

Introduction

They shouldn't be allowed to get away with saying that. It's misleading, obscene, defamatory, inflammatory, blasphemous, malicious, intrusive, disrespectful or deceitful. Or alternatively, reflecting a number of newer categories of alleged communicative disorder, something might be considered to be 'edited in a misleading or dishonest way' (of a broadcast documentary). Or it could be 'glorifying' (of a statement referring to a terrorist incident or campaign). Most days some dispute about media discourse forces its way into public consciousness on one or other of these grounds. Disputes along such lines have become an almost continuous, reflexive dimension of meaning in the media. Allegations rarely go undefended. You've misunderstood, there was a legitimate public interest, it can be shown to be true, this was reasonable comment in the circumstances, no offence was intended.

Contestation of media communication is part of everyday modern life. In many cases quarrels blow over as quickly as they blew up, made irrelevant by subsequent events. But this is not always what happens.

Sometimes interpretive disputes drag on as major public controversies. As well as having their own momentum, they become defining reference points in public thinking about what communication is, almost as much as public thinking about the subject matter communicated. This was the case with Salman Rushdie's novel *The Satanic Verses*, which ignited worldwide controversy following the book's publication in September 1988 and the fatwa imposed by Ayatollah Khomeini of Iran five months later. Nearly two decades later, the controversy was rekindled, albeit in a less incendiary way, by the award of a knighthood to the author in 2007. Something analogous, if based on a different kind of grievance and spread across different political groups, surrounded the British government's 'dodgy dossier' about Iraq of September 2002 (and again in February 2003). The dossier claimed that Saddam Hussein had imminently threatening WMDs (Weapons of Mass Destruction), a claim controversially referred to in a live radio broadcast by BBC journalist Andrew Gilligan as having been 'sexed up' beyond the available evidence. In the United States, major public controversy surrounded President Clinton's assertion under oath

2 Meaning in the Media

during the Monica Lewinsky scandal of the late 1990s, that ‘I did not have sexual relations with that woman, Miss Lewinsky.’ Partly because of President Clinton’s apparently reluctant substitution of ‘sexual’ for the words ‘not appropriate’ in earlier statements (and before ‘not appropriate’, the still earlier ‘improper’), this notorious assertion attracted relentless scrutiny from cross-examiners during the Grand Jury hearings of 1998. It also prompted nationwide discussion about precisely what constitutes ‘sexual relations’.

Away from these internationally discussed cases – but equally painful to those immediately concerned – disputes often find expression in only minor, unreported legal actions. Or they may be resolved following complaint to an extrajudicial media regulatory body. In other, still less newsworthy cases, disputes over published utterances or media discourse are calmed down or brought to a close without intercession from any formal body or procedure. They burn out, in a to-and-fro of media commentary and conversation among media audiences. Such disputes can still create anger, humiliation and embarrassment. They may also turn on mendacity and distortion. But the drama of powerful forces and feelings they enact takes place in the shadows, by comparison with the international spotlight of fatwas or possible impeachment proceedings.

All three kinds of contestation of what disputed stretches of media discourse mean are important in their own way. In this book I discuss cases of each: public dispute and controversy; legal and regulatory complaint; and ‘never formally contested’ interpretive disagreement. What encourages me to consider the three categories together, despite the obvious difference of public impact between them, is a common problem of interpretation they share: what counts as evidence for or against the meanings in contention?

0.1 Meaning troublespots

In the pages that follow I hope to throw light on public arguments over meaning, and on practical challenges that must be faced in resolving them. Under a common heading I will consider different scales of public dispute together, as well as different fields or domains in which disputes arise: the various topics people argue about and kinds of harm that such quarrels inflict. The resulting field is large, and unified only by the processes and structures of the struggles over meaning it contains. I give this combined field of areas and types of interpretive contestation an informal, collective name: ‘meaning troublespots’. This is not a clear-cut analytic category. But my class of ‘troublespots’ should illuminate why contestation of meaning in the media is relevant not only to people actively engaged in interpretive disputes, or to students of meaning (whether in linguistics, law or cognate fields), but to anyone concerned with problems of modern communication and citizenship.

What form should investigation of such meaning troublespots take? It is possible simply to narrate the well-known controversies. Rather than doing this, I propose to investigate three slightly more abstract questions.

- Why are competing interpretations put forward so often about media discourse?
- How are alternative interpretations in contention questioned and evaluated?
- What obstacles stand in the way of arbitration or settlement?

I illustrate my discussion of these questions with numerous short (and sometimes longer) examples. I also anticipate that readers will test my arguments against the almost daily controversies aired in the media and judgments reported on legal and regulator websites.¹

My focus in what follows may sound similar to other work in ‘language and law’. But the field of ‘language and law’ consists of a number of different kinds of study and it is important to see their different approaches. Sometimes investigations are concerned with language in the machinery of law (e.g. with the form of writs and injunctions, legal warnings, technical terms and courtroom jargon). On other occasions, discussion focuses on legal interpretation: how judges and lawyers tackle problems of meaning in their own legal terminology, for example in deciding between ‘original’ and ‘contextual’ meanings in construction of statutes. Other work again – this is the field that this book seeks to contribute to – is concerned with language as the *content* of legal inquiry. Sometimes, non-technical, ‘ordinary’ public discourse becomes an object of contestation (e.g. in libel, false advertising, obscenity, misrepresentation and other fields of media law). The different approaches to ‘language and law’ are

¹ A continuous stream of examples of interpretive disputes and controversies can be found in the multimedia environment of news and comment, as well as on media regulator websites (e.g. in UK, www.asa.org.uk, www.ofcom.org.uk, etc.). Legal case reports provide a source for legal actions (via sites like Westlaw, as well as in print). Many critical accounts can be found of the language used in news and political reporting, such as Nick Davies, *Flat Earth News* (London: Chatto and Windus, 2008). There is also the established genre of exposés of government deception, such as Peter Osborne’s *The Rise of Political Lying* (London: Free Press, 2005) or Nicholas Jones’s blow-by-blow accounts of New Labour lying, including *The Control Freaks: How New Labour Gets Its Own Way* (London: Politico’s Publishing, 2002). Examples of contested social keywords can be found in Steven Poole, *Unspeak*TM (Little, Brown, 2006 and at www.unspeak.net). A thought-provoking and sometimes moving account of modern British controversies is Tim Slessor, *Ministries of Deception: Cover-ups in Whitehall* (London: Aurum Press, 2002). Vividly polemical but less probing is Sheldon Rampton and John Stauber, *Weapons of Mass Deception: The Uses of Propaganda in Bush’s War on Iraq* (London: Robinson, 2003). The linguist George Lakoff’s influential *Don’t Think of an Elephant: Know Your Values and Frame the Debate* (White River Junction, Vt.: Chelsea Green Publishers, 2004) investigates techniques of ‘reframing’, often by systematic use of alternative metaphors, within contemporary political and commercial discourse (see also the related website, www.rockridgeinstitute.org). Other useful sources include Spinwatch (www.spinwatch.org.uk) and MediaWise (www.media-wise.org.uk, formerly Presswise, www.presswise.org, as well as links from those sites).

4 Meaning in the Media

not just different in detail or nuance.² When it comes to meaning, they differ fundamentally as regards where authority for decisions is looked for.

Adjudicating meaning at what I will call meaning troublespots requires a particular approach to meaning. To see why this is so, compare the task of deciding between incompatible meanings that people put forward for something they have just read, heard or watched with what you need to do in order to grasp what is meant by a conversation you overhear or in order to understand some difficult piece of technical terminology you encounter (such as a legal term, or some other expression of professional or scientific terminology).

If you want to grasp what is going on in a conversation, you focus on the continuously developing ‘insider’ understanding being constructed by the conversational participants. That process is intuitive, but it can be made more precise by bringing to bear linguistic techniques such as those of conversation analysis. Faced with a specialised or technical term, on the other hand, although you might learn something useful by listening in, you must go elsewhere for explanation: terms of art are defined by specialised knowledge agreed for a particular field, even if some degree of ordinary meaning is still infused into them. You learn the meaning of such specialised or technical terms by hearing from experts or by looking them up in reference works, including dictionaries.

Adjudicating meaning for stretches of discourse that have become a focus of controversy or legal contestation calls for something different. It is necessary to look beyond how the discourse is understood by its ‘insiders’ (that is, either by its producer(s) or by people who allege harmful effects). But for an appeal to meaning beyond the participants to have social legitimacy, that appeal must strive for some standard other than expertise in a specialised field – precisely because what is sought is some kind of ‘ordinary’ meaning that everyone is supposed to get. Linguistics *as a whole* is occasionally pushed aside in this process. But mostly it is not even thought of. The aim in trying to establish the

² The literature on language and law is vast. But there are some useful starting points. For a mainly linguistic perspective, see John Gibbons (ed.), *Language and the Law* (London: Longman, 1994) or John Gibbons and M. Teresa Turell (eds.), *Dimensions of Forensic Linguistics* (Amsterdam: Benjamins, 2008). See also, Judith Levi and Anne Graffam Walker (eds.), *Language in the Judicial Process* (New York: Springer, 1990) and Lawrence Solan, *The Language of Judges* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993). For legal discussion of interpretive questions, see H. L. A. Hart, *The Concept of Law* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961); a compelling record of Hart’s efforts to bring together law and philosophy of language is given in Nicola Lacey’s biography, *A Life of H. L. A. Hart: The Nightmare and the Noble Dream* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004). Other useful sources include A. R. White, *Misleading Cases* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1991) and Brian Bix, *Law, Language and Legal Determinacy* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993). A recent guide to debates about linguistic meaning and interpretation in relation to legal language, which covers many of the key topics discussed below, is Chris Hutton, *Language, Meaning and the Law* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009).

meaning of a contested utterance or text is not to prove that meaning using scientific or expert techniques, but to assess what the utterance or text conveyed to language users who encountered it in everyday circumstances, without drawing on any special skill or knowledge. To establish meaning in these cases, appeal is made to intuitions thought to be shared by a population at large: to a kind of community competence in interpreting a culture's symbolic codes. My main claim in this book, put simply, is that there are problems in expecting media law to function as a 'meaning umpire' like this.

Is a claim of this order of generality worthy of investigation? I suggest that examining problems of meaning breakdown is illuminating both about meaning and about media, especially in societies with a lot of cultural diversity or which are undergoing rapid social change.

0.2 Approaches to meaning

In the course of my discussion I will draw, inevitably selectively, on frameworks for discussing meaning developed in linguistics, philosophy and psychology. I will also compare approaches in these fields with the sometimes strikingly different but equally closely argued accounts of meaning put forward in media law and regulation.

By bringing these different approaches to meaning into dialogue with one another, I hope to push discussion in two main directions. Firstly, rather than treating media communication as being like an ordinary conversation that has simply been amplified and made public, or alternatively as a matter of isolated textual 'objects' set free from their communicators or addressees, I propose to explore meaning problems in media discourse as being specific to the communicative capabilities, use and circumstances of different media. Secondly, rather than talking about meaning on the basis of apparently successful instances of communication, I want to show how new insights can be prompted by moments when the spontaneous flow of meaning in the media is interrupted.

My focus on moments when meaning breaks down differentiates this study from most existing work on verbal meaning in the media. I hope nevertheless that my work will complement rather than compete with existing approaches. Just as there are different ways of thinking about 'language and law', there are different ways of bringing linguistics to bear on interpreting media texts. I should indicate briefly what the differences are, and how this book relates to them.

One possible line in thinking about interpretive disputes is to start from the idea that disputes often centre on a particular crux expression (a problematic word or phrase). That crux expression is not a legal concept, like 'recklessness' of intention or alleged 'blasphemy' of content. It is an expression used prominently or repeatedly within the utterance itself. 'Sexual relations', as said by President

6 Meaning in the Media

Clinton, is an example. Another example would be whether an expression like 'economical with the truth' has a specific meaning of its own or merely offers convenient cover in accusing someone of lying. If the crux of a dispute involves concentration of meaning into such a contested expression, then it may be helpful to clarify matters with detailed analysis of the troublesome word or phrase. Such an approach would accordingly have investigation of word meaning at its core and would engage closely with available (e.g. philological, lexicographical, corpus linguistic) tools for investigating word meanings.³

But 'meaning' might be more diffused across an utterance or text than this kind of concentration in a troublesome crux word. If so, it may be preferable to start from the idea that when a text is disputed, the whole text rather than only some part of it should be examined. What is of interest then is the text's overall terms of interaction with an audience. If we start from this point, then we will expect not close analysis of isolated 'key' expressions that are interpreted differently by the parties to the dispute, but investigation of the overall texture of the discourse: its structure of turn-taking, if the text is conversational in character; how the topics it deals with are linked to one another, and by whom; how impartiality or fairness is established within it, if those qualities are claimed; and what implied relationship between communicator and addressee is created by the way that the text addresses its audience. All of these are topics in the fields of discourse analysis and conversation analysis.⁴

³ For an explanation of 'dictionary' approaches to word meaning, see Howard Jackson, *Lexicography: An Introduction* (London: Routledge, 2002). The fullest account of any given word of English is likely to be found in the OED: the *Oxford English Dictionary* (www.oed.com), first published, in parts, as *A New English Dictionary on Historical Principles*, ed. J. A. H. Murray, H. Bradley, W. A. Craigie and C. T. Onions (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1884-1928). For a detailed account of what each OED entry contains and how to read it, see Donna Lee Berg, *A Guide to the Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993). For discussion of lexicography within corpus linguistics, see Douglas Biber, Susan Conrad and Randi Reppen, *Corpus Linguistics: Investigating Language Structure and Use* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); and on reading electronic concordance lines in particular, see John Sinclair, *Reading Concordances: An Introduction* (London: Pearson, 2003). An especially detailed account of corpus approaches to word meaning is Michael Stubbs, *Words and Phrases: Corpus Studies of Lexical Semantics* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002).

⁴ There are many introductions to discourse analysis; the most usefully detailed remains Gillian Brown and George Yule, *Discourse Analysis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983). The same is true of conversation analysis; for an advanced guide, see Ian Hutchby and Robin Wooffitt, *Conversation Analysis* (Cambridge: Polity, 2008). Numerous studies have applied discourse analytic frameworks to media discourse. Examples investigating media interviews include Allan Bell and Theo van Leeuwen, *The Media Interview: Confession, Contest, Conversation* (Sydney: New South Wales University Press, 1994) and Steven Clayman and John Heritage, *The News Interview* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002). On news discourse, see Martin Montgomery, *The Discourse of Broadcast News: A Linguistic Approach* (London: Routledge, 2007), and on argumentative radio talk, see Ian Hutchby, *Confrontation Talk: Arguments, Asymmetries and Power on Talk Radio* (Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1996). A valuable collection of work in a 'discourse' paradigm is David Graddol and Oliver Boyd-Barrett (eds.), *Media Texts: Authors and Readers* (Clevedon: Multilingual Matters / Open

An approach influenced by discourse analysis appears especially well suited to interpretive conflict over whether someone is bullied or patronised in a TV or radio interview, or left out of a discussion agenda (for instance if women contributors are said to be marginalised during a studio discussion). Analyses of discourse structure also have a part to play in institutional discourse of various kinds: courtroom discourse, doctor–patient interaction, and public meetings (such as meetings forming part of a political campaign, or annual shareholder meetings).⁵ Since evidence from such situations is often presented in recorded or otherwise mediated form, there can often be a ‘media’ dimension to controversies that arise. In mainstream mass media such as radio and television, controversies amenable to such analysis take many forms, including disputes over aggressive interviewing, the handling or mismanagement of discussion programme formats, biased vox pops, and the alleged offensiveness of ‘shock jocks’.

Is either of the two general approaches I have described here more suitable than the other in investigating meaning troublespots? This depends on what kind of trouble is involved, and the kinds of dispute I explore in this book invite comment based on both.

Troublesome keywords are always used in a given context. So lexical analysis (whether undertaken by consulting intuitions, conducting surveys, looking up words in a dictionary, or searching an electronic corpus) is unlikely to be sufficient. To understand what is meant in a given instance, ‘dictionary meaning’ must be set in the context of how particular statements unfold in a given broadcast, advert or other text; and what tone something is said in. Crux words, as the name suggests, are crucial, but the limbs of the cross also matter. Crux words are not only used in a context, either; they are used differently in different contexts. This is what gives them their ‘crux’ significance, and makes them controversial.

What if instead our effort to decide between conflicting interpretations begins routinely with aspects of discourse structure? In this case, while we range more freely across different aspects of context the conceptual aspects of meaning conveyed by nuance, connotation, allusions and echoes of other styles of

University, 1993). Also useful are chapters in Paddy Scannell (ed.), *Broadcast Talk* (London: Sage, 1991). A recent treatment of what makes media discourse specific is Mary Talbot, *Media Discourse: Representation and Interaction* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007). Innovative use of corpus linguistic techniques in analysing media discourse can be found in Anne O’Keeffe, *Investigating Media Discourse* (London: Routledge, 2006).

⁵ For examples of work on discourse in these settings, see Norman Fairclough, *Critical Discourse Analysis: The Critical Study of Language* (London: Longman, 1995); Paul Drew and John Heritage, *Talk at Work: Interaction in Institutional Settings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); William Labov and D. Fanshel, *Therapeutic Discourse* (New York: Academic Press, 1977); and Ruth Wodak, *Disorders of Discourse* (London: Longman, 1996). For a useful reader of research in this field (that includes extracts from other works referred to in this chapter), see Adam Jaworski and Nikolas Coupland (eds.), *The Discourse Reader* (London: Routledge, 1999).

discourse may be pushed too far into the background. The sting of many kinds of verbal dispute (for instance in libel, in indirect comparative advertising, or in cases of alleged offensiveness) is often felt most in the peculiar power of a single, loaded or poisonous expression. We should therefore look to specific inferences invited by and drawn from such expressions, alongside directly stated meanings and recurrent patterns of style or interaction, if we are to grasp what is being said: what speech act we think is being performed; what indirect meanings speakers give to the words they choose; and what presuppositions and expectations they rely on in building up their overall meaning.

If linguistics is to help in analysing interpretive disputes, then what is likely to be needed is attention to overall discourse structure with extra spotlights directed towards word-meaning and utterance-meaning. At the same time, we must not overstate the contribution of linguistic analysis of *any* kind in helping with interpretive conflicts. It is true that forensic linguistics has achieved notable successes (arguably more in the fields of phonetics and syntax than in relation to meaning, for reasons I consider later).⁶ At the same time it is easy to underestimate scepticism about the value of linguistics – and especially about semantics – felt by judges, barristers, juries and many members of the wider public. In legal and regulatory disputes about meaning, as well as in controversies adjudicated by the court of public opinion, solutions are only rarely brought about by linguistic proof or deference to linguistic expertise.

My own interest in meaning troublespots is partly linguistic and partly social. I am concerned with linguistic accounts of meaning and also with other frameworks for describing and analysing meaning, including legal approaches. In interpretive controversies, no single account of meaning – from any source or background – goes unquestioned, whether based on legal, linguistic or religious grounds. Meaning is actively contested precisely because people bring conflicting experiences, assumptions and interests to bear. Opposing statements of meaning are made, justifications of alternative viewpoints are advanced, and the meanings claimed remain in contention until a court or regulatory judgment is reached, or some other form of settlement is agreed, or until an oblique way is found of getting round the impasse.

⁶ For wide-ranging coverage of the field of forensic linguistics, see John Gibbons (ed.), *Forensic Linguistics: An Introduction to Language in the Justice System* (London: Wiley Blackwell, 2003); and Janet Cotterill (ed.), *Language in the Legal Process* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002). A clear introduction is Malcolm Coulthard and Alison Johnson, *An Introduction to Forensic Linguistics: Language in Evidence* (London: Routledge, 2007). For accounts of US cases from the point of view of an expert witness, see Roger Shuy, *Fighting over Words: Language and Civil Law Cases* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), as well as his earlier *Language Crimes: The Use and Abuse of Language Evidence in the Courtroom* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993). The main journal of research in this field is the *International Journal of Speech, Language and the Law* (known from 1994 until 2003 as *Forensic Linguistics*).

Meaning in the Media is about struggles over discourse meaning as viewed from different perspectives. Each perspective typically offers a confident view (as linguistics itself often does) of what the meaning of a contested utterance or text is. My concern in this book is not to vindicate a series of particular meanings put forward using linguistic analysis, as an expert witness might if called upon. My aim is to show how competing views of meaning within a dispute or controversy engage with one another. On those occasions when arbitration of an interpretive conflict is achieved, it is usually brought about by some specific combination of argument, evidence of different kinds, and the social authority or straightforward executive power of the adjudicator. My aim is to illustrate different perspectives on the ‘meaning’ aspect of media disputes, and to explore common ground and scope for dialogue between them.

Throughout this book, I do of course draw on general work in linguistics in describing interpretive controversies. I have tried as far as possible, however, to keep the text uncluttered and only to go into detail regarding any particular author’s work where it is essential to the argument (as with Austin’s work on performatives and illocutionary force discussed in Chapter 11). Readers familiar with linguistics will recognise names and theories implied by my exposition as well as stated in it, and will be able to elaborate on and refine my account as appropriate. To assist the reader who is not familiar with work in linguistics, on the other hand, I draw attention to essential concepts and positions in footnotes. I do not, it should be noted, claim to be putting forward a coherent theoretical account of meaning in disputes, or offering a critical review of existing approaches. I am describing a largely uncharted field: the different grounds appealed to, and assumptions relied on, in public disputes about meaning. To this end, I have tried to identify and outline concepts and problems rather than to build up a general system of analysis.

Readers more engaged with linguistic accounts of meaning than my own aims allow for will look for a clearer statement of the main traditions of work I have drawn on. Such readers are encouraged to follow up the references provided throughout the book. But it is worth saying at the outset that my arguments are underpinned by reference to three main, intersecting traditions. The early stages of my argument (especially my discussion of disagreement in Chapter 1) draw especially on insights in discourse analysis, conversation analysis and sociolinguistics. My initial account of spoken interaction and mediated communication events, for example, reflects accounts of verbal interaction that run from Dell Hymes and Erving Goffman into current sociolinguistics, critical discourse analysis, and studies of mediated discourse.⁷ Other sections of the book build on a sometimes neglected tradition of

⁷ See works referred to in note 4 above, as well as the references contained in them.

10 Meaning in the Media

semantics beginning with General Semantics of the 1930s and 1940s (including work by writers such as Korzybski, Hayakawa and Chase), through attempts made to measure meaning in behaviourist semantics (e.g. in the work of Osgood and his collaborators), through Raymond Williams's cultural analyses of meaning, into what is now a dispersed field of linguistic approaches to meaning in the media, squeezed into the margins of mainstream media and cultural studies.⁸ This 'semantic' tradition comes to the fore in my discussion in Chapter 4. Thirdly, I have drawn on concepts in linguistic pragmatics, especially in Chapter 5 (and prominently again in Chapter 11), especially the role played in utterance interpretation by inference.⁹ In introducing pragmatic approaches I suggest that the ideas of Austin, Grice and Searle, as well as more recent approaches such as Sperber and Wilson's Relevance Theory, offer potential grasp of meaning in the media that can elude ethnographic research such as that associated with media audience studies (exemplified for instance by the work of Morley).¹⁰

Given the broad aims I have stated, it would be impossible to do justice to theoretical arguments related to the interaction between these different theoretical approaches. The brief orientation offered here, however, together with footnotes throughout the text, should allow readers to see the potential of linguistic frameworks to engage with questions about meaning that arise not only in academic circles but also in professional legal and media circles.

⁸ Particularly notable among works of General Semantics are Stuart Chase, *The Tyranny of Words* (New York: Harvest Books, 1938) and S. I. Hayakawa, *Language in Thought and Action* (New York: Harvest Books, 1939). Charles Osgood, G. Suci, and P. Tannenbaum's *The Measurement of Meaning* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1957) is an outstanding exception to the now usually negative view of approaches to meaning of its period. Raymond Williams's investigation of meaning runs through virtually all his writing, but is most clearly expressed in the 'Preface' and entries of *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*, 2nd edition (London: Fontana, 1983). Writing in this 'semantic' tradition connects in interesting ways with the thinking about meaning of C. K. Ogden and I. A. Richards (for example in *The Meaning of Meaning*, 10th edition (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972)).

⁹ A clear introduction to pragmatics, elaborating (and extensively illustrating) concepts from Austin, Searle and others, is Jenny Thomas, *Meaning in Interaction: An Introduction to Pragmatics* (London: Longman, 1995). More theoretical exposition can be found in Stephen Levinson, *Pragmatics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983). Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson's Relevance Theory is presented in *Relevance: Communication and Cognition*, 2nd edition (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995). A helpful textbook introduction to relevance is Diane Blakemore, *Understanding Utterances: An Introduction to Pragmatics* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992). Connections between pragmatics in linguistics and in other fields are explored in Louise Cummings, *Pragmatics: An Interdisciplinary Perspective* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005).

¹⁰ Ethnographic research on meaning was inspired particularly by Clifford Geertz's *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973). This approach became especially popular as a means of investigating media meaning in the movement in media studies known as 'New Audience Studies'. For a collection of essays charting his own development from audience studies of *Nationwide* to more open-ended ethnography, see David Morley, *Television, Audiences and Cultural Studies* (London: Routledge, 1992).