Self-publishing is certainly not a new practice, though with new, increasingly accessible technologies such as eBook software and the internet, it is experiencing a renaissance which threatens traditional publishing methods. Recently there has been a greater incentive to self-publish, as authors signed with established publishers are making less money than ever before—30% less in 2015 than in 2009 (Neary 2015). But only recently has technology made self-publishing a viable, realistic option for authors. Authors who could not find support from publishing houses were unlikely to succeed in publishing books because traditional print publishing requires so many resources that typically only large publishing houses offer: credibility, editorial guidance, and assistance with sales and marketing. Furthermore, even after the introduction of print-on-demand services in the nineties, which allowed anyone to create print books for a low cost (Stauss), there remained a stigma surrounding self-publishing. For instance, vanity presses, which used to be one of the primary channels for publishing without the support of a traditional publishing house and charge authors a fee to produce a book have been associated with poor writing: “Self-published authors were considered not good enough to get a real publishing contract. They had to pay to see their book in print” (Neary 2012). In recent years the stigma surrounding self-publishing has begun to diminish and self-published authors have begun seeing success traditionally only associated with authors working for large publishing houses. For instance, Andy Weir’s *The Martian*, a self-published book initially posted as a free series of chapters on his own website before being released to Amazon for 99 cents, immediately rose to the top of Amazon’s bestselling list of science fiction and debuted as number twelve on the New York Times hardcover fiction bestseller list (Dickerson). Weir’s success story is one of many recent ones which all demonstrate the viability of self-publishing in this digital age: any author can theoretically reach millions of readers on their own by putting out eBooks on the internet. One caveat to consider as self-publishing expands is a lack of quality control in the industry. Large publishing companies and editors traditionally weeded out plagiarism, pornography, poor writing, and problematic language. For instance, “erotica is 25 times more prevalent in self-publishing than in traditional publishing” (Tobar) and now, authors can self-publish essentially anything they wish. It will be up to self-publishing authors in the future to control the future of the publishing industry.

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