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Greti-Iulia Ivana

Social Ties in Online Networking

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Greti-Iulia Ivana
Department of Sociology
Uppsala University
Uppsala, Sweden

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For my mother, Felicia

Acknowledgments

This book discusses social networking activity and its significance in the context of users' reciprocal bonds. The bulk of the analysis is based on interviews with Facebookers about what they do, what they like and watch, but first and foremost how they intend their own actions and read into each other's within the realm of social media. I have had an interest in human communication, and in everyday life interpretative processes long before realizing it, and before being a sociologist. However, it was during my years as a graduate student when, reading Alfred Schütz, I became fully aware of it. Since then, my standpoint and my focus have shifted repeatedly. Nevertheless, my approach is still greatly indebted to Schütz, particularly for his systematic analyses of taken for grantedness and relevance and for his views on first-hand lived experience. Many other authors writing in a phenomenological vein have also served as guidance in writing this book (Merleau-Ponty stands out). Yet, the relational angle I adopt is also strongly influenced by Simmel and several symbolic interactionists, particularly Goffman and Hochschild.

As insightful as these sources have been for me as a sociologist and for my efforts of theorizing social reality, this book would have not been possible without the cooperation of my informants. For reasons of confidentiality, they cannot be named, but I do wish to thank all of them for their openness and honesty in sharing with me private aspects of their lives. Their stories and experiences are the backbone of this work.

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Greti-Iulia Ivana
14.08.2017, Uppsala

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