary culture. *Goon Squad* often seems to be indirectly considering the state of the novel in its diminishment, in an age in which the form has surrendered or lost much of the cultural authority it once possessed" (7). Bennie's allegation against digitization finds resonance in Kreilkamp's analysis, where his concern about music's authenticity parallels a larger theme of social and artistic shifts and displacements.

As Kreilkamp notes, Egan herself, in a 2017 Skype interview with Rachel Cooke for *The Guardian*, commented, "I'm obsessed with the Victorian novel. I can't help it. I feel like the

novel then was so powerful and agile in ways I'm not sure it is now." It is difficult, having read *Goon Squad*, to subscribe to the sentiment that the contemporary novel is not "powerful" and "agile" in its own right. Fitzpatrick argues, "The lament over a new technology inevitably goes up from the quarters that house the old technology, from those who stand to lose (whether in financial terms or material terms of cultural status) if the old form disappears. Thus Plato's deploring the rise of writing" (27), as he feared it would subvert the Socratic method. It's worth noting that Bennie takes issue with the "postpiracy generation, for whom things like 'copyright' and 'creative ownership' didn't exist...the dismantlers who had murdered the music business" (26-27) when the very next chapter opens with a teenage Bennie and his friends "blasting bootleg tapes of the Stranglers, the Nuns, Negative Trend" (39). Bootlegging, like piracy, is ethically questionable, yet such enterprises do extend music's reach, delivering it to broader audiences and those who might not otherwise be able to afford or access it.

What Bennie reveals in his distaste for the postpiracy generation is his interest in the lucrative aspects of the industry he claims to despise. It's possible that Bennie is projecting his own guilt onto technology and consumers because he is complicit in what he sees as the music industry's "murder" when he sells his label. It isn't until the end of the novel that Bennie returns to "producing music with a raspy, analog sound, none of which had really sold" (Egan 312). Bennie's return to producing music with this sound, despite its lack of commercial success, suggests a longing for a perceived authenticity he associates with analog sound.

Gerard Moorey suggests that "Bennie fetishizes the alleged authenticity of pre-digital recordings, his nostalgia for the album as commodity fetish dovetailing with nostalgia for his youth" (78). Bennie acknowledges that "the deep thrill of these old songs lay...in the rapturous surges of sixteen-year-oldness they induced" (Egan 23). What Bennie doesn't acknowledge,

what he doesn't *want* to acknowledge, is that even the music of his adolescence is mediated. Theodore Gracyk points out that "[l]istening to...recordings does not reveal what 'actually happened'" during the recording process (42). In his estimation, the "performance" of a song is always mediated, and it's never spontaneous. Savage considers the deceptive nature of analog recordings from this perspective as well, arguing, "technologies...were in part the manifestation of human desire—wishes that innovation, invention, and the network of interaction translated into devices capable of reproduction and manipulation of sound. All of this suggests the ways that *audio recording technology is intertwined with the creative activity that produces art*, though it might typically be classified as artifice or even as a kind of deception" (65). When Bennie visits the Stop/Go sisters, an unsuccessful band that resided on his label for a number of years, he feels invigorated because for him, "Hearing the music get made...was the thing: people and instruments and beaten-looking equipment aligning abruptly into a single structure of sound, flexible and alive" (29). Yet when he arrives, the first things he asks in their basement recording studio are, "You've got Pro Tools...right?" "Is everything miked?" "Can we lay down some tracks right now?" (29). Though he scorns digitization, Bennie relies on a digital audio workstation for production. He aims to capture what will happen in the recording studio, but the end product will still be a copy of the original performance. What begins as a romantic notion of recording—"the raw almost threadbare sound of [the sisters] mixed with the clash of instruments" (30) and the small basement recording studio "imploding from their sound" (31)—quickly transforms into an uncomfortable experience, partially because of the "airlessness of the recording studio" (32). Bennie's illusion is shattered as the Stop/Go sisters fail to live up to his expectations. Driving away from their house with his assistant, Sasha, Bennie listens to the same music he did while picking up his son, imagining that through his selection, "he was confessing

to her his disillusionment—his *hatred* for the industry he'd given his life to" and of the "singles he'd...been petitioning radio stations to add, husks of music, lifeless and cold as the squares of office neon cutting the blue twilight" (Egan 36). We should pay close attention to the word "husk," which returns in the final chapter to describe language imprinted on by the Internet.

In *Goon Squad*'s final chapter, "Pure Language," the Web is put under scrutiny as a threat to language and communication; however, a closer examination of digital interactions like T-ing (the novel's version of texting) complicates questions about language's evolution as a result of smartphones and the Internet. In this chapter, Rebecca and Alex have made the decision to shield their impressionable toddler from "handsets" (the novel's version of smartphones in Egan's near future), but Alex "felt unable to explain...the beliefs he shared with Rebecca about children and handsets" (321). The novel leaves this shared understanding implicit, compelling readers to connect the dots through Alex's descriptions of Rebecca's work as a "harried academic" and her apparent technophobia. Rebecca argues that the Web has watered down language, or at least aspects of it. She invents the term "word casings" for words that have diminished in value by way of their technological contexts, that "no longer had meaning outside of quotation marks" (323), such as "friend," "real," "story," "change," "search," and "cloud" (324). From Rebecca's perspective, these words have "been shucked of their meaning and reduced to husks" (324). For her, the natural evolution of language over time—and we might think of the evolution of the novel as well—has been diminished rather than enriched by the changing digital landscape. In *Keywords*, Raymond Williams considers the evolution of language through the context of his experience returning home after World War II. He remarks that he "just [didn't] speak the same language" (xxiii) as everyone around him who had remained home during the four and a half years he was away. He continues,

When we come to say “we just don’t speak the same language” we mean something more general: that we have different immediate values or different kinds of valuation, or that we are aware, often intangibly, of different formations and distributions of energy and interest. In such a case, each group is speaking its native language, but its uses are significantly different, and especially when strong feelings or important ideas are in question. (xxiii-xxiv)

Just as Williams observes the divergence between languages based on distinct experiences, Rebecca’s outlook highlights the tension between pre-digital and post-digital languages. Language’s evolution is marked by shifts in societal values and technological advancements, and what may seem like diminishment for some is a natural progression for others. Through Rebecca, Egan underscores the complex interplay between linguistic change and the transformative influence of digitization on our perception of language.

We might think of Rebecca, Alex, and Bennie as akin to those who grieve the death of the novel. For Kreilkamp, *Goon Squad* “is pervaded by a sense of literal and figurative loss, a fear that we (both the novel’s characters and the culture more broadly) have somehow, without realizing it, abandoned or destroyed something essential to our being” (71). When Alex meets with Lulu—who has replaced Sasha as Bennie’s new assistant—to discuss his work recruiting “parrots” (the novel’s version of influencers) who will market the Scotty Hausman concert Bennie is producing, they bicker as a result of the different “languages” they speak and what seems like an erosion of shared understanding. When describing the marketing campaign, Lulu says, “we’re going to make a blind team, with you as the anonymous captain” (Egan 318). While she claims these are marketing terms from school, Alex dumbfoundedly points out, “they’re sports terms...from sports” (Egan 318). Lulu dismisses Alex’s ethical and moral concerns with

parroting—a practice involving recruiting individuals to create “authentic” word of mouth to promote a product, event, or opinion. In his attempt to secure parrots who will promote a concert for Bennie, Alex’s selection process includes determining how much his targets need money and assessing their susceptibility to becoming “corruptible” agents of influence. Lulu tells Alex, “On the surface, it looks like you might not even do it, you’re so ambivalent, but I think it’s the opposite: I think the [ethical ambivalence] is a kind of inoculation, a way of excusing yourself in advance for something you actually want to do. No offense” (Egan 320). Alex responds, “Kind of like saying ‘no offense’ when you’ve just said something offensive?” (Egan 320). Then, “Lulu underwent the most extreme blush Alex had ever witnessed: a vermillion heat encompassed her face so abruptly that the effect was of something violent taking place, as if she were choking or about to hemorrhage” (Egan 320). Once Alex draws attention to the emotions tied to their conversation, Lulu’s composure and confidence falters. Her response is to immediately shift to a different mode of communication and T him instead.

For all of its negative connotations, T-ing enables Alex and Lulu to bond. Once they transition from verbal communication to digital, their interaction softens. Lulu says that T-ing is “pure” with “no philosophy, no metaphors, no judgments” (Egan 321) and, consequently, no opportunity for misunderstanding or misinterpretation. Of course, George Lakoff and Mark Johnson would disagree, arguing that “metaphor is not just a matter of language, that is, of mere words...on the contrary, human *thought processes* are largely metaphorical” (6). Lulu’s approach to communicating seems callous—likely one of the unspoken reasons Rebecca and Alex don’t want their toddler, Cara-Ann, to engage with a handset. Yet, this method of communicating brims with the potential for human connection:

Litl grl, U hav a nyc dad, Alex dutifully read aloud, a blush promptly staking a claim on

his own face. Cara-Ann pounded keys with the hectic fervor of a starving dog unleashed in a meat locker. Now a blooper appeared, one of the stock images people sent to kids: a lion under a sparkling sun. Cara-Ann zoomed in on different parts of the lion as if she'd been doing this since birth. Lulu T'd: *Nvr met my dad. Dyd b4 I ws brn.* Alex read this one in silence. (Egan 322)

T-ing empowers Lulu to share personal details that she may not have otherwise shared. It so unsettles Alex that when he responds verbally, he feels his voice is a “coarse intrusion” (Egan 322). It is Alex’s turn to blush as they shift to Lulu’s native language. Despite Lulu having the home-field advantage (to use a “sports term”), she becomes an equally vulnerable party in the interaction.

In this sequence, Egan suggests that using the kind of digital media that Rebecca eschews does not take authentic connection out of the equation but amplifies it. Additionally, T-ing allows Lulu to connect with Cara-Ann, who, like Lulu, demonstrates signs of digital fluency. The way Cara-Ann engages with the handset intuitively, with the “hectic fervor of a starving dog” (Egan 322), suggests she may be deprived of a kind of natural communication. At the same time, this metaphor reveals Alex’s inherent aversion to technology and what might be unwarranted fear. Cara-Ann’s acquisition of this digital fluency mirrors the way she acquires language throughout the chapter, suggesting that perhaps one isn’t more natural than the other. This idea is reinforced when Alex considers “how easily baby talk fitted into the crawl space of a T” (Egan 327). It may be that by withholding this channel of communication, Alex and Rebecca will ultimately delay Cara-Ann’s capacity to connect with others.

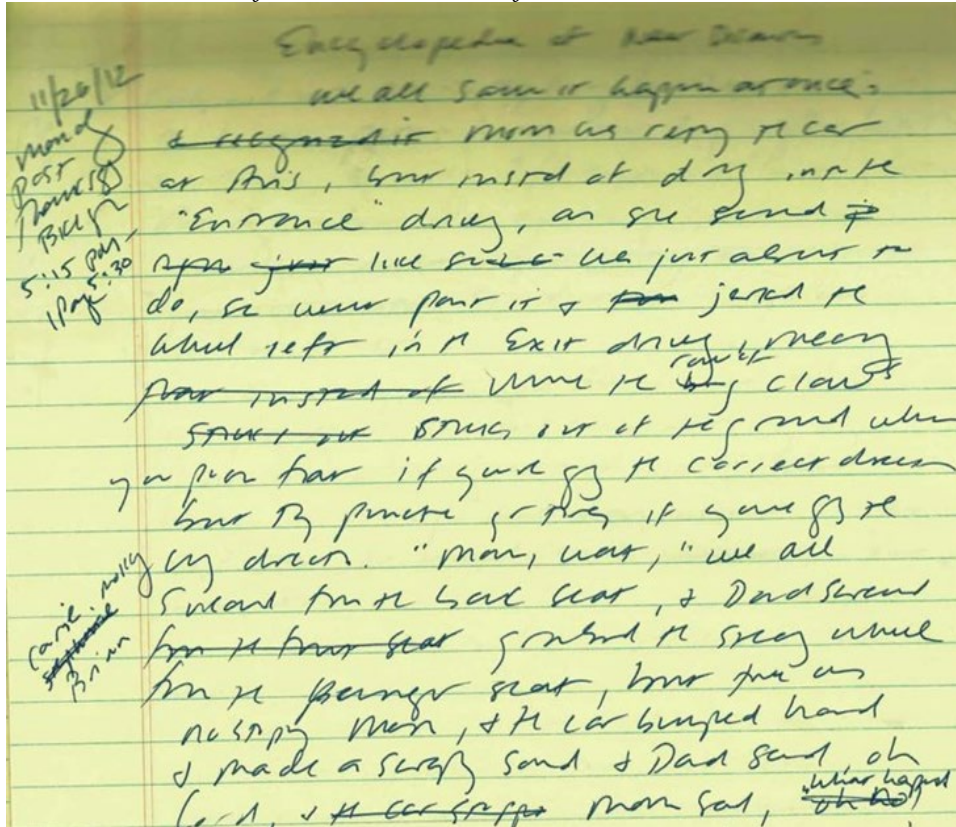
By the end of “Pure Language,” Bennie and Alex bring thousands together using social media and the ethically questionable practice of parroting. The analog experience of the concert,

as well as the analog nature of its artist, seem to be revered. Alex describes Scott's songs as "ballads of paranoia and disconnection ripped from the chest of a man who knew just by looking had never had a page or a profile or a handle or handset, who was part of no one's data, a guy who had lived in the cracks all these years, forgotten and full of rage, in a way that now registered as pure. Untouched" (Egan 336). Yet, there's no denying that Scotty is impacted by digitization—that his success was only possible because of social media under the guise of authentic word of mouth. It is also Alex's handset that allows him to locate his wife and daughter amidst the massive crowd—he uses a zoom feature to "spot her" from far away. He remarks, "Without the zoom, he couldn't even see them" (Egan 336). Worried about being separated from Rebecca, he T's her in "desperation...*pls wAt 4 me, my bUtiful wyf*, then kept his zoom trained on her face until he saw her register the vibration, pause in her dancing, and reach for it" (Egan 336-337). This moment of connection and outreach, and the concert as a whole, is made possible at least in part by technology, offering a counterpoint to the fears depicted by other characters.

The character dynamics Egan creates in *Goon Squad* parallel and reflect the way she incorporates paratextual and digital epitextual elements in the novel and its sequel, creating a metafictional layer in the narrative. For those who may fear that digitization has incited an "aesthetic holocaust," Egan addresses this sense of loss. While her work is informed by digital media, the handwritten drafts on her website (see Figure 2) attempt to humanize and materialize the creative process, despite the fact that readers can only access them digitally.

Figure 2

Prior Incarnation of "The Perimeter Before"



Source: jenniferegan.com/artifacts/the-perimeter-before/

While art's increasing "dematerialization" is a physical loss, its digitization enables Egan to expand her work. Her website creates the space for epitextual sprawl that would be difficult, if not impossible, to mirror in print. In her digital *Goon Squad* timeline, she shares personal notes about when, where, and why she wrote each chapter, as well as links to the music she was listening to at the time. While her links to iTunes, YouTube, and Amazon have since broken, they showcase the potential for authors to connect with their readers. These broken links are also emblematic of the transitory nature of the digital, underscoring the evolution in the way we engage with artistic content. Egan's characters likewise interact with digital media, showcasing how their lives are intertwined with a rapidly changing digital landscape. This mirrors Egan's own engagement with technology in her storytelling. Characters' use of technology reflects the

real-world impact of these tools and how we are all constantly negotiating our relationships with technology and its influence on art. This parallel between the characters' experiences and Egan's metafictional approach underscores the ways in which the novel can engage with contemporary technological shifts, making it a vital part of the evolving literary landscape. As I will show in the following section, Egan's use of digital paratext and epitexts offers us possibilities for the future, rather than the death, of the novel.

3. Egan's Digital Epitexts

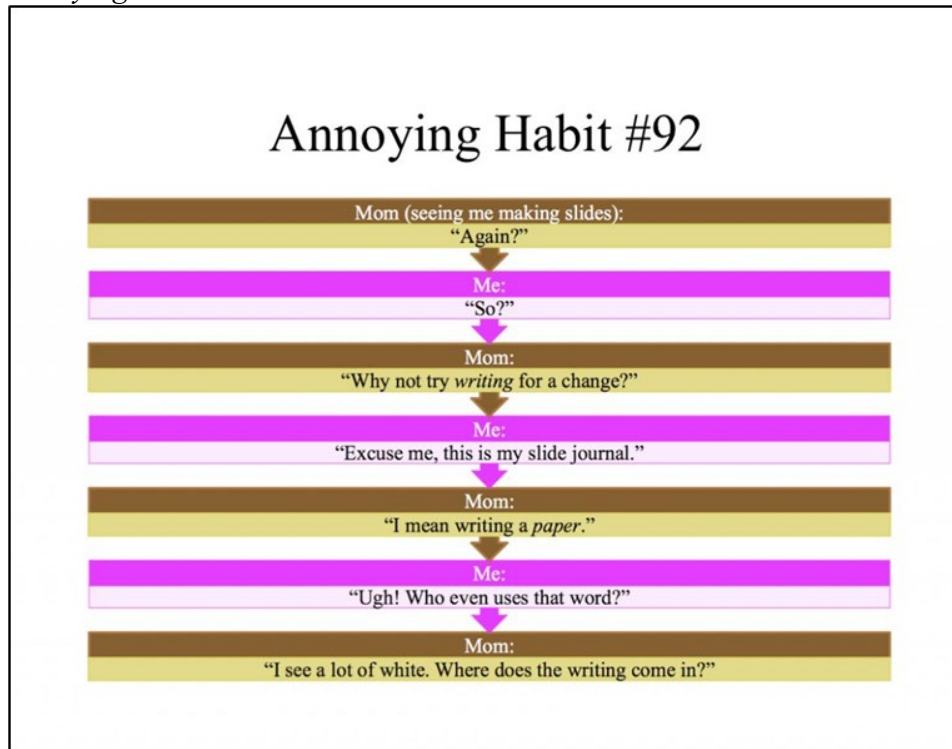
Egan's experimental narrative modes converge seamlessly with the sphere of digital epitexts, highlighting (literally) the themes found in her novels while reflecting "the state of reading within a networked culture" (Fitzpatrick 153). Genette describes an epitext as "any paratextual element not materially appended to the text within the same volume but circulating, as it were, freely, in a virtually limitless physical and social space" (344). Through this digital pathway, Egan not only invites readers backstage to her creative process but also propels her novels into a space where it's possible to create a more interactive network between her texts and readers. Digitizing elements of her work is not merely a response to contemporary technological shifts but an assertion of the novel's adaptability and endurance in a changing literary landscape. Egan's web materials serve not merely as auxiliary artifacts but as a dynamic extension of her narrative.

As mentioned earlier, Egan was concerned that her publishers might reject "Great Rock and Roll Pauses"—her PowerPoint chapter in *Goon Squad*—because of costs or logistics; however, the presentation did find its way to print. While the chapter is printed in greyscale, the digital presentation on Egan's website is alive with color and embedded audio clips of the music the PowerPoint references. Fladager argues that the digital chapter "create[s] a unique reading

experience that expands the print boundaries of Egan's novel into the digital world" (313).

However, Egan feared that the publishing industry might—like Bennie—see literary digitization as contributing to an “aesthetic holocaust.” In her interview with Brockes, she confessed, “I thought, all I'm going to do is make everyone frightened by telling them I'm writing in PowerPoint.” Having never used the presentation software and therefore unfamiliar with its corporate conventions, Egan had the capacity to treat it the way a child might experiment with Microsoft Paint.

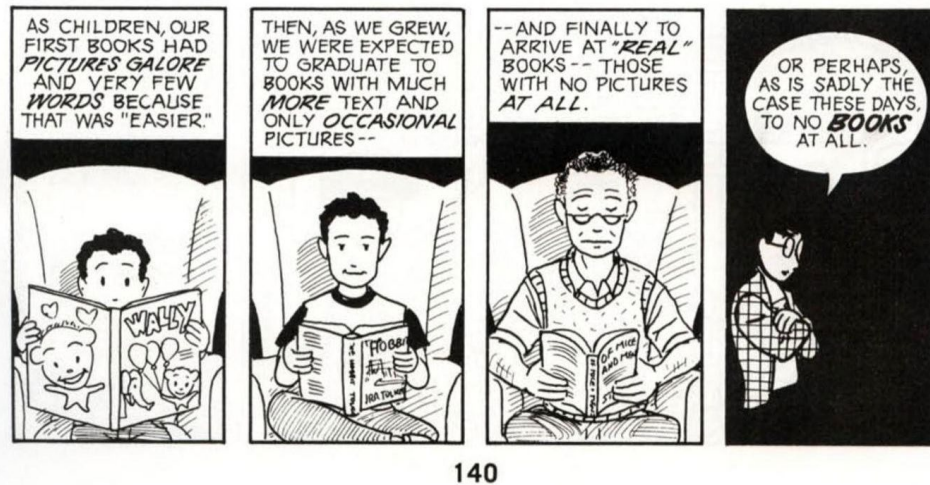
“Great Rock and Roll Pauses” is a slide journal that Sasha's daughter, twelve-year-old Alison Blake, creates in PowerPoint during an imagined variant of the 2020s. Her digital diary incorporates elements like shapes, arrows, diagrams, color, and sound (the latter two in Egan's digital iteration) that we typically don't see in a novel. From a paratextual perspective, Egan compels her readers to regard the print book spatially, as they are forced to rotate it on its side and turn its pages vertically rather than horizontally (perhaps to the confusion of passersby). In this way, even parts of Alison's journal that move unambiguously, like her conversation with Sasha about creating the slide journal, feel unfamiliar.

Figure 3*Annoying Habit #92*

Source: <https://jenniferegan.com/excerpt/a-visit-from-the-goon-squad/>

On the slide in Figure 3, Sasha focuses not on the nature of what Alison is writing but the way and the amount she is writing. Sasha says, "I see a lot of white," and asks, "Where does the writing come in?" (253). Sasha's apprehension and skepticism seem akin to Bennie's distress about the shift from analog to digital recording and Rebecca's concern about the impact of handsets on her daughter. Her focus on traditional "writing" also calls to mind Scott McCloud's discussion about how the marriage of words and images is perceived: "It's considered normal in this society for children to combine words and pictures, so long as they grow out of it" (139).

Figure 4
Show and Tell



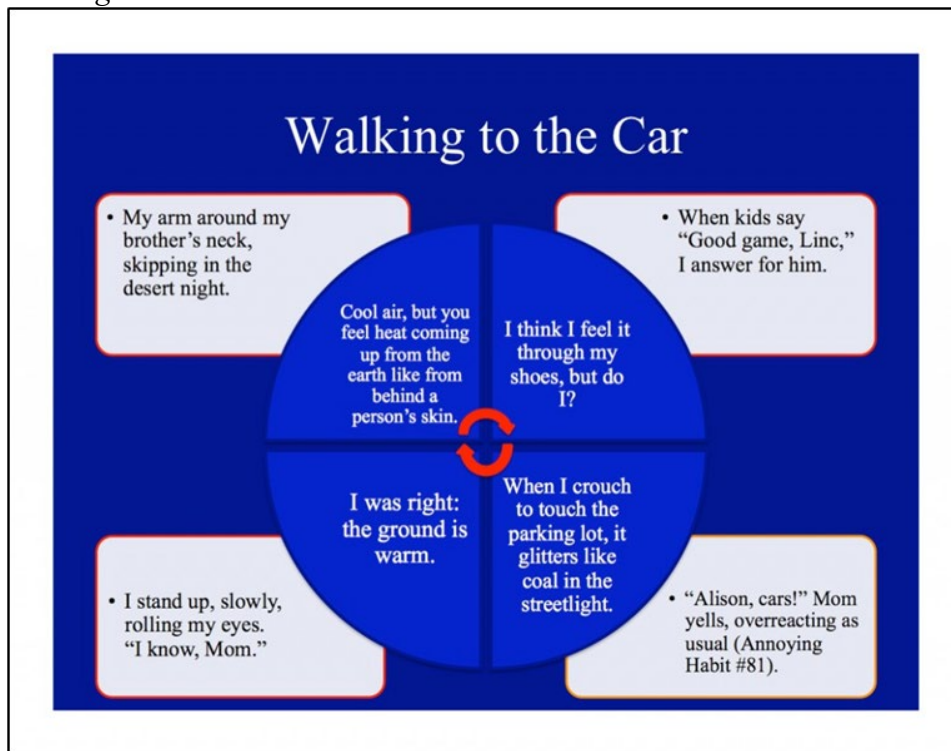
Source: Scott McCloud. *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art*. William Morrow, 1993.

Sasha doesn't seem to consider that the presentation software isn't limiting how Alison expresses herself but is empowering her to externalize her thoughts in a distinctive way. Egan uses PowerPoint in a similar way, expanding her novel's scope and opening up avenues for exploration. In Egan's digital presentation, Alison frequently represents Sasha with muted, neutral colors, suggesting a sense of conformity, while representing herself with a vivid fuchsia shade, a visual proclamation of her individuality and autonomy.

The way Alison navigates the white space of the PowerPoint slides allows her to illustrate how she experiences the world around her, how she holds multiple thoughts simultaneously, and how she doesn't see or feel the world linearly. Though Alison is being facetious when she recites "slide slogans" from school like "Give us the issues, not the tissues," or "A word-wall is a long haul" (254), Egan makes a compelling argument for her unconventional journal. The slides in her presentation evoke a series of panels in a comic, and Egan, much like a comic artist, trusts her readers' ability to fill in gaps through "closure," what McCloud describes as "the phenomenon of observing the parts but perceiving the whole" (63). He writes, "comic panels fracture both time and space, offering a jagged, staccato rhythm of unconnected moments. But closure allows us to

connect these moments and mentally construct a continuous unified reality” (67). Alison’s “Walking to the Car” slide in Figure 5 is an impressive example of her external experiences and interactions juxtaposed with her rich inner world.

Figure 5
Walking to the Car



Source: <https://jenniferegan.com/excerpt/a-visit-from-the-goon-squad/>

In Figure 5, we can see how Alison’s thoughts are both cyclical and central to her experiences while everything happening around her is on the periphery. There is a sense of distraction in Alison’s interactions as she answers her brother’s friends on his behalf and responds to Sasha’s anxiety about cards in the parking lot while trying to connect with her environment. Alison perceives the external objectively while her inner experiences are figurative, with “heat coming up from the earth like from behind a person’s skin” and the parking lot “glitter[ing] like coal in the streetlight” (238). The audiobook gives us an idea of how this slide might be arranged in traditional prose:

Cool air, but you feel heat coming up from the earth like from behind a person's skin. My arm around my brother's neck, skipping in the desert night. I think I feel it through my shoes, but do I? When kids say "Good game, Linc," I answer for him. When I crouch to touch the parking lot, it glitters like coal in the streetlight. "Alison, cars!" Mom yells, overreacting as usual (Annoying Habit #81). I was right: the ground is warm. I stand up, slowly, rolling my eyes. "I know, Mom." (8:21:41-22:23)

Alison's thoughts and interactions are no longer presented as simultaneous in this linear organization, and it feels as if something has been lost. While the audiobook has its own value in presenting the sentences in an accessible and straightforward way, the structure of the PowerPoint, by contrast, creates a greater sense of disconnect between what Alison is saying to others and what she is thinking, which is more abstract. Egan uses the flexible space of the slide, shapes, arrows, and color contrast to evoke this sensation.

The digital presentation is perhaps at its most immersive when the reader becomes a listener, encountering embedded audio on slide 11, shown in Figure 6. Just after Alison prefaces that her brother Lincoln is "obsessed with rock songs that have pauses in them," a sample of the Four Tops' song "Bernadette" plays suddenly, followed by samples of Jimi Hendrix's "Foxy Lady," and David Bowie's "Young Americans," each featuring a pause.

Figure 6
Songs with Lincoln's Comments

Songs with Lincoln's Comments

"Bernadette," by the Four Tops	"Foxey Lady," by Jimi Hendrix	"Young Americans," by David Bowie
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "This is an excellent early pause. The voice tapers off, and then you've still got 1.5 seconds of total silence, from 2:38 to 2:39.5, before the chorus kicks back in. You think, Hey, the song didn't end after all—but then, 26.5 seconds later, it does end." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Another great early pause: 2 seconds long, coming 2:23 seconds into a 3:19-minute-long song. But this one isn't total silence; we can hear Jimi breathing in the background." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "This is a lost opportunity. Hell, it would've been so easy to draw out the pause after '...break down and cry...' to a full second, or 2, or even 3, but Bowie must've chickened out for some reason."

Source: <https://jenniferegan.com/excerpt/a-visit-from-the-goon-squad/>

While Egan's website prepares readers with a note, "Some slides have audio. Be sure your speakers are on and the 'play' button is activated to hear it," the audio feels like an abrupt intrusion (depending on the reader's location and volume). Fladager argues, "The eruption of decontextualized musical snippets act as a visceral experience for the subject of the presentation, Alison's little brother Lincoln. Described in both versions of the chapter as 'slightly autistic,' Lincoln's almost violent outbursts of musical referentiality create a wedge between him and his father" (318). He points to slides 16 and 17, where the song "Fly Like an Eagle" accentuates the breakdown in communication: "On this slide, the song loses its harmony and slips into a discordant electronic waver just as the moment of misrecognition occurs... Lincoln wants to say, 'I love you, Dad,' but, through a string of increasingly distorted referents, ends up talking about a popular rock song" (318). The auditory experience stresses the challenges inherent in Lincoln's mode of communication, emphasizing the gap between his intention and the actual expression

through music. While the print reader could theoretically “pause” to search for and play the referenced songs, consuming the presentation digitally provides a more immediate and integrated experience.

The digital version of the slides isn’t the only epitext available on Egan’s website. As noted earlier, “Great Rock and Roll Pauses” is part of Egan’s interactive autobiographical timeline in which she shares personal notes and memories associated with each chapter of *Goon Squad*. Pignagnoli argues that through these artifacts, “Egan extends the storyworld of her novel with incursions from the actual world... This puts to the fore a postmodernist ontological juxtaposition of the actual world and the fictional storyworld” (66). Egan invites readers to actively participate in the interplay between reality and fiction. Unlike traditional methods of author-reader interaction, such as interviews (which are often mediated by external sources and lack direct engagement), Egan’s digital timeline invites a kind of intimacy between author and reader.

While this discussion has centered primarily on Egan’s innovation within the framework of *Goon Squad*, it is crucial to acknowledge *The Candy House*, which the publisher has described not as a sequel but a “sibling novel.” In this subsequent work, Egan’s venture into digital epitexts takes on heightened significance, extending and enriching the landscape she previously explored. In a book review for *The New York Times*, James Poniewozik argues that while *Goon Squad* is like “a concept album,” *The Candy House* is like “a social network, the literary version of the collaborative novel written by your friends and friends of friends on Facebook or Instagram.” In this transition, technology assumes the role once played by punk rock. Notably, Egan not only extends the cast of characters from *Goon Squad* into *The Candy House* but also extends the digital epitexts associated with the former into the latter. Both within

the novel and on her website, *Goon Squad* becomes the origin point for an expansive network. In each interactive excerpt, she shares allusions to other chapters in *The Candy House*, highlighted in pink, and allusions to *Goon Squad*, highlighted in orange:

Dennis sold vintage weed: Humboldt Homegrown, **Eureka** Gold, weed from back in the day when marijuana was leafy and harsh and full of seeds but delivered a high that was the weed equivalent of vinyl: “whorled” and “crosshatched,” “sonorous” and “plump” (Dennis’s MFA in poetry served him well in these marketing descriptions)—in other words, *authentic* in ways that the bloodless, odorless tinctures that passed for weed nowadays were not.

“How is our Athena?” Gregory projected, with effort, toward his open bedroom door. In the weeks since a mysterious fatigue had confined him to his bed, Gregory and Dennis had perfected the art of conversing between rooms.

“Unchanged,” Dennis said. “*Topical. Fearsome.*” He popped briefly into Gregory’s doorframe.

“*Poison,*” Gregory said.

“Aaaaaant.” Dennis made a buzzer noise. **Word-casing.**”

While the title of the chapter “Eureka Gold” may call to mind “The Gold Cure” from *Goon Squad*, clicking on “Eureka” transports readers to “What the Forest Remembers,” in which Charlie Kline uses the Collective Consciousness to explore her father Lou’s memories from the 1960s (readers of *Goon Squad* will recognize Lou as a music producer and Bennie’s mentor). The chapter begins, “Once upon a time, in a faraway land, there was a forest. It’s gone now (burned), and the four men walking in it are gone, too, which is what makes it far away. Neither it nor they exist” (130). This language has a fairytale quality, much like the novel’s titular reference to the story of Hansel and Gretel, evoking a feeling of nostalgia and wistfulness for what has been lost. “What the Forest Remembers” was originally published as a short story in *The New Yorker*, and in an interview for that magazine with Deborah Treisman, Egan said,

the chasm between generations in the nineteen-sixties in some ways mirrors the chasm between people who grew up with the Internet and those, like me, who did not. As a writer, I’m fascinated by technology, but as a human I feel a dread that’s rooted in my

frightened awareness of how different it must be to grow up without the kind of solitude I remember having. And I think that frightened awareness of difference is the definition of a generation gap!

Egan's use of the word "chasm" emphasizes the significant differences in experiences, perspectives, and environments across generations. In the "Last bit of history" she shares about "Pure Language" on her website, she considers "that a whole generation of young New Yorkers has never seen [the original World Trade Center]—their experience of the city is purely post 9/11." The forest's disappearance becomes a metaphor for a vanishing world in an environmental sense but also in a technological sense. As Kreilkamp observes, "art has become increasingly dematerialized, out there nowhere in servers and clouds" (2). In *The Candy House*, Bennie is still "striving for cultural relevance in a world that seems to happen in a nonexistent 'place' that we can't even find unless our kids (or grandkids!) show it to us" (298). The physical world is altered by a kind of digital sprawl, where what used to be photo albums or tape cassettes become nebulous data, and this is the fate of memories. A book trailer for *The Candy House* from Simon & Schuster takes the form of an advertisement for Own Your Unconscious, encouraging people to share their personal memories with the Collective Consciousness.

Figure 7

Own Your Unconscious with The Candy House



Source: <https://jenniferegan.com/news/own-your-unconscious/>

While the trailer emphasizes technology that gives users the ability to hear, touch, taste, and feel memories, social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok already allow users to share their personal experiences, photos, and memories with or beyond their networks. Joss Hands notes that, “[i]n certain contexts, such as an open access social media app, this memory can then become accessible to any other user of the network, becoming absorbed into their device and therefore also potentially available to their social endogram¹” (98). These platforms essentially serve as digital archives where individuals document and share their life events,

¹ Hands has adopted this term from Zoltan Torey, who “call[s] the product of the continuously updating cortical maps the *endogram* (from the Greek ‘*endon*’—within, and ‘*grammar*’—a writing). The endogram or internal ‘readout’ (Mountcastle 1978) is the animal brain’s neural representation. It is the integrated audio-, visuo-, somato-sensory model of what goes on in and about it. The endogram is not watched or handled by the animal because in neural terms it is identical with it. By contrast, humans can access this endogram, handle it with language and proprioceptively sense that they are modulating it. Humans can reflect on this ground state of awareness and integrate experience of reflection into the endogram on which they are reflecting” (21).

creating a curated narrative of their personal history while contributing to a kind of collective history. Egan points out in her interview with Treisman that memory externalization and sharing “is not all that different from what the Internet already does.” Within the framework of the novel, however, Egan’s representation of the Collective Consciousness defamiliarizes our perception of social media, prompting us to reconsider and question the conventional understanding of social media’s impact.

Browsing through Egan’s website material, both her interactive *Goon Squad* timeline and *The Candy House* drafts, gives readers the sense of probing the Collective Consciousness. Egan shares personal memories and experiences with her readers, constructing a shared narrative and immersive experience that compliments her writing. In the embryos of her first drafts, we see how titles evolved, when she was writing them, and what she scrapped. Clicking on each draft and each highlighted allusion is addicting, similar to falling down a “Wiki rabbit hole,” just as Alice is tempted to Wonderland and Hansel and Gretel the candy house.

5

A hundred feet of blue-black Mediterranean will allow you ample time to deliver a strong self-lecture.

At such moments, it may be useful to explicitly recall your training: “You will be infiltrating the lives of **criminals**.”

“You will be in constant danger.

“Some of you will not survive, but those who do will be heroes.

“A few of you will save lives or even change the course of history.

“We ask of you an impossible combination of traits: ironclad **scruples** and a willingness to violate them;

“An abiding love for your country and a willingness to consort with individuals working actively to destroy it;

“The instincts and intuition of experts, and the blank records and true freshness of **ingenues**.”

“You will each perform this service only once, after which you will return to your lives.

“We can’t promise that you will be exactly **the same** when you go back.”

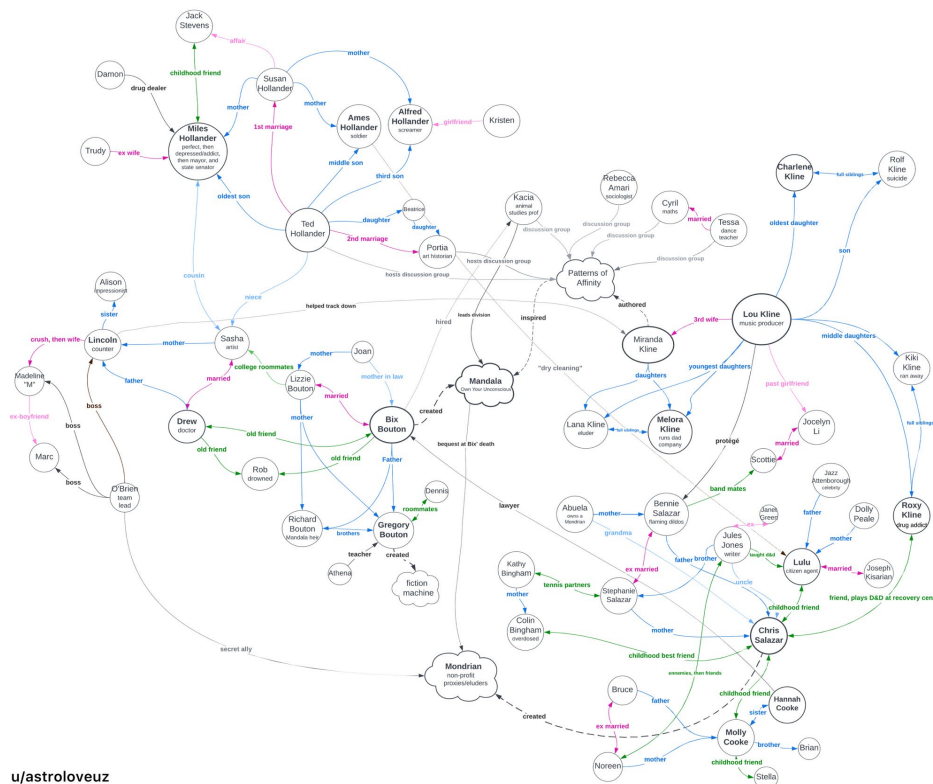
In an excerpt from “Lulu the Spy,” which was originally published as a short story by *The New Yorker* in 2012 as a series of Tweets, Lulu has moved on from her position as Bennie’s assistant and become a “Citizen Agent,” a spy for the U.S. government, recording a mission through a “weevil” device implanted in her head. What Johnston describes as “Lulu’s “feminized labor” as a “handset employee” (162) is transposed to her espionage, as she is expected to sacrifice both her body and mind for the mission at hand. From Johnston’s perspective, Egan, in *Goon Squad*, “mockingly portrays Lulu as a disciple of [neoliberal] thinking” because she “seeks solace in ‘capitalist realism’” (162) and the idea that an “ethically perfect state” (Egan 319) does not exist.

Egan’s annotation, drawing readers’ attention to the word “ingenue,” which links to the “Pure Language” entry on her website, suggests instead that Egan sympathizes with Lulu’s interpellation into such ideologies in both novels. In this excerpt, Egan traces Lulu’s history as a child in “Selling the General,” Bennie’s assistant in “Pure Language,” a Citizen Agent in “Lulu the Spy,” and an anxious mother in “See Below,” a chapter that reads like the endlessly overflowing inbox too many of us have come to know. In this digital space, Egan is not only the

architect of her novels but the curator of an evolving literary experience. This deliberate intertextuality serves as a bridge between the two novels, enriching the reader's understanding by signaling the thematic and narrative threads that bind them together, perhaps giving them momentum to draw further connections of their own.

The comparison between Egan's novels and a social network becomes increasingly palpable as readers actively engage in the creation of character maps and share their interpretations online. Annalisa Quinn, in a book review for NPR, says that she "drew a character map while reading...*The Candy House*, just for the pleasure of charting the swooping, kaleidoscopic intersections of parents and children...of a central set of people first introduced in her 2010 novel." Others have done the same and shared them online, one reader creating an extensive character map and sharing it with others on Reddit, shown in Figure 8:

Figure 8
Character Map for The Candy House



Source: <https://imgur.com/gallery/8OLDHTZ>

This online sharing not only extends the novel's reach beyond the confines of the printed page but transforms the act of reading into a collaborative, collective activity. The network created online reflects not only the intricate relationships between *Goon Squad* and *The Candy House* but becomes a testament to Egan's impact on her readership. In this way, the social network analogy takes on a dual significance—not only is the novel itself likened to a network of characters, but the online interactions further reinforce the interconnected nature of both the narrative and the readership. The digital landscape becomes an extension of Egan's literary universe, where readers actively participate in shaping and expanding the web woven between the two novels.

4. Conclusion

Fitzpatrick argues that “there is no reason to suspect that print generally, or the book in general, or the novel specifically, will die...print and the electronic media might produce a new hybrid. This hybrid might look something like the e-book, or it might look like hypertext on the web. It is more likely, however, that it will take a form we cannot yet imagine” (39). Egan's website helps us begin to imagine, serving as a blueprint for future novels that are inseparable from their digital epitexts—novels with elements, like her PowerPoint chapter, that are intended to be experienced in a multimodal environment. Egan's approach ushers in a paradigm shift in how we conceive of and interact with literary works, challenging traditional notions of print by inviting readers to navigate a web of hypertext. David Scott Kastan argues,

The electronic text is permeable in a way that the printed text is not, not isolated from other texts in its physical integrity but existing in the same environment, so that, indeed, it is unable to “shut out other texts” that are networked with it. Any document can be linked to and thus become part of any other text. The resulting hypertext is thus the

materialization of a Barthesian conception of textuality itself, a textual environment in which any text can intersect and be intersected by an infinite number of others. (740)

Egan leaves us digital breadcrumbs to *The Candy House* on her website, with hyperlinks that enable readers to traverse seamlessly between concepts, characters, and themes as part of a dynamic reading experience.

The intertextual connections on Egan's website not only intensify readers' engagement but also create pathways for analysis. By presenting a model where texts can "intersect and be intersected," Egan not only reshapes the potential structure of the novel but also reconceptualizes the relationship between author, text, and reader. Her digital epitexts become a playground for interpretation, where readers are invited to participate in the ongoing construction of meaning by exploring suggested connections and sharing new ones, like character maps. An increase in digital paratexts and epitexts will demand a recalibration of literary criticism and a need to recognize the symbiotic relationship between the primary text and its digital extensions. *Goon Squad*, *The Candy House*, and their corresponding digital epitexts are harbingers of the evolving relationship between literature and technology. As we stand at the intersection of print and digital, Egan's work beckons us to reimagine the boundaries of the novel, the role of the reader, and literary criticism in an evolving landscape.

Works Cited

- Bakhtin, Mikhail M. *Discourse in the Novel*. 1935. *The Norton Anthology of Theory & Criticism*, edited by Vincent B. Leitch, 2nd ed., W.W. Norton & Company, 2010, pp. 1076-106.
- Brockes, Emma. "A Life in Writing: Jennifer Egan." *The Guardian*, 6 May 2011, www.theguardian.com/culture/2011/may/07/jennifer-egan-life-goon-squad.
- de Voogd, Peter. "A Singular Stroke of Eloquence: Tristram Shandy's Typography." *Nordic Journal of English Studies*, vol. 17, no. 1, Jan. 2018, pp. 75–84. *EBSCOhost*, <https://doi.org/10.35360/njes.423>.
- Egan, Jennifer. *The Candy House*. Scribner, 2022.
- . "Great Rock and Roll Pauses by Alison Blake." *Jennifer Egan*, jenniferegan.com/excerpt/a-visit-from-the-goon-squad/.
- . "Jennifer Egan." Interview by Christopher Cox. *The Paris Review*, June 2010, www.theparisreview.org/blog/2010/06/25/qa-jennifer-egan/.
- . "Jennifer Egan Does Avant-Garde Fiction — Old School." Interview by Lynn Neary. *NPR*, July 2010, www.npr.org/2010/07/25/128702628/jennifer-egan-does-avant-garde-fiction-old-school.
- . "Jennifer Egan: 'I Was Never a Hot, Young Writer. But Then I Had a Quantum Leap.'" Interview by Rachel Cooke. *The Guardian*, Sept. 2017, www.theguardian.com/books/2017/sep/24/jennifer-egan-quantum-leap-manhattan-beach-visit-from-the-goon-squad.
- . "Jennifer Egan on the Dangers of Knowing." Interview by Deborah Treisman. *The New Yorker*, 2021, www.newyorker.com/books/this-week-in-fiction/jennifer-egan-01-03-22.
- . "Lulu the Spy, 2032." *Jennifer Egan*, jenniferegan.com/artifacts/lulu-the-spy-2032/.
- . *A Visit from the Goon Squad*. Anchor Books, 2010.
- . *A Visit from the Goon Squad*. Narrated by Roxana Ortega, Random House Audio, 2019. Audiobook.

- Fitzpatrick, Kathleen. *The Anxiety of Obsolescence: The American Novel in the Age of Television*. Vanderbilt University Press, 2006.
- Fladager, Daniel. "Jennifer Egan's Digital Archive: *A Visit from the Goon Squad*, Humanism, and the Digital Experience." *Lit: Literature Interpretation Theory*, vol. 31, no. 4, Oct. 2020, pp. 313–327. *EBSCOhost*, doi:10.1080/10436928.2020.1840004.
- Genette, Gérard. *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*. Cambridge UP, 1997.
- Gracyk, Theodore. *Rhythm and Noise: An Aesthetics of Rock*. Duke UP, 1996.
- Hands, Joss. *Gadget Consciousness: Collective Thought, Will and Action in the Age of Social Media*. PlutoPress, 2019.
- Johnston, Katherine D. "Metadata, Metafiction, and the Stakes of Surveillance in Jennifer Egan's *A Visit from the Goon Squad*." *American Literature*, vol. 89, no. 1, Mar. 2017, pp. 155–84. *EBSCOhost*, <https://doi.org/10.1215/00029831-3788753>.
- Kastan, David Scott. "From Codex to Computer; Or, Presence of Mind." 2001. *Modern Criticism and Theory: A Reader*, edited by David Lodge and Nigel Wood, 3rd ed., Routledge, 2013, pp. 731-50.
- Kreilkamp, Ivan. *A Visit from the Goon Squad Reread*. Columbia University Press, 2021.
- Lake, Christina Bieber. "Review: The Middle Children of History." Review of *The Candy House*, by Jennifer Egan. *Current*, 3 Apr. 2023, currentpub.com/2023/04/03/review-the-middle-children-of-history/.
- Lakoff, George, and Mark Johnson. *Metaphors We Live By*. U of Chicago P, 1980.
- Levine, Caroline. *Forms: Whole, Rhythm, Hierarchy, Network*. Princeton University Press, 2015.
- McCloud, Scott. *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art*. William Morrow, 1993.
- Moorey, Gerard. "Aging, Death, and Revival: Representations of the Music Industry in Two Contemporary Novels." *Popular Music & Society*, vol. 37, no. 1, Feb. 2014, pp. 65–84. *EBSCOhost*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/03007766.2012.726036>.
- Pignagnoli, Virginia. *Post-Postmodernist Fiction and the Rise of Digital Epitexts*. Ohio State

University Press, 2023.

Poniewozik, James. "A Visit to 'The Candy House.'" *The New York Times*,

www.nytimes.com/2022/04/06/books/review/jennifer-egan-the-candy-house.html.

Quinn, Annalisa. "'The Candy House' is a Brilliant Portrait of Intersecting Lives." *National Public*

Radio, 2022, www.npr.org/2022/04/06/1090201253/the-candy-house-is-a-brilliant-portrait-of-intersecting-lives.

Savage, Steve. "Art or Artifice?" *Bytes and Backbeats: Repurposing Music in the Digital Age*, U of

Michigan P, 2011, pp. 61-78. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctvc5pf3g.10.

Schober, Regina. "Between Nostalgic Resistance and Critical Appropriation: Contemporary

American Fiction on/of the Information Age and the Potentials of (Post)Humanist

Narrative." *Amerikastudien / American Studies*, vol. 61, no. 3, 2016, pp. 359–379. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/44982296.

Torey, Zoltan. *The Crucible of Consciousness: An Integrated Theory of Mind and Brain*, MIT Press, 2009.

U/astroloveuz. "I Made a Character Map for *The Candy House* by Jennifer Egan." *Reddit*, 2023,

www.reddit.com/r/books/comments/16f4fz0/i_made_a_character_map_for_the_candy_house_by/.

Waugh, Patricia. *Metafiction: The Theory and Practice of Self-Conscious Fiction*. Routledge, 1984.

Williams, Raymond. *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*. Oxford UP, 2015.