Narratives Online

Stories are shared by millions of people online every day. They post and re-post interactions as they retell and respond to large-scale mediated events. These stories are important, as they can bring people together, or polarise them in opposing groups. *Narratives Online: Shared Stories in Social Media* explores this new genre – the shared story – and uses carefully chosen case studies to illustrate the complex processes of sharing as they are shaped by four international social media contexts: Wikipedia, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. Building on discourse analytic research, Ruth Page develops a new framework – 'mediated narrative analysis' – to address the large-scale, multimodal nature of online narratives, helping researchers interpret the micro- and macro-level politics that are played out in computer-mediated communication.

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Shared Stories in Social Media

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For my mother, who taught me to read and shares with me the love of a good story.

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Preface

This is a book about the shared story as a distinctive narrative genre that flour-
ishes in online contexts. There are two reasons to write a book about shared
stories:

1 Stories remain a pervasive genre that people use to make sense of the world
 around them.
2 'Sharing' has become a dominant keyword in online contexts, particularly
 associated with the ability to distribute and redistribute content within large
 networks of connections.

Shared stories that are told in online contexts are interesting for a number
of reasons. This book focuses on the language and the mediated contexts in
which shared stories are produced and consumed. The first chapter introduces
shared stories and traces their analogous conversational, artistic and journalis-
tic antecedents. Later chapters explore shared stories as they are told in four
online sites that have become well established over the last decade, and which
have international reach: Wikipedia, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. Many of
the examples of online interactions discussed in this book are available at the
time of writing, but their longevity cannot be guaranteed. In the quoted excerpts
from the stories, I have retained the exact spelling and punctuation that was
used in the original, not always using *sic* to indicate unconventional spelling or
usage. Sometimes – although not always – that unconventionality is part of the
narrator's style.

Shared stories involve many tellers as they unfold over time and draw
together many different kinds of texts. Although this book is not a shared story,
it has unfolded over the process of several years, and there are many people who
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an article which is available via the doi 10.1177/0963947013510648, and parts
of which are printed here with permission of SAGE Publications.

I began work on this book whilst I was a member of the School of English at
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