

Reading/Writing Canada: a Facebook Wall about Canadian Literature

Leer/Escribir Canadá: un muro de Facebook dedicado a literatura canadiense

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Abstract: The CBC operates on a mandate that defines it as a company of content whose vision is to connect Canadians through attractive Canadian content and whose values include serving the Canadian public. This article responds to the questions of how the CBC uses social media to disseminate national literatures, taking a Facebook wall, Canada Reads, as a case study, based on the small stories method (Georgakoupoulou) to analyze narrative activities that are important for recognizing the identity-forging work of their narrator as well as the social fabric of practices that people become involved in, with the objective of discovering if it has created a virtual community of practice (as conceived by Robert V. Kozinets) and if it has achieved, at the same time, the ultimate goal of discussing contemporary Canadian identities and if it has fulfilled its aim to disseminated contemporary regional and national quality content.

Methodology: Small Stories, Virtual Communities, and Communities of Practice

Keywords: CBC, Canada Reads, virtual communities, communities of practice, reading

Resumen: El mandato de la CBC (Corporación Canadiense de Radiodifusión) la define como una empresa dedicada a la producción, cuidado y distribución de contenidos canadienses y cuya visión es conectar a los canadienses a través de contenidos relevantes elaborados en Canadá, y que además tiene entre sus valores la vocación de servicio al público de Canadá. Este artículo intenta responder a varias preguntas: en primer lugar, cómo utiliza la CBC las redes sociales para difundir las literaturas nacionales. Se utiliza como caso de estudio un muro de Facebook llamado Canada Reads, y se hace un análisis basado en el método de las pequeñas historias (Georgakoupoulou) para examinar las actividades narrativas relevantes para reconocer el trabajo de forja de identidad de los narradores. También se analiza cómo el tejido social de las prácticas en las que se involucran las personas, con el objetivo de descubrir si se ha creado una comunidad virtual de práctica (en el sentido de la elaboración de Robert V. Kozinets). Por último, se analiza si se ha logrado el objetivo de establecer un debate sobre las identidades canadienses contemporáneas y si se ha cumplido el propósito de la CBS de difundir contenidos contemporáneos regionales y nacionales de calidad.

Metodología: Pequeñas historias, comunidades virtuales y comunidades de práctica

Palabras clave: CBC, Canada Reads, comunidades virtuales, comunidades de práctica, lectura

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Introduction

How can social media be used to disseminate national literatures? How can reading them be promoted and the publishing industry, both national and local publishing houses, be strengthened? How can literature become the focus of a broad spectrum of people? How can a conversation be started about what it means to write, publish, and read? This article responds to these questions, taking a Facebook wall administered by an Anglo-Canadian institution as a case study, based on the small stories method which I will use to analyze narrative activities that are important for recognizing the identity-forging work of their narrator as well as the social fabric of practices that people become involved in. The objective is to discover if it has created a virtual community of practice and if it has achieved, at the same time, the ultimate goal of discussing contemporary Canadian identities. Using the concept of virtual communities, as conceived by Robert V. Kozinets, and José M. Tomasena's approach to dissemination of books through cyberspace, I will prove that, by promoting both reading and writing in social networks, the CBC has fulfilled its aim of not only creating virtual communities of practice but has also disseminated contemporary regional and national quality content. People interact on Facebook walls with different aims. To discover how the walls can be used as tools for disseminating literature, I did a FB search of groups whose interest lay in Canadian literatures.¹

For the research subject, I found two walls (Canada Reads and Canada Writes) promoted by one of English-speaking Canada's most important and prestigious cultural institutions: the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), a public broadcaster.² I discovered there a very interesting conversation, not only about reading and writing, but also an underlying, successful will to disseminate Anglo-Canadian literature in its two aspects: writing and reading, both of

1. First off, I found groups that included academics in associations by field or collectives of enthusiasts for certain literary genres, such as science fiction (written in English) or novels (written in French). These groups, managed by individual members, were not very interesting since members did not interact with each other as such. They were characterized by uploading calls for meetings or congresses or new publications, but I found it difficult to find ideas flowing between one post and the next.

2. The French-speaking division, Radio Canada, is organized quite differently. It has published uninterruptedly a Quebec-based version of Canada Reads, which I will not cover here.

which go hand in hand with the production and consumption of books. Since this article is only a part of a broader research, I will only discuss one of them, Canada Reads.

My starting point for observing and following the groups, is the definitions of virtual communities developed by Kozinets, of communities of practice by Wenger, and of the method of small stories proposed by Alexandra Georgakopoulou, as well as an adaptation of Tomasena's contributions regarding the dissemination of books online. I have kept records from the time I was admitted, in September 2020, throughout 2021, and for the first two months of 2022. I began as a mere observer, but later, I would sporadically participate in some of the discussions in which it seemed respectful to participate, given that I'm not a Canadian writer; I introduced myself as a Mexican researcher specializing in Canadian studies. This article presents a first approximation to the study of the dynamics on one of the two groups and a few preliminary conclusions about them.

Why is the methodology of small stories (Georgakopoulou 2016, 266-272) useful in this case? In the first place, this is because its starting point is the analysis of a paradigm for the study of narratives and identities that implies taking a position and narrative re-writing in search of the meaning of those stories in daily life as part of the social fabric of practices that people become involved in. This perspective is fundamental for this article, since the community studied here is made up of participants committed to reading Canadian literary texts specifically. In the second place, Georgakopoulou proposes to recover these small stories to include them in the area of analysis of narratives and identities, which is also pertinent in the sense that the participants define themselves, describe themselves, and simultaneously construct an image of themselves with regard to reading: that is, they identify and narrate themselves as readers.

Georgakopoulou's methodological proposal (2016, 267) is that analyzing small stories shows us a range of narrative activities that are important for recognizing the identity-forging work of their narrator. We must keep in mind that these stories are fragmented and open-ended, that they go beyond the confines of a closed conversation, and that they resist the categorization of beginning-middle-end. Because of the dynamic of the groups, the stories are co-constructed, and it is difficult to assign their authorship to a single person. For this reason, they are ideal for

reconstructing the idea of reading, writing, and identity that we can recover from the Facebook walls administered by the CBC. For his part, Kozinets (2010, 2) points out that, using a cultural orientation, studies can be carried out in the communities of the social interaction mediated by technology that happens on the Internet and using ICTs, and that is what this article will do.

Canadian Broadcasting Corporation: Mandates and impact on national literary production

As part of consolidating the idea of the national, that is, of a Canada with an identity that all Canadians, men and women, could recognize and embrace, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) was founded in 1936. Today, it broadcasts content in English, French, and eight First Nation languages (Bonikowsky 2019). It operates based on a mandate that defines the corporation as a company of content whose vision is to connect Canadians through attractive Canadian content, with a mission to create audacious, distinctive programming in order to inform, enlighten, and entertain, and whose values include serving the Canadian public (1991 Broadcasting Act). To do this, its programming must be predominantly and distinctively Canadian; it must reflect both the country and its regions for local audiences, while offering special services in those regions. It must contribute actively to the flow and exchange of cultural expressions, seek equitable quality in the official languages and for linguistic minorities, contribute to a shared awareness and national identity, and reflect Canada's multicultural, multi-racial character (BTLRP 2020).

Regarding content production, today, the aim is to ensure cultural sovereignty through the communications media (kinds of content and platforms; policy aims for the sector that reflect a transformative media) and to embrace the global market. In the current context, it now has the aims of reimagining the support for Canadian content in the media (digital disruption of regulatory models of financing; modernization of the regulatory framework; ensuring public support for Canadian creators) and improving the rights of Canadians by improving confidence in the digital sphere (BTLRP 2020).

CBC Books is one of those initiatives: significantly, its page is called a "home" for people who read and write. The page includes news, interviews, new publications in English, the lists of the best-selling Canadian books every two months, reading lists, bibliographical

recommendations for every season of the year, calls for literary competitions sponsored by the institution (poetry, essay, and short story), tips for participating in them, and the introduction of members of the juries, podcasts, videos, and the two pages studied in this article (Canada Reads and Canada Writes). It also includes links to other prestigious Canadian literary prizes, such as the Governor General's Literary Awards and the Scotiabank Giller Prize for the novel, short story, and graphic novel. Lastly, it offers micro-sites of programs like *The Next Chapter*, with Shelagh Rogers, or *Writers & Company*, with Eleanor Wachtel, on which the journalists interview writers and discuss writing.

The page, then, is not only a source for inviting us to read, but also to direct us to CBC productions through the social and other kinds of media.

Image 1



Image 2



I am interested in pointing out how relevant literary competitions are for both the CBC mandate and for the creation of a virtual community based on Canada Books. Tomasena (2019) explains that, today, the publishing industry is facing a profound transformation that involves different fronts: advertising, distribution, and sales.³ When you review the CBC Books page, it is clear that the broadcaster's strategies are responses to these changes.

Based on Bourdieu's concept of a field, Tomasena states that in the symbolic literary field, struggles are structured around a principle of dual hierarchization: on the one hand, the specific recognition or literary prestige, an autonomous principle, provided by the symbolic recognition of other artists; and on the other hand, commercial success, a heteronymous principle linked to the field of economics and power, expressed both in successful sales and in prizes.

CBC contests are divided into two distinct kinds: for unpublished manuscripts in genres that are not the most commercial (such as poetry, essay, and short stories), and for already published books (like Canada Reads, about which I will expand further down). The promotion of awards is an incentive for new voices to participate and, besides, for ensuring the recognition of the winning authors, not only in the field of prestige, but also commercially. In addition, they put importance on local and national creation and utilize literature as a vehicle for a multiculturalist national unity and regional identification. Monetary prizes are provided by subscription fees, the Canada Council for the Arts, and creative residencies are also offered at the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity. So, at the same time as this contributes to the possibility of professionalizing writing and consolidating a literary canon, it also fulfills the cultural institution's mandate, not only by promoting reading in English, but also by encouraging writing, the production of Anglophone literature, as an essential part of creating regional and the national cultures. It is in this context that both the pages and the profiles of Canada Reads and Canada Writes emerged.

3. Because this is an analysis of virtual communities, it seems to me that Tomasena's analysis about the dissemination of books, using Bourdieu's theoretical framework, is appropriate, even though it is a different medium, since he specifically studies what are called booktubers, who disseminate new publications on YouTube.

Canada Reads

Canada Reads is a private Facebook page,⁴ created three years ago, managed by the CBC's Books Division, and linked to the Internet page of the same name.⁵ Today, it has around 10,000 members.⁶ Its rules are very clear:

Be kind and courteous. We are in this together to create a welcoming environment. Let's treat everyone with respect. Healthy debates are natural, but kindness is required.

No hate speech or bullying. Make sure everyone feels safe. Bullying of any kind isn't allowed, and degrading comments about things like race, religion, culture, sexual orientation, gender or identity will not be tolerated.

Use spoiler alerts. Keep in mind that members of the group are reading at their own pace.

Canada Reads only. Please keep your discussions about Canada Reads only, except when it is off-season, in which posts can also be about Canadian books and literature. Off-topic posts will be deleted.
(<https://www.facebook.com/groups/CanadaReads/about>)

Its content is closely linked to the competition named for it, which has been defined as the country's biggest book club.

Tomasena (2019) uses the relational concept of fields (coined by Pierre Bourdieu), to describe the social space that different actors occupy in promoting reading on social media. He

4. In order to carry out this research, I requested membership in the group in November 2020. On September 2022, consent was given by administrators and moderators of CBC Canada Reads, and by the members too, to monitor and conduct research on the dynamics of the group. Names on the images are erased to maintain anonymity.

5. The Canada Reads Internet page has several sections: "Listen," where we find the debates broadcast on the radio and previous broadcasts; "Watch," which offers the debates broadcast by video, in addition to all the previous years' debates; and "Past Winners," which includes the winners of all the contests from the years 2002 to 2021.

6. Anyone (in any part of the world, as my case shows) who shares an interest in reading books by Canadian authors is welcomed to the group. Therefore, members in this group can come from various experiences, given their differences in age, race, gender and nationality.

points out that these actors possess different kinds of capital that they use in different forms of competition, collaboration, and reward according to the rules of the field. Economic capital belongs to the publishing houses that print/digitalize the books; human capital is that of the writers and readers; and symbolic capital is contained in the literary products, but also possessed by critics and the prizes, which assess that content. In an era when production, distribution, and sale of books have all changed a great deal, Tomasena points out that publishing houses have looked toward social media to attract the attention of potential readers, given market saturation, dispersion, and specialization today.

So, to have a practical sense of what it means to create content related to literature on social media, he proposes that all three kinds of capital are needed: human capital, the ability to publish on social media and relate to others through them; social capital, which is the number of followers you have; and symbolic capital, or knowledge, taste, reliability, and expertise (Tomasena 2019, 6). The relationship through social media can be very satisfactory both for the writer and the reader since it shows enthusiasm for the work.

Canada Reads creates content based on all the above. Why? To make books visible, attract the attention of readers to the issues they touch on and to the fact that quality writing produces recognition of works in literature, and, at the same time, promoting reading increases the sales of books not conceived of as best-sellers. This eliminates the debate about the impossibility of commercial success going hand-in-hand with artistic excellence. The idea is to connect readers with works and based on that, build a community.

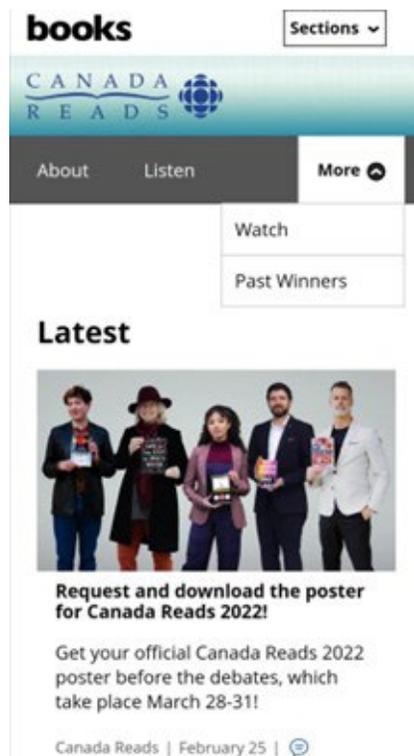
The CBC is in a privileged position for being able to promote reading, with the impetus of promoting quality content and encouraging proximity to literature with intellectual depth and aesthetic value. Therefore, on the Facebook wall, it fosters discussion and criticism.

For Kozinets (2010, 8), virtual communities are social congregations that emerge from social media when people hold public discussions for a long enough time, with human feelings, to build networks of personal relationships in cyberspace. In online communities, compliments and discussions are exchanged and users become involved in an intellectual discourse; they trade, exchange knowledge, share emotional support, make plans, brainstorm, forge and lose

friendships, play, and create art.

Canada Reads is a community that revolves around reading in general, but, in particular, around the Anglo-Canadian fiction literary competition of the same name, held since 2002. Since it came into being at a time when reality TV contests became popular, ironically, it uses the format of eliminating one of the five finalist books (picked from a list of fifteen), each defended by a celebrity, every night after a panel discussion, which the CBC broadcasts on radio, television, YouTube, and social media, and a secret vote. The first contest winner was *In the Skin of a Lion*, by celebrated author Michael Ondaatje, which, though published in 1987, sold more than 70,000 copies after appearing on Canada Reads. This is a *sui generis* competition. Each year a topic is proposed and the book that wins will be the one that best deals with it and has the most pertinent meaning in this regard. The books do not have to be recently published. Those who read them, discuss them, and make them winners are not from the world of academia, publishing, or literary criticism, but “celebrities” of Canada’s multicultural worlds of sports, the media (radio or television), acting, or activism. And they do it to invite the country to read.

Image 3



La revista **Norteamérica** publica versiones *Ahead-of-Print* (AOP) de los artículos dictaminados mediante una rigurosa evaluación de tipo doble ciego y que han sido aceptados por el Comité Editorial con el fin de ofrecer un acceso más amplio y expedito a ellos. / **Norteamérica** publishes Ahead-of-Print (AOP) versions of all manuscripts that have undergone a rigorous double-blind peer-review and been approved for publication by the Editorial Board in order to provide broader and earlier access to them.

So, the small stories on this wall are linked together by the discussion of the books that appear both on the preliminary list and among the nominated. Due to that, the conversations they generate come alive only during the competition; that is, the activities of the community members are concentrated solely during a couple of months of the year. The administration of the page uploads news about the competition, which is stored on the CBC's website of the same name: they introduce the celebrities that will make up the jury; the extensive list and then the list of finalists; the jury's opinions; and interviews with the authors.

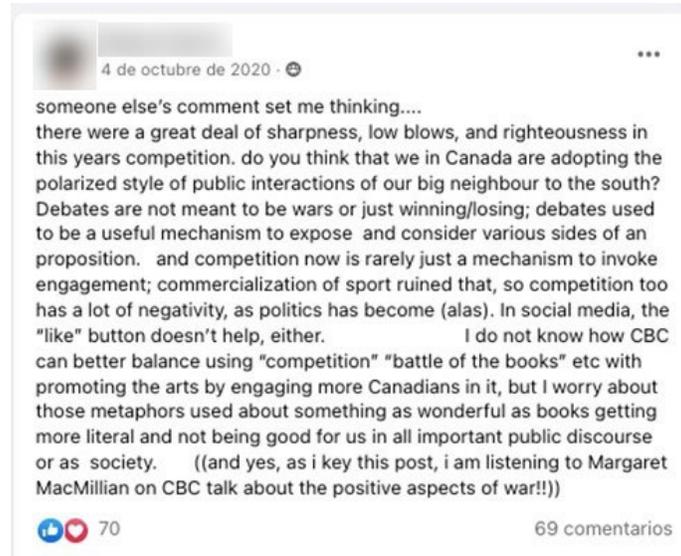
The members of a virtual community do not passively consume the content produced, but rather communicate actively among themselves; they connect to form, express, and deepen their social alliances and affiliations (Kozinets 2010). Also, in the context of the conversation on the wall, their very diverse perspectives underline the multiplicity, fragmentation, specificity of the context, and performativity of the communication practices among them. They are identities in interaction, and a combined focus on the content, author/narrator, form, and the readers as active participants (Georgakopoulou 2016).

To discover what is being thought about, what is being said, how to read, and how to criticize Anglo-Canadian literature, I will work on the interaction during the 2020 competition; that is where the specificity of the context lies. Regarding the identities in interaction, it is important to remember that the CBC's mandate, the basis for the competition, is to offer literature as a kind of mirror that Canadians can look into it and recognize themselves. That is why the notion of nationalism cannot be excluded from this overview and why a previous post seems pertinent.⁷

7. In this article, I will use the terms "publication" and "post" interchangeably.

So, a first search for the terms “nationalism” and “identity” provided the following small story:

Image 4



This post is very significant on the wall, where the rules demand courtesy and respect for the presentation of ideas during the debate. Is this a “Canadian” perspective? We should not forget that one of the stereotypes of what is Canadian when compared with the U.S. American is being courteous and non-aggressive (Martínez-Zalce 2016, 32-97). The conversation constructed around what is expected from an intelligent debate about literature, based on well-founded arguments, makes it clear that belligerence is distasteful to users, given that it’s not a matter of winning at any cost or of destroying the opponent, but of building a consensus based on intelligent, respectful discussion. In the contributions, the disagreement with that style is clear, to the point of “stopping listening to the debates,” suggesting changes to the format, and allowing that the public vote.

The 2021 Canada Reads: a case study of virtual communities

The year 2021, under the complex circumstances due to the pandemic, began with readers expressing concern over the competition.

Image 5



The small story narrative about Canada Reads 2021 unfolds based on the following log.⁸ I list the number of user posts related to each topic in parentheses: predictions and speculation about who will be on the long list and the short list (4 posts); recommendations to get on the lists, the twenty favorites, sporadic readings, and possible contenders (11), with special attention to the work of indigenous authors (Leanne Simpson, Alicia Elliot, Richard Wagamese, Tanya Talaga); general issues such as the theme for the year, the mechanics of selection, when the list will come out, panelists, where to get the books (12); posts by the administration (3), announcing Canada Reads 2021 (1); and thanks for being accepted into the group or expressing happiness at being able to participate (6).

Canada Reads 2021 story, where the topic was “One book to transport us”, is chronicled thus: January 6, the long list is announced, followed by conversations about the titles that the users want to read about or that they are already reading, and which ones they enjoy or not (19 posts); those who read this list write reviews as the list of competitors is announced (1); they share reading practices, such as diaries, for example, podcasts, or a YouTube channel (3); suggestions about what to read first (1); the creation of their own lists of the five competitors that they would propose (3); and promotion of and events with the authors (1). While they wait, in addition to speculation, there are also recommendations of other books. At the end of the

8. Virtual ethnography critics have debated on how to study communities developed in cyberspace. Adriana Marcela Moreno Acosta recognizes that despite the change in location (on-site or online), studying the field still relies on observation and description (314). Although an elaboration on this subject is not the focus of this article, I wanted to note that focusing on one year helped to understand how this annual literary event affected the dynamics of the group in this particular year, marked by immobility because of the COVID19 pandemics. As any community, this community continues to change, but in this particular case the transformation of the dialogue depends on the books and the specific topics that are being shared.

month, the administration announces the list of competitors and the panel that will defend them.⁹

After the list of competitors is announced, the small stories revolve around reading and general opinions about the books read —we should remember here the rule of not being too specific in order not to ruin the readings for others. In general, they can be summarized as follows: *Two Trees Make a Forest* is boring; *Jonny Appleseed*, is heavy-duty; *Butter Honey Pig Bread*, a very interesting read; *Midnight Bargain*, nice; and *Hench*, enjoyable. All in all, in January, there were around eighty posts.

Because of the uncertainty caused by the pandemic, in general the exchanges were influenced by the context and, in January, several concerns are expressed about how the competition would work, given that the previous year the debates were postponed several months. These ranged from how the books and themes would be selected and when they would be announced, to where people could physically get the books. We should remember that Canada's sanitary measures were very rigorous, so some of the conversations revolved around the difficulty of getting copies and then, included a series of recommendations that range from borrowing them from the library to using electronic books, audiobooks, etc.

After the first list is announced, the titles are the center of the conversations. Readers share the books on the list that they have read, comment whether they enjoyed them or not, and express their opinions about whether they think they should advance in the process. They exchange ideas and even go so far as to make their own selection of five novels that should compete given their quality.

The announcement of the short list intensifies readers' exchange of opinions. The page administrators direct the specific practices, leading the users to share their opinions with the broad membership in the group; the play between the restrictions —no spoilers, for example—

9. Actor Ali Hassan has moderated the panels since 2017. In 2021, the selection was made up of *Two Trees Make a Forest*, by Jessica J. Lee, defended by singer/songwriter Scott Helman; *Jonny Appleseed*, by Joshua Whitehead, defended by actress and filmmaker Devery Jacobs; *Butter Honey Pig Bread*, by Francesca Ekwuyasi, defended by chef and TV host Roger Mooking; *Midnight Bargain*, by C. L. Polk, defended by Olympic athlete Rosey Edeh; and *Hench*, by Natalie Zina Walschots, defended by actor Paul Sun-Hyung Lee.

and the possibilities of action on the platform shape both the subjectivity and the presentation of the user (for example, if a user points to reviews published in other media), as well as the interaction with those who respond to their posts (Georgakopoulou 2016, 267). Since the conversation is concentrated only on the five finalist books, group members share what they're reading, how their reading is progressing, and whether they like it or not and why, and, in some cases, their order or preference for the award. The administration sends the users to another platform to watch the shorts produced as a hook for attracting readers both to the books and to the competition.

Image 6



To measure the importance of both the competition and the group, readers' answers to *Jonny Appleseed* —the novel that ended up winning— are particularly interesting because due to the theme (being queer, destitute and first nations) and the style (quite colloquial), several readers said that they only finished it to be disciplined.

Image 7



February's sixty-four posts are divided into different kinds of stories: events (2); headway in reading and opinions (46); rating of the books (5); and different kinds of recommendations like podcasts (4); other readings (3); interviews (1); or previous years' competitions.

The story that users most contribute to is about reading, in preparation for the debate with opinions and comments about each of the books that they have just read or are reading. Participation varies between centering on only one of the books or on comparing them. As time and the reading go on, the posts become more robust (18), with more complex critiques and lists based on personal preferences, which would then get "likes" from people with similar opinions. A general reflection about the entire reading list begins to take form.

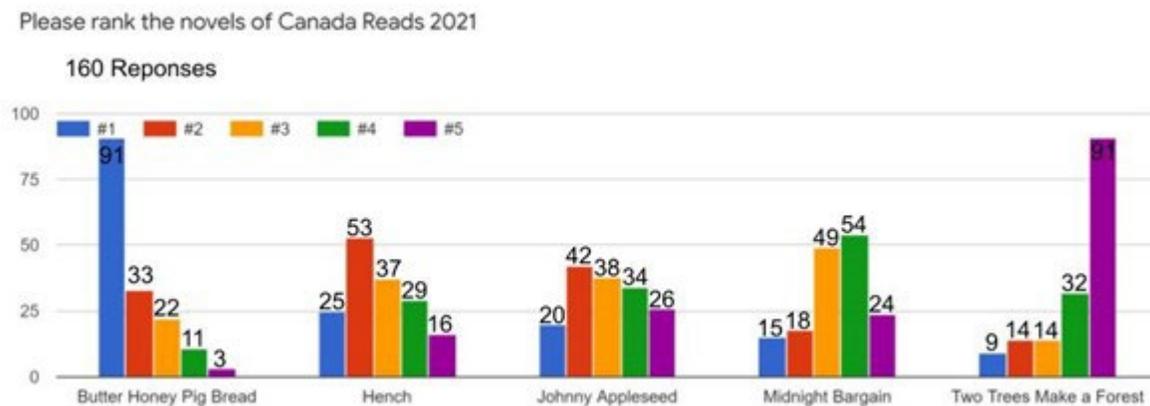
The specific textual characteristics of the small stories are fragmentation and the openness of the stories that go beyond the confines of a single post and a single platform and that resist a categorization of beginning-middle-end. They imply multiple authors in each post, as they can be shared on multiple platforms (Georgakopoulou 2016, 268). At that point in the discussions,

then, we even find a survey to get an idea of the general opinion of the group.¹⁰

In March, the conversations involve what is happening in the televised debates. Some people talk about the order in which readers would like the books to be ranked (8). Some individual posts sometimes also give the reasons why certain books seem better than others to them (15); some include quotes (1 post); others invite people to leave the platform to find others with pertinent information (podcasts, 4) or related events (2) and thematic associations with other readings (3).

As is common on this platform, the conversation didn't flow simply through the responses to a post, but also with symbols of approval and links to other platforms.

Table 1



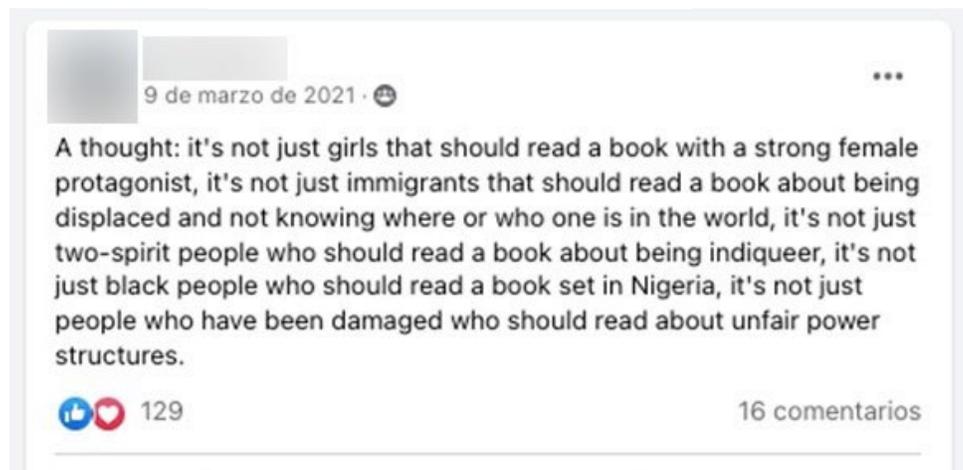
Georgakopoulou (2016) emphasizes that small stories, in contrast with other kinds of fiction, do not follow a linear logic (beginning, development, climax, and denouement), but rather are characterized by being fragmented. Kozinets (2010), for his part, states that users participate in online communities as part of their regular, continuous social experience, and in this case, their reading experience. And they do this in a participatory way, even if they only read the posts and react by saying they agree or disagree with them. Thus, it can be said that March is the month of

10. See https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd7dAxRDeSI7SQuy8ezUYrVSIceYdJ93MO1nOqHHu-1o4o12A/viewform?embedded=true&fbclid=IwAR3DkCzR5syTBqbq_UFo-PcQTW1MPLE_e-JFEKjkJonwdoBhC5VJLRijgUM

the most intense exchanges among members of this community: the first few days center on the classification the participants propose for the books in their very brief analyses and opinions about some of the titles in particular, basing themselves also on the promotion of events, podcasts, etc. The administration, for its part, announces the platforms where members of the group can follow the competition, once again pointing them to other platforms.

Starting on March 8, once the nightly debates begin, the conversation intensifies (57 posts) with opinions about the panel as such and the way that each individual behaves: their arguments, the readings that each proposes, not only of his/her own text but about those that the others defend; the presentation they make of both the books and of their importance for the reading community, in particular the Canadian reading community in general. They repeat the terms “respectful,” “thoughtful,” “insightful.” And then, the feeling of the community embraces that Canadian pride in the discussion within the limits of attention span and courtesy. There is a positive connotation about what a good debate consists of: it’s not only a matter of expressing something, but of the way you express it, without devaluing disagreement about the order in which the books are eliminated, and which one is the winner. On this occasion, the balance is favorable because the users think the debates were respectful, thoughtful, and insightful and that they invite the broad public to consume novels regardless of whether the readers are familiar with the themes or the characters.

Image 8



Once the winner is announced, the small story of the competition fades away (between mid-April and December), almost to the point that from that point on, the posts (50) come almost completely from the administrators of the wall. It is important to note that in some of these posts, the verbal comments are not enabled; you can only share or react to them with symbols. You can follow the links to other platforms, but the idea is that they are only informative. So, here there is a change in the narrative of the wall, in which the readers are receiving news and stop being co-creators of the stories.

In December, speculation starts up again, and some of the atypical narrative activities return, following a similar pattern to that of the previous year. Kozinets (2010, 9) writes that, since these groups share both a cyber culture and a consumer culture, they do much more than transmit information. Going back to Tomasena (2019), we can say that this group shares cultural capital and are provided with symbolic consumption of capital: the small stories lead successfully to book purchases and discussions about what literature implies in the lives of those who consume it.

Conclusion: The Communities and Achievements of the Cultural Institution

For decades, the CBC has been part of the lives of Canadians. Bonikowsky (2019) states that an Ipsos-Reid survey in the last decade shows that the population agreed that the CBC was successful in preserving Canadian culture and identity and that they would continue to vote in favor of public radio broadcasting. “Clearly, Canadians find their voice in the CBC,” he concludes. Voters would support political parties that fostered domestic ownership of broadcasting.

Based on following the pages using the methodology of small stories and questioning virtual communities, we can conclude that, by promoting both reading and writing in social networks managed by the CBC, the corporation has fulfilled its aim of disseminating regional and national quality content.

Online connections and positionings affect our social behavior as consumers. Therefore, a competition like Canada Reads offers wide visibility to books that can become well known, and, by encouraging reading, promotes both the publishing houses that have printed them and local bookstores that sell them. But in addition, these online interactions also influence our social

behavior as citizens since these social groups have a real existence for their participants, and therefore, have effects and consequences in their behavior (Kozinets 2010, 15-29). Thus, holding discussions on literary issues gives literature not only economic capital, but also human, social, and symbolic capital. Georgakopoulou (2016, 269) states that underlying the small stories constructed on these platforms are reasons that make it possible to study them. On the one hand, there are the empirical reasons, since they constantly announce fragments of our day-to-day lives that signify how we see and present ourselves in the communities; on the other hand, there are the epistemological reasons, the critical micro-perspectives in the online relations, which can help respond to the question of whether a sociopolitical potential exists for producing changes and which of these practices that construct meaning act in countercultural, hidden and unofficial ways, for engendering their narratives. In her opinion, these traits legitimize the study of the life experience while also reflecting on the role of the researcher.

In Canada Reads, the patterns of interpreting identities are traced based on selecting the proposed readings, on their analysis, on the tone in which the debate is carried out for picking the winning title. Themes, styles, forms, but also public personalities that include the authors, are discussed in order to determine which text is valuable enough for Canadians to read and identify with —or disassociate themselves from— some of its characteristics. The virtual reading community constructs small stories revolving around the value of literature in general and certain books in particular, as the glue that binds together a country based on many diversities.

Tomasena (2019) states that platformization makes it possible to acquire social and symbolic capital that creators can use to become visible and popular, which can be transferred to other platforms. I would say that they can even be used to transfer to other media. This is what the CBC wants for literary work from its two walls and website about books.

I think it is very important to say that Canada Books classifies as entertainment. Despite this, it is not promoted nor presented from the superficial plane associated with entertainment. The social capital the CBC acquires online that is expressed quantitatively (through number of views, subscribers, and followers) and through the active involvement of its audience, gives it the power in the literary field to make known and therefore sell books (Tomasena 2019, 9). It also

enables it to include a very wide variety of titles in the canon, titles that could be classified in a huge number of overlapping categories: literature written by women, migrant literature, Afro-Canadian literature, literature of the First Peoples, queer literature. This turns the CBC into one of the forces that fosters both literature and writing produced in the different regions of the country, as a mirror that can reflect values of every sort, from aesthetic to thematic. These discontinuous narratives, where both readers and writers practice, are also, in turn, a mirror.

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