Transcript: Deena Larsen

Deena Larsen
November 19 at 8:37pm

Hi All. I, too, apologize--I had a work emergency and I am holding vigil at a friend who is dying. But I am here now 😊. Marble Springs, my wiki, has been a quiet little corner of the web since 1993. From 93 to 2013, it was difficult to post and repost as this was stuck in HyperCard. I finally moved it to the web, and it is still pretty quiet. So I am quite lucky that I have not had the harassment issues I could have had by having a "play in my sandbox" type of work out there.

Welcome to Marble Springs 3.0 - Marble Springs

Come explore the lives of women in a small Colorado mining town from the mid 1800s when white men first swooped to the gold fields to the mid 1900s when wars took the final breath from the town.
marblesprings.wikidot.com

Comments

Judy Malloy Welcome to electronic literature pioneer Deena Larsen
who has taken her early hypertext Marble Springs to a colloborative wiki! Her bio in the Panel Program is at
http://www.narrabase.net/socmedianarrative.html#deena

On comment | code | process (formerly Authoring Software) Deena writes: "...my vision of Marble Springs grew to an open-ended, never ending place-- a one-to-one map of reality as people came and went in the town. I wanted a place where readers could make their own marks on the town." --
http://www.narrabase.net/deena_springs.html

November 20 at 8:46am

Judy Malloy Hi Deena, Good to see you here!
November 20 at 8:47am

Remove
Joe Sansone Hey Deena I had a question about your work. Why did you choose Wikidot over other mediums to present your story?
November 20 at 9:37pm

Deena Larsen Hi Joe Sansone, since 1990, with Marble Springs 1.0, i have wanted to have an "open" work. The conceit is that as the town's people come and go, so too do authors.Thus, being able to contribute to Marble Springs is central to the work. And thus, I chose to do it as a wiki.
November 20 at 10:28pm

Antoinette LaFarge This is good evidence that it can pay off not to be in the limelight all the time, and even to have small obstacles to entry: both are much less likely to attract trolls, while you still get to reach people with your ideas. Mass media tends to think that what matters is to blast any given thought to millions of people, but while that is going on, there are all those hundreds of thousands of smaller and less visible sites sending out concentric ripples that intersect with each other in unexpected ways. It's not obvious to me at all that the former matters more in the long run than the latter.
November 21 at 3:31pm

Deena Larsen HI Antoinette LaFarge --yes, I'd like people to engage with Marble Springs. Edgar Lee Masters, who wrote Spoon River Anthology, had a hit with it in the 1916--mostly because people were able to read the "forbidden list" of salacious topics. But these are complicated little works, so they fend off the trolls.

November 21 at 6:19pm

Deena Larsen I would like to figure out what to do with Marble Springs--threading that needle of engaging readers with complex materials, yet avoiding the social media pitfalls...

November 21 at 6:19pm

Chris Rodley Deena I have a few questions, but it's very late at night here in Oz so I better just start with one very practical one. How did you go about meeting the creative challenge of imagining so ~many~ characters? Whenever I've tried to do this (various abandoned novel projects for example) it has seemed perfunctory ("and there's also a bodybuilder, and an accountant, and a dog-walker, and a rich widow who lives in a brownstone"). But your minor characters seemed very rich and intentional and lifelike. Did they 'come to you' or did you have some process for generating them? (Apologies that's not very relevant to social media, although some social media projects do raise this issue, because there's often a lot of fine-grained details that many readers may not see)

November 22 at 9:46am

Deena Larsen Thanks **Chris Rodley**. Thesis why Marble Springs is my child. I grew up loving the Colorado History Museum, where I'd go every chance I got. The ladies there fed me and gave me white gloves and i was able to touch and read journals, touching the words that women had written down in the mining towns and prairies. Looking back, I was probably the only kid they ever saw interested in that stuff. Moreover, I devoured my copy of Spoon River Anthology, and I just wanted a better way to discover relationships between Master's characters.

So I had a wealth of stories in my head from the time I was 8 or so. I first "got" Laura Keeperly because I love quilt patterns and I wanted to see if I could tell that story. Then I needed to know who Sadie was, why Emmy Mateson was so sad, and who that Washerwoman was. But then who was Sandra Miller, and why was she afraid of her father? And who did she teach? So it was one question after another.

I lived in Japan for three years, far away from my beloved Rocky Mountains. One thing that brought me comfort was living in my Marble Springs, writing out those stories. Then when I got back to the States in '89, I wanted to recreate the town, because of course I knew where everyone lived and where each person was buried in the graveyard. A logic professor suggested HyperCard, and that did me in.

November 22 at 9:52am

Chris Rodley Thanks **Deena**! Sorry for the late reply (I had my annual review in my PhD). Your explanation makes total sense to me; I could sense that deep connection between author and character. (Also I loved HyperCard so much....I still sometimes dream about the beautiful radio buttons and grey shading....)

November 27, 2016 at 5:10pm

Judy Malloy `Hi Deena,`

`Your wiki version of Marble Springs is situated on a social media platform that is central in the contemporary infosphere`
`-- reminding us that social media narrative can take many shapes on many different platforms.`
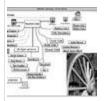
`One of the first exercises I asked students to do for the Rutgers Camden DSC class in Social Media Narrative was to create a "world model" on Twitter in 20 tweets. Because the concept of world model (that lies, along with the parser, at the heart of Interactive Fiction composition) was not familiar to contemporary students, although it is a complex iteration of the idea of world model, for its effective creation of place and people, one of the examples I used was Marble Springs 3.0.`

`In your statement on content code process --`
http://www.well.com/user/jmalloy/elit/deena_springs.html `-- you observe:`

`"So my vision of Marble Springs grew to an open-ended, never ending place -- a one-to-one map of reality as people came and went in the town. I wanted a place where readers could make their own marks on the town. In HyperCard, this was an ungainly, expensive programming nightmare that barely hinted at what a wiki could do automatically. Now, the Marble Springs wiki is a collaborative space where readers can easily join in. You can follow scandals on the Forbidden list, wander the maps and graveyards, and then add your own insights into this tightly intertwingled little Colorado gold rush town."`

`Yes!`

`And Thanks for joining us and contributing your voice to the discussion!`

Authoring Software - Deena Larsen: Marble Springs 3.0
well.com
November 27, 2016 at 1:31pm

Deena Larsen `Thank you for all your support in the little town of Marble Springs!`
November 27, 2016 at 6:14pm

Deena Larsen You know, for CyberMountain 1999. I took about 10 people up to Marble Colorado and we hiked into the quarry and saw the ruins of the church and all. (Marble Springs is *almost* Marble, but with a few bends to the history... kinda like what the US would have been like under a Gore presidency...). anyway, half came down with altitude sickness.... I learned then to force water on everyone I encounter in the mountains 😊 :)

November 27, 2016 at 6:15pm