Feminism and Feminism within the Twilight Phenomenon
Erin Cotter and Dr. Rachel Ablow
Department of English, College of Arts and Sciences, University at Buffalo, Buffalo NY 14214

Introduction
The Twilight Phenomenon has become the object of great debate so many Meyer’s books have risen in popularity. She describes her fans as the most “exciting, and dedicated fans in the whole world” (Meyer, Eclipse 632). However, Meyer’s fans are viewed quite differently by those outside the series. USA Today admits that Twilight Saga fans are “fanatical” and “in a frenzy” (Meyer 1). Fans of the series themselves admit that they have been “made fun of” and described as “crazy, or obsessive” by non-fans Twilight, “Made Fun of For Liking Twilight?”). One fan observes “never before have I seen so much hatred towards someone—or a group of people—because of a book they like” (madness, fads, Twilight, “Fans: The Perils of Populism”). Though popular fan movements in the past (such as Harry Potter) have had their opponents, none of them have raised as much anger and mud-slinging as the Twilight Phenomenon has. But fans have come up in the Twilight Saga, both non-fans and fans of the Twilight Saga, but one of the most pivotal and hotly argued issues is whether or not writers pro- or anti-feminist, and how the series’ stance on women might affect its readers.

My interest in the Twilight Saga stemmed from the initial question of whether or not the series is pro-feminist, or conversely, whether or not the story is anti-feminist. This question was also immediately answered. My efforts to find an answer focusing entirely on the books were frustrated by far more questions than answers. I even realized that my search was too specific. I was only considering the Twilight Saga itself, and was ignoring how the series may have affected (or been affected by) the fans of the series. To do this, I must consider the reception of the genre in general, and the female genre in the particular. With this in mind, I am able to begin answering whether or not the Twilight Saga is pro- or anti-feminist.

In the following pages, my argument is arranged in two sections: "Twilight Saga’s Feminism to Fan Movement." In the first section, I will look at the Twilight Saga’s genre and its relationship to the genre of female fan movement in the popular culture. Although gender relations in the Twilight Saga are not the focus of a single character, it is through the actions of Bella Swan, the protagonist and the focus of the series, that we can see the relationship between female character and movement. The second section, I will look at the fans themselves. We can see the similarities and differences in relationship to feminism not only through the fans’ actions in the series, but also in their perceptions and representations of the genre. In this last section, we can see how the fans re-interpret the genre, and the role that this interpretation plays in their lives. This engagement and construction value of the Twilight Saga for fans has been largely ignored by critics in favor of the anti-feminist and anti-Twilight movements, and much of this is based on the larger implications of the Twilight Saga to fans as a movement.

Twilight’s Significance as a Female Fronted Fan Movement
In the past few years, the representation of female characters in contemporary novels and media has risen. Women have been increasingly represented in magazines, television, movies, and books. In this way, we can see the rise of the female fan movement. Is this rise the result of a society that is getting more progressive and equal to men, or are there other factors that may be influencing the rise of the female fan movement? In order to understand what factors may be influencing the rise of the female fan movement, we must consider the relationship between the two. The rise of the female fan movement has been a long time coming. In order to understand the rise of the female fan movement, we must consider the relationship between the two. The rise of the female fan movement has been a long time coming. In order to understand the rise of the female fan movement, we must consider the relationship between the two. The rise of the female fan movement has been a long time coming. In order to understand the rise of the female fan movement, we must consider the relationship between the two. The rise of the female fan movement has been a long time coming. In order to understand the rise of the female fan movement, we must consider the relationship between the two. The rise of the female fan movement has been a long time coming.