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Krystina Madej

Interactivity, Collaboration, and Authoring in Social Media

Springer

Krystina Madej
School of Literature, Media, and Communication
Georgia Institute of Technology
Atlanta, GA, USA

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This book is dedicated to Mary Neilson and Douglas Grant, friends and colleagues with a love for ideas and conversation.

…what matters is not the enclosure of the work within a harmonious figure, but the centrifugal force produced by it—a plurality of language as a guarantee of a truth that is not merely partial.

——Six Memos For The Next Millennium
Italo Calvino

Prologue

Mission Statement

To uncover the lies and secrets being held from our Verona Citizens. To Speak the Absolute Truth. To Show the Facts and bring awareness to Verona. Verona Leaks is a non-for-profit organization, ferreting out all information withheld from public view. The goal is simple, if knowledge is power, then give the citizens back their power.

So begins the real story behind the untimely deaths of Romeo and Juliet.

Charged with bringing the real story behind the deaths of Romeo and Juliet to life through social media, students chose to work within a contemporary metaphor based on an organization noted for revealing facts, *WikiLeaks*. Three main sites document the extensive work students took on in their search to bring the truth to the public about the lives and events surrounding the ill-fated couple.

The City of Verona Speaks, the official city website, links readers to the individual *Facebook* sites of the main players (at http://projects.gnwc.ca/bp/).

VeronaLeaks, a *Wordpress* blog site, informs the citizens of Verona of information withheld from public view (at https://veronaleaks.wordpress.com).

The Indefatigable J. Murphy & Sons' website, the website of the firm of investigators hired by the City of Verona to look into organizational leaks and the deaths of Romeo and Juliet, provides information crucial to understanding the events that occurred (at https://jmurphyandsons.wordpress.com).

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First, let me thank Richard Smith, the Director of the Center for Digital Media (CDM), who encouraged me to become involved in the narrative program at CDM, and to George Johnson, who graciously agreed to a co-taught class. They not only included me but also made me welcome at the center's innovative graduate program.

Thanks for the inspiration to use social media for retelling canonic stories go to Aaran Kashtan's students in the School of Literature, Media, and Communication (LMC) at Georgia Tech: Udita Menon and her team members Cassidy Burton, Cindy Huang, and Zac Zachow met the challenge of the project *The Future of the Book*/*The Book of the Future* with a Facebook adaptation of the Romeo and Juliet story.

I'm in particular debt to the grad students at CDM who responded with enthusiasm, creativity, and humor to writing *After Love Comes Destruction*. Thanks go to Nada Aljohani, Micheal Auger, Alan Correa, Patricia Nunez, Neshat Piroozan and in particular to Brett Pawson for his help in putting together documentation after the course was complete and for his penetrating views during our ongoing conversations about the process and product that resulted. Thanks go to Bill Zhao, who patiently responded to the team's technical hopes and needs, and to Mark Lange and Josh Miller, who ensured CDM's technology backed him fully.

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and I'm grateful for her generosity. Thank you to Sue Thomas who I met at the second DAC conference (1999) where she explained the intent of trAce as a writer's resource and encouraged participation in the collaborative work *Noon Quilt*.

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More recently, research into social media narrative brought me into contact with Rob Wittig, who kindly clarified details about his early work with *IN.S.OMNIA* and *Invisible Seattle*. I thank him for always taking the new road in writing social media narratives over a span of more than 30 years and generously and enthusiastically sharing his interest. Thanks to Ian Harper for contacting me many years ago about *Inanimate Alice*. I've followed Alice's life with interest. Thanks also for the assistance I've received from Ellen Rubin, John Lloyd Davies, Alastair O'Neill, Mark Bernstein, Julie Judkins, Christina Engelbart, Marty Ritchey, Ludovic Carpentier, and Richard Lowe in acquiring images that tell the story.

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