

## Co-crediting in an age of participation

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# CO-CREDITING IN AN AGE OF PARTICIPATION

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## ABSTRACT

Participation in creative productions increases in complexity with the accessibility of digital technologies and forums, and the acceleration of these into many types. Using Norbert Elias' theories on power figurations as a starting point and supply with Fuchs' theories on power in participatory culture, we investigate the challenges and possibilities of *co-crediting* in participatory design. To do so, we examine three case examples to search for different perspectives in understanding the power structure seemingly inherent in these creative productions. Through a brief historical outline and the analysis of three creative production cases from different participatory fields, the authors provide an initial understanding of *co-crediting* and its challenges for co-design and participatory design from a participatory culture viewpoint.

## CO-CREDITING AND POWER

It is a foundational prerequisite in research fields such as participatory design, co-design and the broader participatory culture that a creative production is not a single person's effort but the result of a series of interactions between users and/or stakeholders with diverse perspectives and skill sets.

The logical hypotheses would then be: if there is *co-design* (a design production by more than one individual), then by default there must be *co-crediting* (legitimized credit for the involved contributors).

In presentations and in talks with representatives from user development teams from larger Scandinavian companies such as Grundfos, the act of co-crediting is considered a 'sensitive' issue. It is considered important both from a strategic and ethical viewpoint, but the companies are less sure on how to approach it.

Based on early power theories from Weber (1958), and later Beetham (1991) in a more thorough way, it is suggested that one important way to gain power throughout life is by the legitimisation of the individual's efforts, whether this is formalised into documents and titles or recognised by a social group, such as today's digital communities and networks.

In this paper, we investigate the power gained through co-crediting in participatory design and participatory culture by researching the issues and categories surrounding power in relation to co-crediting. As a point of departure, we look to the influential sociologist Norbert Elias' concept of 'power' figuration (Elias 1990: 249):

The web of interdependences formed among human beings and which connects them: that is to say, a structure of mutually oriented and dependent persons.

Central to Elias' theory is that power lies within relations and each of us has some form of web of relations. This is clearly demonstrated in his elaboration (Elias 1990: 251):

A configuration exists when two or more individuals or human groups establish some kind of link fostered by the dependences they have on one another, and which render them capable of exercising some form of reciprocal constraint.

With the impact of participatory culture through the advancement of digital communities and forums, one way of gaining status and a form of crediting is by recognition and acknowledgement by the participant's peers—in general related to social and cultural capital (Gudiksen 2013; Jensen 2014). This, we suspect, takes the power figurations in networks to a new level—including Elias' *web of interdependences*—as this type of recognition can be given through, for instance, co-crediting the members of the group who have contributed to a certain kind of content, design or artefact.

Fuchs further develops the idea of power structures in social media settings especially regarding the power of cultural media in which reputation and prestige are the resources participants try to gain (Fuchs 2014: 81). Fuchs focuses on the power struggle between the privately owned social media platforms and the commons-based media users and their provision of content. The platform owner is dependent on the creator of content; the creator is dependent on the platform to make the content visible and on other users to see and interact with said content. It is this latter dialectic relationship between creator and user, which is of interest in the challenge of co-crediting.

To investigate the broad implications of participatory culture on co-crediting, we examine three cases that show some of the main problems when co-crediting is lacking or impossible to give adequately. While the emphasis will be on the design praxis and co-creation mostly found in creative production workplaces, the examination of the cases will show how participatory design and participatory culture influences a wide range of creative environments in which collaboration—and with it co-crediting—is essential to ensure content creation.

The initial case is a historical credit dispute between Yoko Ono, widow of John Lennon, and Paul McCartney. The focus here is the simple order of names and the disagreements that arise even if only two parties are involved.

The second case takes on the difficulties of crediting each individual contributing to the development of a business book idea and its framework. It deals with the explicit crediting and the implicit value that came out of the book project *Business Model Generation* with Osterwalder and Pigneur (2009) credited as authors.

The third case takes a starting point in fandom and the book *Fifty Shades of Grey*. It examines how fan labour and so-called big-name fans can exploit their social and cultural capital within fandom to gain fame and fortune outside of fandom. This case shows how co-crediting affects a fan community and the incentives to participate.

To be able to understand the increasingly important critical aspects of the power of co-crediting, we will take a short historical tour of participatory design and culture before moving on to the selected cases. This is followed by case descriptions and analysis. The article will close with a cross-examination and comparison of the cases to show the first tentative results in understanding the importance of co-crediting in participatory culture.

## PARTICIPATORY DESIGN AND CULTURE

Participatory design has a long history, and it has been stated that this approach started as a counterposition to

typical system development processes in which the ‘workers’ who were going to use the systems were not involved. It is claimed by many participatory design researchers that the applied tools and techniques have the general goal of ‘giving users a say’ in the design process, which, in turn, claims to be more democratic.

Greenbaum and Kyng (1991: 2) argue that ‘Computers systems are *tools*, and need to be designed to be under control of the people using them’. These people have proficiency in their work practices. Back in the 1990s, it sufficed, and was regarded as a giant improvement, for workers simply to be involved and recognised for their work experiences in implementing a system that was suitable and in accordance with their practices.

Much of the attention in the subsequent research has since been given to the development and application of tools and techniques that could support this involvement of the users with a sincere wish to make them ‘human actors’ rather than ‘human factors’ (Bannon 1991; Sanders & Stappers 2008) and to create alternative ideas and visions about future work practices (Kensing & Madsen 1991).

These tools and techniques range from physical 3-D tools and materials (Ehn & Kyng 1991; Roos et al. 2004) to game structures (Brandt 2006 & 2008; Vaajakallio & Mattelmäki 2014; Gudiksen 2015) and the use of video (Müller 1991; Buur et al. 2001; Buur et al. 2004) to name only a few. Also, the notion of the ‘user’ has been expanded to include a circle of stakeholders with diverse professional expertise (Buur & Matthews 2008) or simply people with experience considered important for the project at hand.

However, none of these research papers mentions how the involved actors would be credited afterwards for their contributions. Yet, the power of articulating the results and implementation of the design was held by management.

Nowadays, we can ask provocatively: how democratic is a participatory design process if no credit is provided and no legitimisation of the work efforts are given to the ones involved? Do we presume that the actors involved are credited through first-hand use of the process outcome and, in terms of power and credit, should be satisfied with that?

In co-design, which has a significant overlap with participatory design, it is further argued that the creative force by many is one of the main reasons for applying this approach in the first place. Sanders and Stappers (2012: 58) argue that ‘when people come together, the number of ideas and the breadth of the ideas that are brought to the table increase dramatically’. Again, this is related to the positive elements in being more than one, but does not deal with the distribution of credit.

With the advancement of digital technology and the rise of digital forums, many creative productions move to the digital world. Some stay within the forum itself;

others accelerate beyond these. Here, we also begin to question at what point in the design process can something be called ‘a production’.

Influential media scholar Henry Jenkins explains the different forms of participatory culture to include affiliations, expressions, collaborative problem solving, and circulations (see Table 1 for elaboration).

Table 1: Definition of participatory culture derived from Jenkins et al. (2009, p. 5-6)

	Definition of participatory culture
1	Relatively low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement
2	String support for creating and sharing creations with others
3	Some type of informal mentorship whereby what is known by the most experienced is passed along to novices
4	Members who believe that their contributions matter
5	Members who feel some degree of social connection with one another

Together with Ford and Green, Jenkins further develops his understanding of participatory culture in *Spreadable Media* (2013). Using insights from fandom-related co-creation and participation, Jenkins, Ford and Green examine how companies can create value through an understanding of participatory culture by actively partaking in it. Companies and individuals who want to take advantage of the possibilities of participatory culture need to understand the necessity to acknowledge and recognise the contribution and support created by the ‘crowd’ (Jensen 2016).

The movement of ‘creative commons’ seems to overlap with this discussion. It gives authors, artists and so forth the opportunity to control how others can use their creative productions. But still, it relies on crediting *after* something has been produced, and at a point where who owns the rights has already been established. What about the promise of crediting *before* as an entry-point and *during* as the creative productions unfold? It is suggested in participatory design that involving users and stakeholders creates ownership, but what about the aftermath? Who has the power to articulate the end result and in what way?

We suggest using the term *co-crediting* with the following definition:

Co-crediting is the division of credits and legitimisation of contributing efforts in creative productions with more than one contributor; often a multitude of contributors with diverse perspectives and skills are engaged.

In our three case examples, we use co-crediting as our point of departure and investigate the following questions through a *strategic* and *ethical* perspective on power and control.

*Strategic perspective:*

What are the strategic incentives from initiators and in what way do they choose to credit involved contributors?

Are potential contributors looking for different kinds of legitimisation of their efforts?

*Ethical perspective:*

How are individuals recognised for their efforts and in what way can contributions be divided fairly, especially in ‘crowd’ productions?

Are mutually agreed contracts with references established to begin with and are they ‘dynamically’ adjusted if the creative production receives a significant attention?

## RESEARCH METHOD

The data material is based on available second-hand resources—interviews, website information, forum postings—as well as an autoethnographic approach (Ellis et al. 2010), including actively participating and, to some degree, being part of the communities and networks of fandom and related groups on various Internet websites, first-hand interviews and workshops.

While we present only three actual cases, our research is based on several years of examining, working with and participating in various communities and workplaces, and we bring in other examples along the way.

The three cases represent an information-oriented selection of extreme cases, which provides the basis for an initial understanding of the diverse challenges and possibilities of co-crediting (Flyvbjerg 2001: 79). With such an approach we go for an initial exploration of the issues at stake seeking to establish broad categories of major concern through obtaining information from unusual cases. Here we are charting new terrain therefore we make an effort to be open to interesting incidents across the cases (Flyvbjerg 2006).

The presentation and examination of the cases is followed by a cross-comparison. When the various cases are connected and brought into the same paper, we have the opportunity to make cross-comparisons between case incidents to look for differences, similarities and, above all, interesting nuances rather than generalizations, which is rarely a goal in case studies. Thus, we are able to present initial findings on the power of co-crediting and expectations in participatory settings.

## CASE 1: A HISTORICAL CREDIT DISPUTE

We use the historical ‘credit dispute’ case on creative production from an influential music band, the Beatles, to analyse some of the fundamental issues at stake.

### *Description of creative productions and events*

John Lennon and Paul McCartney, in their early career years, mutually agreed ‘to be equal partners in every song they write, regardless of their actual contributions to the song’ (in MacDonald 2005). By so doing, they avoided bickering about input percentages, at least to begin with. Additionally, they agreed that all songs written for their band would be credited with Lennon’s name preceding McCartney’s in the form ‘Lennon–McCartney’.

Years later, the band broke up and, 10 years after that, Lennon was murdered. A dispute followed with Lennon’s widow, Yoko Ono, after attempts by McCartney to change the order of the credits on the song ‘Yesterday’. Later on, it seems as if McCartney also attempted to change the name order in a series of previously released Beatles songs.

McCartney argued that, with Lennon’s death, he was elevated into martyrdom, and because of this, McCartney was frustrated with Ono downplaying his own role (Bilmes 2015). Ultimately, Ono was not the one who created the songs. On the other hand, Lennon was no longer alive to present his perception of the events. To this day, McCartney is still unsatisfied with the earlier agreement (Bilmes 2015) but has not acted further on it at this point.

In this example, the conflict of co-crediting is simply found in the listing order of contributors’ names and in the deeper understanding of the emotions surrounding who contributed the most to a specific song. Conflict arose despite an earlier agreement and because of subsequent events (the breakup of the Beatles and Lennon’s untimely death).

### *Perspectives on strategic questions*

In this case, the dispute concerns fame and the legacy associated with the songs at hand. Bound by the early agreement, this contract holds contributors to exploit others with no say; however, it also becomes non-changeable. Without entering into a law discussion, we can ask: can ‘crediting’ become dynamic due to the course of events (and fame and profits)?

The second issue that arises is when something can be called a contribution and should be labelled as such. Either Lennon or McCartney might have played a minor role in some of the songs. Also, imagine Ringo Starr passing by and starting to drum a specific rhythm that made Lennon think of certain sentences. Should he be credited in the songwriting?

In such creative productions, it is hard to track contributions and even harder to create a ‘weighted’ distribution.

### *Perspectives on ethical questions*

From the history of architecture and design, we often talk about the ‘big-name designers’, but ultimately many people were typically involved without receiving any form of publicly known credit. The ethical perspective concerns first the act of integrity, that is, staying true to commitments and moral principles (which are also up for interpretation) and, second, the practical issue of being able to do this.

Now, this example is only a dispute between two musicians, or to be precise McCartney’s wish to be credited first on the songs he properly wrote and created the arrangement to, and Ono’s protecting Lennon’s legacy. We can only begin to grasp the complex nature of co-crediting in creative productions in a participatory culture with a large group of contributors.

## CASE 2: THE BOOK *BUSINESS MODEL GENERATION*

In this case, we examine the production of the worldwide best-selling business book *Business Model Generation* and the events that followed its launch.

### *Description of creative productions and events*

After completing a dissertation Alexander Osterwalder, a little known Ph.D. scholar, and supervising professor Yves Pigneur embarked on a life-changing project. Based on Osterwalder’s initial framework from his dissertation, they decided to follow up with a book production that was simple, practical and effective. At this time, the topic of business models was less known outside of business management circles, and the topic of business model *design* was a completely new direction. Some crucial decisions were made during the production (see Table 2).

Table 2: Crucial decisions made during the production of the book *Business Model Generation*

	<b>The creation and marketing of the book <i>Business Model Generation</i></b>
1	A business model hub was launched.
2	Practitioners were invited to contribute comments, viewpoints and specific suggestions.
3	Osterwalder and Pigneur invited Alan Smith to be the graphic designer.
4	Contributing practitioners were promised a credit in the book and a book copy before anyone else.
5	The book was self-published, but after a year with significant attention, the publishing company Wiley decided to print it.

As part of the marketing the book, it was claimed that it was ‘co-created’ with a team of 470 practitioners. The credit consisted of a one-page list of names inside the book (similar to the final credits in a movie). It was a page that you would expect people to jump over.

In the one-page list, all were credited equally. By following the community at this point, it was clear that many of the contributors provided only a single comment or simply a type of appreciation, while others shared comments or insights that made it into the book.

#### *Perspectives on strategic questions (incentives from initiator)*

From the initiators’ perspective, the book was a huge success. The crowd of 470 practitioners helped to legitimise the work and also resulted in establishing a vital network following. Through this, Osterwalder and Pigneur had a network of ambassadors who bought the book, promoted the book, acted as a vehicle to open new markets and, to some degree, defended it. A kind of business community was founded.

This project spawned a series of books in the same style from the ‘core’ group behind *Business Model Generation*—sometimes crediting a ‘crowd’ and sometimes not. From a broader perspective, it has also resulted in books being accepted by publishers with a high degree of visualization and hands-on material.

#### *Perspectives on ethical questions*

Upon reading the book, it is impossible to track comments or a specific contribution from one of the 470 practitioners. For the readers of the book, it is considered to be authored by Osterwalder and Pigneur. In communities, blog posts and LinkedIn comments, the reference goes to Osterwalder (and Pigneur is often left out). Interestingly, 70 pages of the book including *the business model canvas* is free to use with a reference to Osterwalder and Pigneur.

Further, Osterwalder and Pigneur came up with the initiative, they drove it forward and, if one compares the main framework in the book (*the business model canvas*), it is fairly close to the results in Osterwalder’s dissertation. So, there can be no denying who contributed the biggest work effort in the production.

This case does not show a ‘dispute’ as such, but questions still arise with regard to how and when to co-credit people, both from initiator’s perspective and from the community contributors’ perspective. What happens when a content contract is not visible or negotiated in the open?

### CASE 3: THE BOOK *FIFTY SHADES OF GREY*

In 2011, the trilogy *Fifty Shades of Grey* was an instant success. The story of a billionaire and his infatuation with a college student became the epitome of ‘mommy porn’ and a new genre was born in a struggling book market.

#### *Description of creative productions and events*

The origins of *Fifty Shades* can be found in a large and growing field of participatory culture and co-creation: fandom and fan fiction.

While E. L. James managed to pull the original fan fiction story off the Internet, in a so-called ‘pull to publish’ move, the discussions, conflicts and aftermath of the events surrounding the publishing of the trilogy, can still be found in various fan spaces. A broad collection of links and quotes can be found in the fanlore (2016) post *Fifty Shades of Grey: The Reddit Origins Essay*. Also, the original fan fiction had been copied and can still be found through an Internet search on ‘snowqueens icedragon’ (James’ profile name) and ‘Master of the Universe’, the title of the fan fiction.

Table 3: From fan fiction to published book: the development of *Fifty Shades of Grey*

	<b>The development of <i>Fifty Shades of Grey</i></b>
1	The original <i>Twilight</i> book series and subsequent movies became a tent pole.
2	<i>Twilight</i> fandom created stories and art.
3	snowqueens icedragon writes <i>Master of the Universe</i> on fanfiction.net (FFnet), using existing and successful fan fiction as a blueprint—an acknowledged practice within fandom.
4	Because of rating problems, the fan fiction is pulled from FFnet and published on a website. The huge number of followers continues reading and reviewing.
5	E. L. James self-publishes; Random House’s Vintage Books division publishes the trilogy.
6	James excites her fandom followers about the upcoming publishing; fandom supports her, because ‘she is one of their own’.
7	<i>Fifty Shades</i> reaches number 1 on amazon.com’s genre list.
8	E. L. James cuts all ties to fandom; fandom splits into supporters and anti’s; many fan fictions are subsequently pulled to publish in hopes of having the same success as James. Fandom never recovers.

During the promotion of the books its origin in fandom was never mentioned by James, and it remains unknown to the general public. The aftermath in the *Twilight* fandom was devastating. The large group of followers split into two fractions, pro and contra James. Several other big-name fans pulled their fan fictions to be published in the hopes of emulating James’ success.

The events surrounding *Fifty Shades of Grey* have spurred discussions in other fandoms and among fans as to whether fan fictions should be published at all and how the readers, reviewers and commenters of the original fanworks should be acknowledged and credited.

#### *Perspectives on strategic questions*

As shown above, the popularity of the original fan fiction can partly explain the way the story was published on fanfiction.net (FFnet). Taking advantage of the basic functionality of the platform, short chapters uploaded frequently meant that the story was kept on top of the list of *Twilight* fan fictions.

Establishing and maintaining a strong following from vocal fans ensured extensive reviewing and recommendations on other sites as well as the production of related fanworks, such as fan art or fan videos (fanlore 2016).

Further, the author had access to statistics on her story. On FFnet, the statistics show hits for every single chapter, containing numbers of visitors, country of origin and how often a certain chapter was visited on a certain date. This makes a powerful advertising tool together with the list of reviews, openly available to users of FFnet. Every reader can review a chapter once. If a reader is loyal to the writer, they will review every single new chapter, thereby creating a hype cycle, because new readers will see the impressive numbers of reviews. *Master of the Universe* was to comprise 110 chapters in the end.

The writer used existing tropes and plotlines, which had already proven their worth in the community, as a way of designing her own story. Despite being a blatant rip-off from other stories, the fan community was supportive, since it meant more stories, which used the same beloved story line. As long as the story stayed on FFnet, the missing credits on the other fan fictions posed no problem. The readers would know the other stories and probably acknowledge their authors as well.

Still, James depended heavily on input from the fan community at large, as Jones (2014) as well as fanlore (2016) points out. Even James' newest book *Grey* is the story she wrote for the fandom donation.

In hindsight, James seemed to control every part of her interaction with fandom once she realised how fandom, and FFnet as a platform, worked. She used it as a marketing platform with subsequent possibilities to publish and earn money. *Fifty Shades* is an extreme case within fandom. Several other writers have started out in fandom, without cutting ties to other fans or avoiding talking about the origins of their stories.

#### *Perspectives on ethical questions*

While Jones (2014:1.6) is concerned with the exploitative as well as 'badly written, poorly researched, misrepresentative of BDSM, and antiwoman stance of *Fifty Shades*, other ethical questions regarding the exploitation of fan labour is brought up by Jones. As

fanlore (2016) describes, James used her followers to create a positive hype around the published books, getting to the top of the best-seller list. Once that goal was achieved, followers from her fandom days were blocked on Twitter and other social media accounts. Not once were fans or fandom mentioned during the promotion of the book.

From an ethical viewpoint, it is interesting how the power reversed during the development of the story and the publishing of the subsequent trilogy. The fans of *Master of the Universe* held the power to make it famous in fandom and let 'snowqueens icedragon' become a big-name fan. Even when the story crossed the threshold between fandom and published book, fans followed in its wake, reviewing and recommending it. Their idea of helping one of their own eventually transfers their power by numbers to James, who, through this transferral, is able to secure the number1 position—and with it, the contract for the movies. At that point, fans become powerless, mostly because the unity from the original community was destroyed and the group split up into smaller groups, fighting and arguing with each other.

### CROSS-COMPARISON AND INITIAL FINDINGS

In this comparison, we discuss some of the themes that emerge from our cases.

#### *Types of co-crediting and associated values*

The case of the business book shows how a community can be created around the development of an original idea. Both this case and the case of *Fifty Shades* illustrate how a community can be used to develop and market a product. Still, there is a huge difference with regard to co-crediting and, through it, the transferral and use of power. In the case of the business book, the authors went as far as to try to credit every contributor, even if it was just on a long list of names. Still, the individual contributor was able to gain recognition and use this acknowledgement in other settings, such as a job application or in talks with business clients. Of course, there is the problem whether this kind of recognition can be balanced against the actual contribution of the individual. As noted above, it is rarely possible to trace certain comments or developments of ideas from a given contributor throughout the book.

*Fifty Shades* has a different point of origin. It is set and written within a participatory community, blatantly using existing storylines and characters developed by a published author. Within the fandom itself, this is not seen as problematic, since readers would know the other fan fictions, as well as acknowledge the original published stories. Power is given to readers and writers alike through the accumulation of social and cultural capital in the community of the *Twilight* fandom, that is, through the net of relationships that are developed within the community. Reviews and recommendations



as well as related fanworks can be seen as the gratifications for each other's efforts. For *Fifty Shades*, the problem of power arises in the transferral of the story from fandom to published book and from the 'use' of fans to James' own ends, which include earning huge sums of money on a story, which probably would not have been written without the fandom community.

Participatory culture thrives on content creation and recognition by peers. As long as a given product, idea or development process is kept within the originating community, unwritten rules of conduct and the distribution of social and cultural capital gives the participants power and control of their creations.

Challenges arise when a product crosses the threshold from one community to another, or from obscurity into public domain. The distribution of power as well as who actually controls the process and its ensuing gratifications, be it money, fame or mere attributing of ideas, becomes less clear-cut and static.

#### *Contractual issues*

In the Beatles' credit dispute, there was a contract at the very beginning of the career before fame arrived. When events occurred, there was still this contract to go back to, although it might not show the 'correct' contribution picture. In the *Business Model Generation* case, a contract was somewhat established and community participants would properly know that this was intended as a business book with an agenda and sales in mind. However, nothing was stated about the dynamic aspect, and the authors, after they reached fame, did not spend time crediting the community even though the community was used as leverage for the book. Still, in this case, each contributor could refer back to the one-page list of credits and in talks with clients could 'claim' a specific input.

The major concern is when a specific creative production moves from a micro-sociology setting – the creation – to a macro-economical reality in which participants will investigate potential types of gains. The one with the best access to channels will remain in a powerful position regardless of social media shitstorms.

What is needed is a dynamic contract that changes with each contribution; however, this can be complex in digital communities and fandom, because of the quick content creation and editing. Nonetheless, unless there is such a contract or the community platform owner has established one, also in legal terms, the community risks being exploited.

We can see that when participatory design broadens, for instance, to municipal settings, where citizens are invited to participate in the development of specific initiatives under the assumption that the pleasure of simply being part of this is enough.

Likewise, in the broader online participatory culture, a crowd can be powerful through, for instance, online trolling and harassment and, in this way, criticise a lack

of integrity, however, this does not automatically lead to being credited. Content creators in digital communities are less aware of the contractual issues they enter into. Also, in another example, we see many petitions with digital signatures, often with a high number, that are not being considered by politicians. Perhaps there is not enough legitimacy bound to it. From a democracy perspective, it could also be considered a major problem that, in spite of a huge amount of 'digital voices', they are not being heard. Alternatively, there is the problem that maybe it is considered to be without formal effort and commitment if you hide behind the screen.

It is an interesting new-century example of Elias' *web of interdependences*—a 'power' battle between more traditional legitimacy through positions, ranks, status and more network-oriented with recognition, acknowledgment and staying true to one's roots. Project initiators and platform owners could benefit from adapting network-oriented co-crediting and, vice versa, content creators could supplement their network-oriented crediting with more traditional co-crediting issues. We suggest that a co-crediting dynamic contract might help both parties and build trust rather than distrust, but a conceptual design of this is still to be explored.

#### *The paradox of legitimacy and integrity*

Actions lead to reactions. Ono sees McCartney's attempt to switch the sequence of the names or change the abbreviation as an attempt to downgrade Lennon's role in specific songs. For a public observer, it seems destined to be viewed as such, because Lennon cannot defend his legacy. It seems that from all perspectives, it is a lost cause for McCartney and his integrity will immediately be questioned in the eyes of the public.

Osterwalder and the core initiative group managed to keep a balance between legitimacy, that is, acquiring all the credits, sales, 'fame' and integrity, and giving credit to others and letting them use the material—at least in the first years. The balance seemed to tilt to legitimacy through the new book series. A couple of decades back, the loss of relations could be decisive. Nowadays, and with 'crowds', it does not really matter if a few people leave a community: new ones will eventually join. The platform owner who manages to create buzz, content and so forth on a level like this gains tremendous power.

In the case of *Fifty Shades*, we see the extreme case of exploiting a community with high activity and content creation. James had a strategy in which she controlled all interactions of her fandom. However, in terms of integrity and finding a better balance, we could suggest co-crediting contributors through giving them access to channels that otherwise are closed to them. This would appear to be fairly powerful co-crediting.

It seems like a paradox of legitimacy, on the one hand, and integrity, on the other. Over the course of events, it might tilt one way or the other. It is probably not solvable as such, but it could be an issue of managing.



How to best manage this balance will continue to be a challenge for involved parties and a central concern that we will keep exploring in future research projects.

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