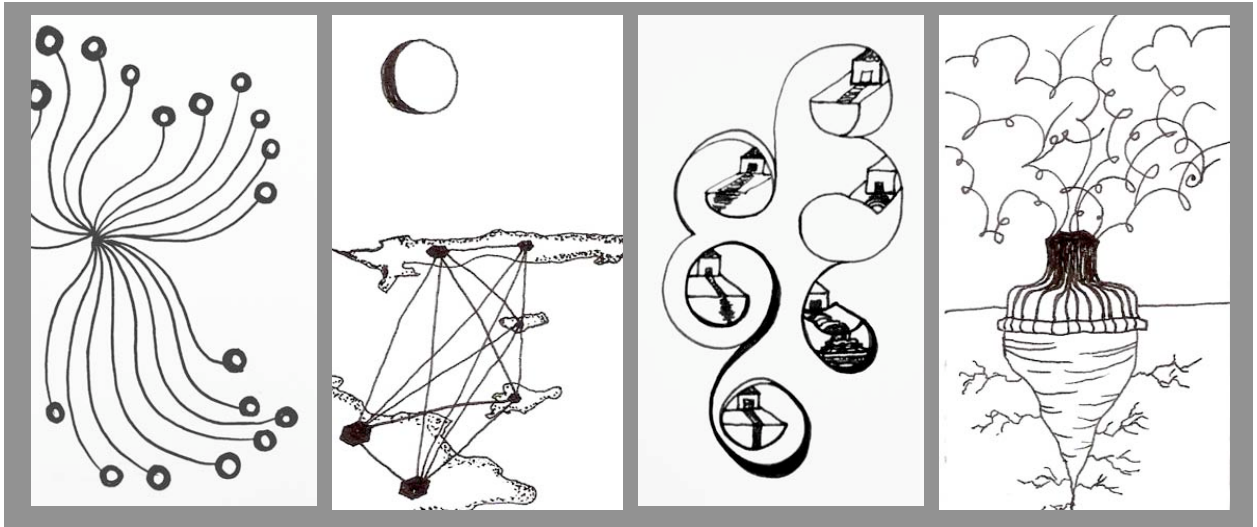


**Navigating Narritory, Creating Terristory:
story as a way of knowing**



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Dissertation, MA Art and Ecology

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Dedication

For my family, Connie, Timothy and Joan Long with gratitude for their perpetual loving support and encouragement; for Christopher Cote with gratitude for the long and frequent supportive conversations, which helped to propel me through the year; and for two generous patrons, whose support made my studies possible.

Abstract

What roles do story and narrative play in the acquisition of knowledge, identity with place and the meeting of and connection to other?

In this dissertation I explore the different facets of this question through desk research, action research and results from a questionnaire. Juxtaposing theoretical enquiry with personal vignettes from these research sources I explore the themes of story and place, land, language, culture and reverberation. Through this research with a focus on oral stories, I address the narrative potential of place and investigate “storying” as a collaborative act. I introduce and define two new words, “narritory” and “territory” as possible additions to expand the vocabulary available to describe the relationship between experience of place and its translation into story. I briefly examine different definitions of story and investigate the possibility of story as nomad. I also introduce the diverse roles that story plays in our lives, from micro relationships with place to the macro manifestations as culture and paradigms. Throughout the piece I return to themes of story and place, narritory and territory.

Acknowledgements

I was drawn across the Atlantic Ocean from my home in New Mexico to attend the MA in Art and Ecology. I was inspired by and committed to the premise of the course, combining Fine Art and Ecology, for me, a natural way to continue my studies in Art and Cultural Anthropology. I was drawn to the emphasis on place and the unique approach to art as research in the course, dividing the year into areas of emphasis based loosely on the “three ecologies” outlined by Gregory Bateson and Félix Guattari. I was keen to find a platform in which I could both pursue my previous interests and also expose myself to new modes of thought, methodologies, philosophies and ways of working as an artist and cultural leader. The MA in Art and Ecology has proven to be such a platform.

I am grateful to Alan Boldon for creating the MA in Art and Ecology. I am also grateful to him for the story he told me at a table in a little restaurant in Albuquerque, NM, the content of which, inspired me to join the MA Arts and Ecology ‘experiment’. I also wish to thank Tracey Warr for illuminating writing and the arts in new ways, for her ability to make the indomitable manageable, and for her confidence in us, her students. I am also deeply grateful to Christian Taylor, Wallace Heim and the many other tutors, whose lectures, guidance and participation were essential and enriching elements of the course. I extend my gratitude also to my fellow students on the course whose company, insights, receptivity and feedback, have been integral to the learning process and to the following research.

I wish to thank everyone who contributed to the research for this dissertation, especially to those who responded to my questionnaire and offered me insights through conversation. I am also grateful to those who unknowingly contributed to this research through their presence in the many narritories that form my life, through brief encounters, deep relationships or written works.

**Navigating Narritory, Creating Terristory:
story as a way of knowing**

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

It is 5:30 AM in Varanasi and I approach the River Ganges on foot over foul-smelling ground strewn with refuse. The rank smell of garbage intermingles with the pungent smell of incense. I weave through the temples and come to the ghats, concrete steps leading to the river. On these ghats are remnants of the last funeral pyre, smoldering ashes and warm coals. I ascend to the water's edge, where I climb aboard a rickety wooden boat. I am rowed down the river, while I observe people of all ages near the banks: bathing, the men in their dhotis, the women in their saris; brushing their teeth; washing clothes; scouring huge aluminum pots; drinking and gargling; saying morning prayers; and meditating. Workers clean the ghats with fire hoses to clear them of the ashes of the dead as well as sand and rocks deposited by recent floods. For these people, their faith in the purity of the river water transcends the fact that the Ganges is one of the most polluted rivers on earth. With the support of tradition and faith, people continue to interact with the Ganges as they have for thousands of years. (My recollections of Varanasi from 1996 journey. All following unattributed quotations are mine.)

In our cognitive process as human beings, we order our perceptions and experiences in different ways. Stories are one of the most important and primal human ways of coming to know and making sense of the world and ourselves. Stories are depictions of experienced or imagined events and observations, created and expressed through subjective lenses of individual perception and creativity. According to Richard Ferdig, stories are part of the fundamental structure of the human mind (2004: 475). We, as story-based creatures, use stories to find and create meaning and understanding from experience (2004: 476). According to anthropologist, Tim Ingold, 'In storytelling as in wayfaring, it is in the movement from place to place – or from topic to topic that knowledge is integrated' (2007: 91). Stories are powerful metaphorical maps that help us to place ourselves in the world in relation to our surrounding environment, culture, land, and fellow human experiences. But stories are also paths into the unknown on many levels, 'like the early maps of the world, or modern maps of the universe...a way of positioning the elements of territory that is just being discovered, beyond the edge of the known' (Tufnell and Crickmay, 2004:176).

Becoming receptive to these narratives enables us to map 'emergent worlds' both external and within us (Tufnell and Crickmay, 2004:176).

This dissertation explores the narrative potential of place and the stories created through recognizing and experiencing this potential. Through this dissertation I introduce and define the invented words, "narritory" and "territory" to describe the transformation of phenomenological experience of place into communicable, digestible stories to be told, heard and retold. This exploration of narritory and territory will take place in the context of story, its prominent role in our lives and its nomadic qualities. The form of this piece juxtaposes different writing styles to include theoretical explorations and brief, first person narratives, in different voices, my own or other people's. Experiences collected through Action Research¹ and responses to a research questionnaire are the basis for these interludes.

The research for this piece includes traditional desk research², Action Research and the dissemination and compiling of responses to a questionnaire based on my research questions. In my action research I took my research questions into different contexts and situations and then reflected on how the experience informed my view of my questions or provided answers. I then wrote about the experience and jotted down any responses or insights I had gained from the experience (full descriptions of these research sessions are included in appendix a). My questionnaire was distributed to over 100 people, friends, friends of friends, and family members. I received 25 responses (included in part in the following piece and in full in appendix b). The questionnaire is inherently qualitative in the way that I chose to write it, the information it was soliciting and because I made no attempt to access a random sampling of people. Therefore this research in no way represents the general public of the United States, the United Kingdom or any other country. It is simply based on responses from

¹ According to the Hand Book of Action Research, Action Research is 'a participatory, democratic process concerned with developing practical knowing in the pursuit of worthwhile human purposes, grounded in a participatory worldview which we believe is emerging at this historical moment' (Reason, 2008: 2).

² I began with a brief general literature study of story and place, however because of my personal interest and education, I have chosen to focus more on anthropological and literary sources which approach story more from a cultural perspective rather than a psychological perspective. There is extensive research on the role of story within the psychology of the individual. However, in this short paper, I only touch briefly on this vast and interesting area of research.

people to whom I am somehow connected. However because I received over 20 responses, as well as providing me with concrete examples of story and narratives, they also provided me with a limited data set. In the following piece I will sometimes refer to trends in responses from this questionnaire. From a wider, random sample study, it might be possible to study more in-depth the trends and patterns in responses to questions about story, place and identity. However currently, I can only refer to the outcomes from the limited data set that I have acquired in this short-term study. Through this experience, I have been surprised by people's willingness to share their stories. I am truly grateful to everyone who has generously given of themselves and their time in either the writing of their responses to the questionnaire or in conversations about my research.

Storying

When I was a child my mother would tell us stories about Ireland – her own stories and memories and family stories and history. This became an important part of my identity and my family's identity – i.e. our personal link to Ireland (and to the past). (Eilis Kirby, Questionnaire Response, hereafter referred to as QR).

In our culture and in much of the modern world, the oral tradition is now one of many ways to convey stories. The diversity of choice in storytelling mediums available now through written language, performance, radio, television, digital technology and the World Wide Web (to name only a few) offer a certain brand of opportunity while simultaneously removing us from the immediacy of experience present in the oral storytelling tradition. Although narrative and story can be expressed in innumerable ways, my focus in this piece is on the oral tradition. As *homo sapiens*, we experienced the world as exclusively oral for approximately 25,000 – 45,000 years before the first script was developed 5,500 years ago, followed 2,000 years later by the first alphabet (Brandt, 1997: 7; Ong, 1995: 85). For thousands of years thoughts, experiences, observations, knowledge and stories were communicated orally. Although, today, the written word and textualization of narrative is often given elevated authority over the

spoken word (e.g. the need to write this dissertation), it is primarily the oral-aural (spoken-heard) exchange that I return to in this written work.

It could be said that in its oral form, story does not actually exist, at least not in material form. It is fleeting and ephemeral 'air, sound, silence; the exhalation of breath whistling through contracted muscles in the throat, tongue touching teeth and tiny conch-like bones vibrating in the ear' (Brandt, 1997: 8). Story lives in the spoken and silent space between teller and listener, although at times both the teller and the listener exist within one person. Some of the most notable stories in our own lives are those that we tell ourselves. While this reflexive aspect of storytelling is present in the following piece, I emphasize more the relationship between teller and listener as two distinct individuals. It is the ephemeral nature of the story spoken by one person to another that gives it nomadic agency, relying on the telling, the listening, absorption and retelling for dissemination. Reflecting my interest in this oral-aural exchange as a central theme, I frequently use "storying"³ in place of the more traditional term, "storytelling." Kevin Brandt in his book, *Story as a way of knowing* describes storying as 'the telling and hearing of stories as a mutually creative, interactive language event' (1997: 4). The creation of story is not a solitary act; it is collaborative by nature. Text or other seemingly "fixed" representations of stories are not devoid of this oral-aural relationship; they only make it less obvious. In a spoken story, until a listener receives the sounds created by the teller, they are noise rather than words, sounds with meaning. Similarly with a book, comic or movie, it is when the words or images are read or viewed by the reader or viewer that the full process of storying is realized (Brandt, 1997: 9).

³ Described in another way by Brandt, 'storying is an action of contemporaneous interchange, happening here and now as "ongoing part of ongoing existence," in which participants – storytellers and story listeners – come together in a relationship of reciprocal oral-aural play and imagination for the co-creative constructing, inhabiting, and exploring of shared alternative story worlds' (1997:4).

Story and Interdependence

When I was on a permaculture course, we lay on the ground and heard the story of millions of life-forms in the soil below us (Rebecca Beinart, QR).

My fascination with story and narrative is rooted in an on-going investigation of interdependence and the way that relationships are formed and voiced between people, places, animals and things; the way that people are and become connected to each other, land, territory, other creatures, home, belongings and experiences. The deeper that physicists peer into the nature of reality, the more relationships they find. Even sub-atomic particles do not exist alone. Physicist, Frijtof Capra defines interdependence in the context of ecology as, 'the mutual dependence of all life processes on one another' (1997: 290). These connections manifest in physical, mental and some would say spiritual form, through the physical web of interdependence and through the web of culture, society and ideas. Story and narrative both create and are created by these webs. Hannah Arendt refers to this "web" in her chapter on "Action" in *The Human Condition*, 'It is because of this already existing web that [action] "produces" stories with or without intention as naturally as fabrication produces tangible things' (1958:184). In this statement Arendt's focus is on the web of human relationships. However in the navigation of narritory and the creation of terristory environment, plants and other-than-human beings are equally important elements of this web. Tim Ingold describes this complex narrative web as more than 'connecting points in a network, every relation is one line in a meshwork of interwoven trails....' (2007: 90). Stories articulate and forge meaningful connections not only between human beings but also between humans, environments and other creatures. Anthropologist, Gregory Bateson describes story as, 'an aggregate of formal relations scattered in time' (1990: 81). Our and others being and acting in the world create an ongoing narrative which, as participant observers, we are constantly choosing to give voice to in different ways.

CHAPTER TWO

Narritory and Terristory

Changing the country in which I live forced a new story to be created about my life, and forced me to adjust to stories unfamiliar (anonymous, QR).

Many people recognize the central role that story plays in our lives, however, few recognize the volatile phases of engagement with place that create an internal narrative and often an external narrative as well. I propose that there are two basic and interconnected aspects of storying with place, which can occur sequentially or simultaneously: 1) experiencing and acting in a place; 2) creating stories from that experience. Being in, interacting with and listening to a place are the basis of narritory and terristory. *Narritory* denotes personal storying with place, the recognition and co-creation of a personal place-based narrative, which when made public becomes a *terristory*.

Moss covered walls built of stones used and reused for architectural delineations of space for millennia. A granite quarry water catchment turned habitat for fish. Grass mown close by eager sheep growing over an old railroad bed. These blatant collaborative works between natural processes and 10,000 years of human habitation are awe-inspiring.

My interest in narritory and terristory came as a result of my relocation for a year to a place I had never been, to an island rich with evidence of thousands of years of continuous human occupation. All places have many layers of stories to excavate, but in the United Kingdom (UK) the relationship between humans and land is evident everywhere. Places in the UK where this relationship is not visible are rare, unlike where I come from, the American Southwest. My home state, New Mexico, offers a rich cultural narrative and a wealth of extensive human – environment relationships, but they are often more subtly hidden. Evidence of ancient peoples is sparse and the illusion of “wildness” is more present. Observing the omnipresent physical evidence of the human-land relationship in the landscapes of the UK made me wonder how these

relationships were formed, how they have been voiced as narratives and stories in the past and how they could be given voice again. This probing of relationships between people and place, past and present led me into a thinking process, which resulted in the invention of two new words.

Another aspect of my relocation to UK, was a new found linguistic flexibility in my mother tongue. Not only was I encountering new physical space, but also new mental and linguistic space to navigate. Surrounded by slang, linguistic trends, traditions and rules for the English language which were new to me, I became hyper-aware of language use. The linguistic similarities and simultaneous dissimilarities created a liminal space in which language became more flexible, more malleable. My experience of coming to know a new place and trying to describe this process made me conscious of the lack of concise words available to use. The discovery of this lack in appropriate vocabulary led to the invention of two new words by splicing together relevant words to describe the meanings I was grasping in this new experience of place. The term “narritory” came first.

Upon returning from a journey by car to Helsinki and back, the word surfaced while editing sounds recorded on the journey. The journey was a group exploration of new places and lands with colleagues Anna and Mark Keleher and Rebecca Beinart, from which we created a series of collaborative drawings, carved tally sticks, and a radio programme. During the creation of the radio programme, as memories of those places coagulated into stories and informed subsequent experiences, I realized that through the journey I had experienced the construction of a narritory. I didn't realize it at the time, but the radio show that we created from the journey, “How Far From Home Are We?” was actually a terristory.

Narritory (noun)

1. The internal narrative created by direct engagement and personal experience of navigating through the multiple narratives and experiences of a place, territory or landscape.
2. The experiential interface between humans and their environment.

Narritory is a combination of the words narrate and territory. Narrate comes from

Latin *narrare* 'to tell, relate, recount, explain and to make acquainted with' and also from *gnarus* 'knowing'. Territory is derived from Latin *territorium* 'land around a town, domain, district', Latin *terra* 'earth or land' and French, *terrain* 'piece of earth, ground, land' (Harper, 2001). Narritory is a new word invented to describe the process of experience-based navigation of multiple narrative engagements and experiences of a place, landscape or territory. Narritory is created when terrain becomes territory, when space becomes place, when place narrates itself to us through our experiences of it. Narritory is an exchange of experiences, information and interaction with a place. According to Rebecca Solnit, 'When you give yourself to places, they give you yourself back; the more one comes to know them, the more one seeds them with the invisible crop of memories and associations that will be waiting for you when you come back....' (2001: 13).

The navigation of narritory is perpetual, happening for each of us all of the time, but most of us are unaware or only partially aware of it. To navigate our narritory requires awareness and openness to the unknown, alertness to the familiar and willingness to be changed by what we encounter. It is this personal narrative that brings us into a knowing of place, out of which arises meaning. A narritory is navigation through experiential narrative engagement. According to Anthropologist, Keith Basso⁴, 'When places are actively sensed, the physical landscape becomes wedded to the landscape of the mind, to the roving imagination, and where the latter may lead is anybody's guess' (1966: 107). A narritory is formed when you give yourself to a place, opening yourself, sometimes to the point of vulnerability, to receive what is offered. This place can then be revisited with other people through terristory. The creation of narritory is inseparably linked to the creation of terristory. The two interconnected terms are not easily separated categories of experience.

⁴ Keith Basso is an anthropologist/ethnographer who I studied with at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque. His lectures were full of dry wit and carefully chosen words. He often crafted his lectures as stories, or included anecdotes from his field research, which was about how the place names of the Western Apache embody stories. He has now retired. I am honored to have been able to attend his classes.

Terristory (noun)

1. A story born of narritory, rooted in the direct experience of new territory, place or landscape made public either formally or informally.

Terristory combines the words territory (etymology above) and story. The modern word, story, comes from Middle English *storie*, Anglo-French *estoire*, and Latin *historia*, 'learning or knowing through inquiry'. The word is also related to Greek *eidenai* 'to know' (Harper, 2001). The word *terristory* specifically denotes public storying of a place with or for others. Terristory is formed when one shares a narritory with others, setting it free to become a nomadic traveler. It is the story created from narritory set free through telling or making public in whatever form is chosen, to navigate new territories, reverberating into other tellings and other terristories. According to Gregory Bateson, 'A story is a little knot or complex of that species of connectedness which we call relevance' (1979: 22).

Transforming the lived experience of a place into a story creates yet another layer within the unique relationship with that place. The creation of a terristory, a formal marking of relationship with place, can be as casual as a fleeting conversation or as formal as a deeply rooted cultural practice. In either case a terristory is created to share a personal narrative of place with others, setting it free to become nomadic, moving from one mouth and ear to the next. Without realizing it, we constantly create informal terristories as we recount experiences and relate narratives discovered in our experiences of a place. However the creation of a formal terristory requires hard work and skill (Estes, 1998: 466-467). Although it can be conveyed in a multitude of ways, the process of creating and presenting becomes as important as the content. The boundary between the informal and the formal is slippery and difficult to pin down, but it is an important distinction to make, as the purpose and affect of these different approaches have different social and cultural implications and link into different bodies of theory about story.

The boundary between narritory and terristory is also difficult to define, as sometimes narritory comes to consciousness and is formed at the moment it is voiced in a terristory. In this case the stages of a narritory and terristory come into existence simultaneously rather than in a linear sequence. Narritory and

territory point out and question the division between life and story, the experiencing, living and the recounting. These divisions are often unclear 'in looping or knitting the thread being spun now and the thread picked up from the past are both the same yarn. There is no point at which the story ends and life begins' (Ingold 2007: 90).

CHAPTER THREE

Place - Language - Culture

I was once very ill and no one knew why. Food did not stay down and even water bounced right back. My place of solace was to wander, in my mind, to the high country above tree line. Always I have felt at peace in such a place. Somehow the purity of the air and water, the colors and forms of the landscape, and the brilliance of the light, all combine to lift up my heart in joy. (Jocelyn Donald, QR).

I will begin by defining place in its physical sense, as a location and then open the definition to include imagined and metaphorical territories of experience, mind and language. Place is not a static container for flora, fauna, stones, people, culture, history, architecture, footprints, teeth marks or story stratigraphy⁵; these are elements of place. It is our experience of these elements that transforms the area from a space to a place. According to Eva Hornecker professor of informatics, 'space refers to the structural, geometrical qualities of a physical environment, place...includes the dimensions of lived experience, interaction and use of a space by its inhabitants.' (2005: 1). According to art writer, Lucy Lippard, 'Place is latitudinal and longitudinal within the map of a person's life. It is temporal and spatial, personal and political. A layered location replete with human histories and memories, place has width as well as depth. It is about connections, what surrounds it, what formed it, what happened there and what will happen there....A lived in Landscape becomes a place' (1997: 31).

The places and experiences navigated in narritory can never be directly transposed into terristory. To become a story these experiences must go through the linguistic transformation, ironically both freeing and limiting their scope (see later section on story as nomad). The nature of human memory and elements of individual perception and experience will always morph the physical places, sensations, feelings, observations and events of narritory to be communicable in a terristory. This will often lead to the introduction of subjective elements as '[w]itnesses to an event do not usually grasp every detail, or see the connections

⁵ Story stratigraphy refers to the layering of stories in our landscapes from the different peoples and generations that have inhabited or passed through.

between parts. The gaps in their knowledge will be filled in later by a confusion of imagination, rationalization and remembered fact. In its transmission subtle variations will be introduced with each repetition' (Swanton, 1986: 23).

Narritory, like territory, is primarily concerned with a geographic area or location, however these words also refer to non-physical places in our imagination or experience through which narratives can be formed. One such example is cited in a response to my questionnaire: 'The strongest experience of a new "territory" is the death of someone one loves, after which all stories are changed' (Anonymous, QR). In this example, the new territory is the state of being precipitated by a life-altering event, the death of a loved-one.

Land and Language

"The Earth as a Whole is a Tree and the Tree as a Whole is the Earth."
(Vulker Harlan, lecture)⁶

Each tree has a story of rooted movement. The growth rings of the tree are waves of communication radiating out from each of us, people transiently rooted.

*Verticulture, rooted movement
clustered experiences, whispered close
toes touching toes, changing light with sway
swinging with feet on ground
Images emerge from bark
one-word story drops, small unexpected sweets*

(Action Research, AR hereafter, University of the Trees, Haldon Forest).

Narritory is formed through the interface and co-mingling of the internal perceiving mind with the external world, the individual and environment. According to David Abram, 'To the sensing body all phenomena are animate, actively soliciting the participation of our senses, or else withdrawing from our focus and repelling our involvement....each phenomena has the power to reach us and influence us' (Abram 1996:81). In Merleau Ponty's approach to

⁶ From a lecture at the Centre for Contemporary Art in the Natural World, Haldon Forrest, Exeter, 26 July, 2008.

phenomenology, he stresses the important role that the body plays as the interface with the world, a great organ of speaking and listening: 'It is our body that allows this interaction to happen. It is the body which points out, and which speaks....This disclosure [of the body's immanent expressiveness] ... extends, as we shall see, to the whole sensible world, and our gaze, prompted by the experience of our own body, will discover in all other "objects" the miracle of expression' (Merleau-Ponty, 1962: 197). Attentive listening enables a deeper, more fully sensual listening to take place. It is in this 'shift of attention' that you hear birdsong 'not just as a pleasant melody repeated mechanically, as on a tape player in the background, but as active meaningful speech' (Abram 1996:81). Listening, looking and speaking are profound reciprocal actions. David Abram describes, 'it is the animate earth that speaks; human speech is but a part of that vaster discourse' (1996: 179). Sensorial alertness and heightened awareness of this discourse are the first steps in the creation of narrytory and terristory.

Nature - Land - Story - Culture

The narrative of the seasons is the theme of many stories from many different cultures around the world. A local play tapped into this tradition bringing together the seasons and the British preoccupation with weather and sun. With a battle in rhyme, and constant protests from an actress embodying the Totnes Tourist Board and an eager visitor to Devon, the plot created for the occasion went something like this: Autumn nearly kills our hero, the Sun. But happily, the Doctor who is paid in Totnes pounds revives him. With the help of the Sun, the Harvest Mother gives birth to a harvest baby, symbolizing all the bounty of mother earth. Autumn and Winter try to steal the harvest baby, but all is soon put right and the babe is allowed to live and serve the people with his bounty. The anthropomorphic Spirit of Climate Change soon appears and is booed as he describes what he is doing to our planet and about those who believe in him and those who don't. The sun, previously, a purely "good" force is now cast in a new light with the concern about greenhouse gasses. Climate change is booed off stage and the play ends with a song in rhyme referencing

*its different characters and themes.*⁷ (AR, Mummings Play, Bay Horse Pub, Totnes 19 July, 2008)

Culture is woven by myths, creation stories, pantheons of mythological beings, folklore, wives tales, “urban myths,” literature, sung story, and performed story as well as the stories of lived experience, conversation and daily life. Stories can also be portals that enable us to make and recognize meaning in any situation or context. Tim Ingold writes, ‘Far from dressing up a plain reality...[story] serve[s] to conduct the attention...*into* the world deeper and deeper, as one proceeds from outward appearance to an ever more intense poetic involvement’ (2000 :56).

In *Versions of Culture*, Terry Eagleton explores the concept of culture in the context of etymology, pedagogy, nature and civilization, drawing on the linguistic roots of the word to reveal the complexity and subtlety inherent in the evolving concept (2000). The relationship between nature and culture is said to reside in the concept of cultivation, which literally and figuratively has its roots in the development of agriculture by humans over ten thousand years ago. The cultivation of the land laid the groundwork for the cultivation of the human interaction and manipulation of nature in what we now call culture. In this approach, nature is seen as both the foundation and the agent of culture. Eagleton points out the importance of limitations and boundaries set by nature and the freedom created by individuality and innovation within the context of culture. Eagleton writes, ‘The very word ‘culture’ contains a tension between making and being made, rationality and spontaneity, which upbraids the disembodied intellect of the Enlightenment as much as it defies the reductionism of so much contemporary thought’ (Eagleton, 2000: 9).

⁷ Observer’s note: costumes were wonderful homemade hats and capes of colorful streamers. The man and woman who produced the play were sweet, genuine and gentle. The man, when asked for a speech, was truly speechless. After a moment’s silence, a little voice came out of him complimenting the actors on their enthusiasm and good work. He was tall and thin and dressed in rumpled blue jeans. I felt such warmth for him. His genuineness and shyness reminded me of my Uncle John.

CHAPTER FOUR

Story and Meaning

This story came from a dream I had when I was 8 years old. It was when I met my wife. In second grade I had a crush on a girl with long blond hair. One winter night, I had a dream that I was walking down over the riverbank on the path where we made our forts. My “girlfriend” was walking in front of me. The weather was crispy and I remember the smell of leaves and fall in the air and the vivid colors of all my surroundings. My “girlfriend” had her hair in a ponytail and wore a purple shirt and striped slacks. I didn’t remember seeing this girl ever wearing these clothes and I did not remember her hair being so very bright blond. We walked on a bit more and then I woke up. Fifteen years later, living in New Mexico, I went to meet my friend’s sister at the train station in Albuquerque. She had blond hair in a ponytail and she wore a purple shirt and striped slacks. This woman later became my wife and beloved.... I knew without a doubt that the “girlfriend” in that dream was my beloved (Timothy Long, QR).

Stories are both questions and answers, embodiments of human curiosity about the world. An essential element of communication, storytelling is one of humanity's oldest art forms and an enduring method for transmission of knowledge. Stories are powerful elements of leadership; vision and ideas can spark social change. Everyone is a storyteller, even if they do not know it. There may be as many ways to define story as there are storytellers. In my questionnaire, I asked the question, ‘For you, what is story?’ People’s responses were varied, emphasizing different aspects: ‘Story is the way we make sense of the otherwise random and inexplicable data that comes through our sense doors’ (Patrick Cooper, QR); ‘Story for me is a journey....’ (Timothy Long, QR); ‘It’s the endless different versions of reality we negotiate each day’ (Rebecca Beinart, QR); ‘Story is the voice of the teller, the words chosen to convey the tone, the specifics of that voice’ (Sallie Bingham QR); ‘story is a stream of consciousness in which you develop characters and the elements....from some story you’ve heard or some odd experience that you turn into something interesting, fun and beguiling’ (Nicolas Arnal, QR); ‘A story relates an event that carries meaning for the narrator; and that meaning, in turn, is communicated to

another human being' (Jocelyn Donald, QR). The subtle and not so subtle differences between these definitions made me realize that the way that we define story determines the roles that we allow it to play in our lives.

We reveal elements of our selves, our cultures and our societies through our definition(s) of story as well as through our stories. What does it tell us of our selves and our culture if a story is defined as a group of linear events strung together with a beginning, middle and an end? Other cultures hold different worldviews and define story and reality in different ways. The word used by the Khanty, an indigenous people of Russia, which is 'usually translated as "story" literally means way – not in the sense of prescribed code or conduct sanctioned by tradition, but in the sense of a path to be followed, along which one can keep going rather than coming to a dead end or being caught in a loop of ever repeating cycles' (Ingold, 2007: 90). Stories manifest in myriad ways, filling different roles, informal and formal within all cultures and societies.

There is something overwhelmingly obvious and simultaneously evasive about the role and power of stories in our lives. Storying is the ability to recognize a story in the familiar or seemingly boring, and to transform it into something worthy of notice. Psychologist and literary theorist, Jerome Bruner points out that 'We are not very good at grasping how story explicitly transforms the common place' but that's exactly what it does (Bruner, 2002: 4). He also points out another important element of story that sets it apart from an account or general description: 'peripeteia', a sudden reversal of circumstances, swiftly turns a routine sequence of events into a story' (Bruner, 2002: 5). Whether a story recognizes the uncommon or transforms the everyday, the act of storying is inherently creative. In the media, our reminisces about the past, our plans for the future, in an art work, in the pub, in an office, at school or during harvest time in the fields, creative acts of storying, whether we know it or not, are happening in small ways within us and around us all the time. They are essential to our humanity and to our survival. According to author, Mahailly Csikszentmihaly 'there is no question that the human species could not survive, wither now or in the years to come, if creativity were to run dry....Survival no longer depends on biological equipment alone but on the social and cultural tools we choose to use.....to be human means to be creative' (Csikszentmihaly, 1996: 319).

Story and Knowledge

The story of numbers was told to me by the mathematician Matthew Watkins as we walked the lines in a car park, which slowly developed from a single line of numbers, then to negative numbers, then to vectors, then to three dimensional geometry, algebra and finally, under a nearby bridge, to Hamilton's quaternions and the fourth dimension in geometry (Phil Smith, QR).

What happens to information that is perceived through narrative or story? What makes stories more memorable than information in other forms? For me a clear and vivid story is much easier to remember than a list of facts. Others agree. (Deborah Hutchison, QR; Caine & Caine, 1994 in Forest, 2007: 207). Humans have two separate neurological memory storage systems: taxon memory, which stores disconnected facts, and spatial memory, which stores narratives and territories (stories and narratives from direct experience) (Caine & Caine, 1994 in Forest, 2007: 207). Storytelling becomes stronger and more common in cultures where the written word either does not exist or is inaccessible due to social or political oppression. When we can no longer rely on the written word to store our cultural knowledge we rely on our built-in system for “storing” stories. While learning takes place for people of all ages, Alasdair MacIntyre points out the importance of cognitive development in children provided by stories: ‘if you deprive children of stories...you leave them unscripted, anxious stutterers in their actions and their words’ (1985: 201 in Ferdig, 2004: 476). David Abram describes the purpose and function of stories in oral cultures, ‘Without writing, knowledge of the diverse properties of particular animals, plants and places can be preserved only by being woven into stories, into vital tales wherein the specific characteristics... are made evident through a narrated series of events and interactions’ (1996: 120). Even in our society, which is so very focused on the written word, storytelling is vital for everyday human interaction, communication, leadership, change, culture, and connection with place.

What do stories do?

When Francis and I walked in Grand Canyon in 1970, I eventually became aware of some regular patterns. One involved rounding points of land {ridges}, heading a side canyon, crossing it and then out round another point and into the next side canyon in a great scalloping pattern.... It was like a very slow clock ticking maybe only twice a day, but definitely ticking. Since we lived outside for 10 weeks I began to realize one could tell time not only by the sun in hours, but by the moon in days. Then there were the rockslides. Once, early in the trip after snow and thaw, a slide crashed down a slope across the river. Francis and I mused how fortunate we were to witness it. He remarked that you might sit there for a week or more and not see such a thing; the slide might only represent a second in geologic time in the canyon. Later, a basketball-sized boulder went whizzing past about 50 feet away. I thought to myself, "another second." Then there were the plants - all in perfect time with the season, waxing into spring. Some like the agave would wait many years until that perfect spring and then shoot up a splendid flower stalk many feet high in just a few days and then die; all of them keeping perfect time for their species. For me, in the midst of all that color and fragrance, there was the feeling of being in a clock shop of sorts, with all sorts of ticks and tocks - some barely noticeable, some thunderously obvious, slow ones, fast ones, all part of the life there. My own sense of 24 hour time is just one of many and of limited relevance in the universe (John Donald, QR).

I propose that stories are integral in the creation of relationship with land and place, people and social change. Stories play a prominent role in all cultures of all times. In contemporary western culture there is a resurgence of recognition of the power of the story, which is being utilized in new ways in organisations, counseling, teaching, advertising, media as well as in other fields. However, there are particular uses of story and culturally specific examples of narritory and terristory that stand out for me. For the Australian Aboriginals "songlines" are enacted and sung story maps of places, memorized by individuals to guide them on their pilgrimage and survival journeys across the vast desert (Chatwin, 1988). The story-place names of the Western Apache poetically reference stories that are kept alive through retelling and repetition. In this statement by Benson Lewis, (recorded by Keith Basso in 1979 and published in his book *Wisdom Sits in*

Places) he calls up the descriptive place name and then describes his kinship to it:

I think of that mountain called Tsee Ligai Dah Sidile (White Rocks Lie Above In A Compact Cluster) as if it were my maternal grandmother. I recall stories of how it once was at that mountain. The stories told to me were like arrows. Elsewhere, hearing that mountain's name, I see it. Its name is like a picture. Stories go to work on you like arrows. Stories make you live right. Stories make you replace yourself (1996: 38).

Place names exist everywhere and are always laden with context and story stratigraphy. However unless these contexts and story layers are kept alive and visible within contemporary culture, the stories within the names become lost. The Western Apache tradition is unique in that place names themselves overtly reference stories, which are taught to one generation after another as part of the fabric of their cultural-geographic environment.

Stories and Agenda

Peace be with you....Genesis.....journey to God....stories map the way....Prayers bellow out in the resonant chamber of the church, invoking a thick strata of stories, familiar, but unknown to me. Organ tones accompany hymns and resonate with my internal organs and fill me with the space of music. I sing in unison with the congregation. The Bible is read splayed on a golden eagle, the instructive predator. The sermon is about wheat and weeds, the children of heaven and hell and a woman. She is suffering the painful punishment of damnation, but asks for another chance at heaven. A search is initiated for one good deed in her life that bore fruit. When one is found she is given a tiny strand of rope on which to climb to heaven. As she climbs, people grab at her legs and feet, trying to use them to climb to heaven themselves. Scared that the weight will break the feeble rope, she tries to stave them off, flailing her arms and legs. In the process she herself snaps the rope and with it her only chance of climbing to heaven (AR, St. Mary's Church, Totnes, Sunday, 20 July, 2008).

For the Western Apache, mentioned above, their land is mapped through place names, which reference events or stories related to particular locations. The stories and events referenced often have messages held within them, moral

instructions or lessons learned (Basso, 1996, John Donald, QR). Each time a person utters the name, or goes to the place, all those present are reminded of these events and lessons of greed, drunkenness, pride, skill in battle and the hunt. These are cultural stories protected and maintained in place names.

Although in this dissertation I am primarily casting storying in a positive light, it is important to acknowledge that stories are powerful tools, which can be wielded by anyone. As well as increased understanding between people, the power of story can be abused. Stories can cause confusion and harm, be coercive and even oppressive. One questionnaire respondent pointed out the power of place names in communicating cultural narratives and agendas in other cultures as well, 'Note: compare the value of this [Apache] system to the value of "Ronald Reagan National Airport" as a place name' (John Donald QR). Another example could be the narratives of advertising, which perpetuate the story of capitalism by preying on human desires to sell products. Political propaganda is also an example of storytelling which is used to sway opinion, or worse, to mislead and control large numbers of people. Human history is thick with examples in which stories have been used on a large scale to amass power, wealth and control.

Stories and the meeting of Other

Here is a story of the story that helped me win the heart of my beloved.....It was a beautiful Easter morning in El Rito, NM. I was invited to an Easter brunch with some good friends and fellow firefighters. Lo, there was a beautiful girl, the daughter of the hosts. It was most fortunate for me to be standing next to [her] when we were told to choose a random person, and smash an emptied egg shell on their back. In each shell was a piece of paper with a "suggestion" written on it. She and I looked at each other and simultaneously smashed shells on each other's back. My piece of paper stuck to her shoulder. It read, "tell a story of springtime." This is the story that came to mind.....One spring day in the early 90's, I was in the White Mountains of New Hampshire to work as a backcountry shelter caretaker for the summer. The whole crew was hiking to a shelter for yearly orientation to set up for the season. 3 miles up the trail I saw movement. It was a bird flying. I looked closely and saw a nest on the uphill side of the trail. Being an

inherently curious individual, I lingered to look at the eggs in the nest. “Whoa, there’s something poking out of one them!” For about the next half hour I sat there on the edge of that trail and watched a bird emerge from its shell. I spoke to it and greeted it into this world. I was very moved by the experience. It is truly an honor to witness a life taking its first breath⁸ (Christopher Cote, QR).

Stories can function as bridges. Stories are conduits and interfaces between our interior worlds as individuals and the perceived external world, which we cohabit and experience with others. In my questionnaire I asked people if they had experienced story as a way to connect with “other.” People’s responses were varied, however most people agreed that story is a way to connect with other. Deborah Hutchison responded, ‘Let me show you my suitcase full of journals with all their stories of relationship’ (QR). Nicolas Arnal recalls telling a story to his neighbor’s dog, The Moose, ‘He listens!’ (Nicolas Arnal, QR). Three respondents to my questionnaire referred to stories of comradery that they share with colleagues and coworkers from experiences “in the field.” Katie Mann explains, ‘Since the work I have been doing the last couple of years is physically demanding and often quite challenging emotionally as well, sharing stories of survival and misfortune is a way to bond with coworkers’ (QR).

Stories also allow us to come to know places, people, plants, animals, rocks, mountains, valleys, or roads and removes some of their strangeness, allowing us to feel a sense of familiarity or affinity with them (Rebecca Beinart, QR). Rebecca describes her experience with this, ‘I have been learning to identify plants I can use for tea, and hearing stories about their medical properties. This has changed the way I look at the hedgerows and roadsides, and connects me to multiple stories and traditions that I was previously unaware of’ (QR). Because stories are culturally and personally constructed, they not only convey events or experiences but also provide the interpretation of the storyteller which can give the listener a tremendous amount of information that is both explicit and implicit (Emily Brown, QR). Storying allows us to both recognize and cross the threshold of other. It is one of the ways that we can position ourselves

⁸ On that Easter morning, I was moved by the story that Chris chose to tell me. Two and a half years later we are composing our lives together.

in relation to others, express our own experiences, perceptions, ideas and values and relate to and potentially understand experiences and perspectives that differ from our own.

CHAPTER FIVE

Story as nomad

A woman walks up and down the aisles dragging her suitcase behind her, beads of sweat and exhaustion on her face. She passes many empty seats but does not sit down. Trains are moving story capsules – an environment moving through environments. Stories step on and off at each stop and temporarily co-mingle while moving from place to place.....(AR, Ride to Newton Abbot 26-27 July, 2008).

Stories are active, animate, unquantifiable. They cannot be pinned down, they slither through small cracks in fences and down into the nooks and crannies of hard to reach places. They can create atmospheres, shift moods, attitudes, environments and reinvent the world. A story is inherently nomadic in more ways than one, both in its form and content. Stories are aural, written or visual journeys for the listener, reader or viewer, which have the potential to make imagination nomadic. Colin Donoghue defines story as 'A vehicle to transport your awareness away from your surroundings in a mind-expanding way' (QR). Our narritories and terristories through characters, encounters, description, metaphor and poetic image take us to different places via our imagination, 'reviving former experiences, awakening dormant memories, irrigating adjacent sensorial fields' (Ricouer, 1991:173 in Heim, 2003: 193).

Stories themselves are also nomads. They are the vehicles that transport our experiences, ideas, observations or lies from within us to travel out into the world. Another version could be: stories use us to travel and reverberate to fulfill their nomadic nature. In the context of stories, nomadism or reverberation could be said to describe how stories move, morph and create change, passing 'along like a slow contagion' (Heim, 2003: 184). According to Brandt, 'story becomes most itself when it allows itself to pass out of its own exclusive form of material existence into something dynamic' (Brandt, 1997: 9). Interpretation, selective omission, selective listening and telling (editing conscious or unconscious) are important elements of the shape of reverberation. According to photographer, John Berger, 'No story is like a wheeled vehicle whose contact with the road is continuous. Stories walk, like animals and men. And their steps are not only

between narrated events, but between each sentence, sometimes each word. Every step is a stride over something not said' (1982: 284-5). Stories allow us to communicate more than what is actually articulated, written or spoken. Innumerable possible meanings are generated by what *is not* said as well as what *is* said (Brandt, 1997: 9).

Story is not bound to one meaning or one situation. The meaning of stories is also nomadic, with a tendency to migrate, travel and change, depending on the context of the telling. In this case, the story becomes the vehicle for the migration of meaning, both across the boundaries between stories and within single stories. A story told multiple times uncovers reflexive information each time about its new context, listeners and itself. The traditions of retelling and reverberation make story and narrative instruments of what Bachelard calls 'the essential mobility of concepts,' shattering frozen meanings and stagnancy (1987: xxxiii - xxxiv). Meaning moves both between and within stories, maintaining both their vitality and flexibility.

Story: truth, lie, fact, fiction or shape shifter?

A male employee brought his daughter aged 5 to work with him one day. She was a very disrespectful child who would come to everyone's desk and smack them for no reason whatsoever. When she came to me for the 3rd time and smacked me, I gently took her by her arm and whispered to her that I was actually a witch, that I knew where she stayed and that I was going to fly over her house on my broom that night, catch her and put her in a rubbish bag and her dad will never find her. She ran towards her father, screaming. Of course he wanted to know what I had done to her, so I replied I just told her a nice story. As the day dragged on she sat quietly on the carpet next to her dad. Oh I liked that and the fact that it really worked, I still tell really naughty kids the same story. The best lie I have ever had (Joey McGuinness, QR).

If a lie is a story, there can be omissions as well as additions to create fictive elements. In my questionnaire, I asked people to tell me about the first lie that came to mind. My purpose in asking was to solicit thinking about a different kind of story and to access recollections of stories with different functions in our lives.

I also wanted to overtly question the role of “fact” in the search for truth. While my question did not communicate all of this, people’s responses and concrete recollections provided unforeseen insights into lying as storytelling and the relationship between fiction and truth. Responses to my questionnaire referenced the ethics of omission, motivations for lying and the paradox of authoritative misrepresentation of reality and trust. People’s responses explored different definitions of lying and aspects of experience-based oral fiction. Examples ranged from lying on a math exam to Weapons of Mass Destruction in Iraq to the Santa Claus myth.

According to Jerome Bruner, ‘A good story and a well-formed argument are different natural kinds. Both can be used as means for convincing another.... arguments convince one of their truth, stories of their lifelikeness. The one verifies by.... procedures for establishing formal and empirical proof. The other establishes not truth but verisimilitude’ (Bruner, 1986: 11). Stories create freedom, allowing fact and fiction to co-mingle and playfully interact. Through the freedom of the story we can say things that we might not otherwise say. Factual or fictional storytelling can be connected with transformation. According to art writer, Wallace Heim, ‘The heuristic force of fiction and narrative is their capacity to open up new dimensions of reality, not only to re-describe a reality which is already there’ (Heim, 2003: 193). This reality (or truth) lies between the teller and the listener, the creator and the receiver. The truth within the story is as much in how the story is heard as in its content and ‘this truth will continue to yield more and more of itself; there will always be more to know, to hear to say, to discern to consider’ (Brandt, 1997: 10). This path of “knowing” within a story never ends.

Tracking Story Footprints

One time Grandpa John told me a three word story. We were out at his barnyard leaning on the rail looking at an old sow pig with her piggies nursing on her in the mud. There were flies on her ears and eyes and she gave contented low grunts as the little ones suckled. They stank as only pigs can. We watched, the flies buzzed. I shifted a little, ready to leave. Grandpa didn't move. Then, after a bit he said, "Isn't she pretty?" Not a lot of information, but only a true farmer who loved his animals could say

that. As years have gone by, I came to agree with his words (John Donald, QR).

As stories are passed from one person to another, even in casual conversation, references are often made about where a story comes from. Acknowledging story-sources, a particular person or culture, and reciting who has told the story before you is similar to including a list of references in an academic paper. It can serve to credit the originator or origin of the story, add validity to the teller and provide context for the story. For many storytellers this “lineage recitation” before the reading/telling of the story is an important “calling up” or invocation of previous tellers, which simultaneously traces the lineage of the story and inducts the teller into that lineage. Another approach to storying is to appropriate a story, telling it as if it happened to you. Finding meaning through story from the inside, literally stepping into someone else’s shoes is another way of finding meaning. This is a choice which creates a quality of immediacy for the listener. It also sweeps away the traceable footprint of the story. Sometimes when a story pops up in an unexpected place, this lack of knowing a story’s source or the route it has traveled becomes vital for its journey and the meaning within the story itself. This is an important aspect of the oral storytelling tradition in which stories remain malleable and alive in the minds, lips and ears of the tellers and listeners.

Where do your stories live?

While visiting the war memorial in the Edinburgh castle I looked into the records of WWI and found the entry of John Donald's death in battle. This is my oldest brother's name and in that somber atmosphere I experienced a sense of a genetic family thread (Connie Long, QR).

When stories aren’t on the move, when they are not being told, written, or read where do they live? This question is connected to my on-going investigation of the location of memory, which for me started with a project about prehistoric food. Anna Keleher, my collaborator, and I conducted both desk and experiential research (our version of experimental archaeology) into prehistoric food practices on Dartmoor, Devon, UK. I found myself wondering: do memories and

stories actually partially live in places, plants, animals, rocks, and food? Or do they exist exclusively only in our brains? With olfactory memory, smells bring back memories, which would not have come to light without the smell. Perhaps it is similar with places, food and other things and locations. In researching the Exeter Cathedral for another project, I came across the following passage, referencing this idea in relation to the saints associated with the cathedral, 'Saints live less in people's memory than in the stones, rocks and buildings with which their names have become associated, often arbitrarily, the popular mind hankering after the palpable and particular' (Swanton, 1986: 21). Perhaps memory and story rooted to a place, a plant or a thing is a case of interdependent co-origination⁹ in which the memory or story could not exist without both the conception within the human mind and the external inspiration.

Who tells stories?

It is early in the morning, still dark. I dread leaving the warm cocoon of my sleeping bag, but the smell of the early morning mist and the song of the first birds lures me out. At 6 am we meet Airik, the resident biologist and ornithologist, for a tour at the Bialoweiza National Park in Poland, one of the last primeval forests left in Europe. We walk into the strictly protected area of the park absorbing Airik's knowledge of the area, its species, its history and his stories from working at the park for over 30 years. Everywhere we look Airik sees a sign of animal presence or activity in the web of relationships within this ecosystem. Seeds dropped on the path tell the story of a recent blackcap breakfast; rings pecked into a tree tell the story of a particular woodpecker species harvesting his food in circles; vole homes and up-turned dirt tell the stories of the inhabitants of a fallen tree habitat and the cycle of decay and renewal.

In my investigation into story as a metaphor I began to see different academic disciplines as different terristories, each with a different story-telling framework, revealing different aspects of the human experience and planetary narratives

⁹ Interdependent co-origination according to some Buddhist teachings, is the dependent existence of one thing on other things; the dependence on two or more factors for a thing to come into being.

within different time scales: psychology as the story of the human mind, biology as the story of living organisms, geology as the story of stone, religion as the story of salvation or enlightenment. In these various disciplines different skills of perception are developed and diverse methods are used to facilitate the telling of stories and communicate the stories collected. Tim Ingold describes the archaeologist as a storyteller 'who is perceptually attuned to picking up information in the environment that others, less skilled in the tasks of perception, might miss, and the teller, in rendering his own knowledge explicit conducts the attention of his audience along the same path as his own' (2000: 190). This is an over simplification of complex areas of study, however for my purposes of examining how stories are narrated in the world and within what frameworks, I find this analogy useful. It levels the playing field between different storytellers, academic or otherwise.

Stories and narratives embody and communicate meaning, connection and relationship through different voices, forms, contexts and cultures, giving rise to different versions of the same story. The etymological root of story is knowledge; knowledge is what filters our view of the world, and this view of the world is what creates paradigms. Stories that grow to engulf entire societies are called paradigms. These underlying storylines continue to exert the same power as stories of any size; but it is their very omnipresence in our lives that prevents us from recognizing their influence on us.

CHAPTER SIX

Summary

In Hermasillo, Mexico an acquaintance was serving as our guide. When asked if he could show us a "miracle place," he took us south of the city to a mountain where a huge shrine to The Lady of Guadalupe was located. On the mountain was a 30-40 foot colorful painting of Our Lady and a rock-lined path leading to the shrine. Along the path were thousands of testimonials and offerings left by devotees - framed letters and photos, carved stones, statues, leg braces, crutches, and tiny, weathered baby shoes. At the top was the ornately decorated altar and a river of candle wax cascading down the side of the mountain from millions of candles lit as petitions for healing. Because I knew the miracle story of The Lady of Guadalupe and Juan Diego, the building of the church for the indigenous people, and the mysterious tilma, which has not deteriorated in over 400 years, I felt connected to this remarkable place. As many others had been, I was moved to kneel and offer my prayer.... (Connie Long, QR).

Through this research I have explored the narrative potential of place and approached storying as a dynamic act of collaboration. I have proposed two new words, narritory and terristory as possible ways to expand our vocabulary to describe the relationship between experience of place and story. I have briefly examined different definitions of story and proposed that story is nomadic in nature. I have also briefly introduced some of the many roles that story plays in our lives, from micro relationships with place to the macro manifestations as culture and paradigms. Although some of these roles are obvious, I have tried to point out some of the more subtle aspects of these roles of narrative and story. Throughout my research on story, narritory and terristory, I have been faced with the irony of simultaneously obvious and illusive subjects, tiptoeing always along the spines and supportive backs of language, perception, meaning, metaphor, image and movement. In this brief exploration of a constellation of large topics, many important areas have been skimmed over or missed entirely. However, through this process, I have come to a deeper understanding of storying with place through my invented words, narritory and terristory. I have also found the word story to be a useful way to describe the currents of experience, information and events that form, reverberate and move through our lives, societies and cultures.

End Note

Through this dissertation, I have experienced the cycles of research and ideas. From this experience, a pattern often found in stories has arisen: the supposed end has brought me to another beginning. As I dug more deeply into the fertile ground of the narrative relationships between place, story, culture and reverberation, more questions than answers emerged, presenting me with options for further research: What is the relationship between story and aesthetic experience? What is the connective quality of stories that brings us closer to our surroundings, our selves and others? What is the role of story and narrative in leadership and self-organisation? How do communities and collaborations form collective stories? Has capitalism caused territory amnesia or is capitalism a territory to be rejected?

In forming these questions and articulating these thoughts another series of narrative seeds have been planted. Given the right conditions, each question could take root, and grow down, up and out towards past, present and potential future stories. As they mature, each story could go to seed, spreading its syllables, words and meanings on the back of the wind, in river currents, as food for birds or as a bur clinging to the sock of an unsuspecting passerby. These narrative seeds would then be free to reverberate and move through different environments, from person to person, shifting, adapting, and changing places and people along the way through encounters with storying.

Appendix Contents

- a. Action Research Descriptions
- b. Questionnaire
- c. 2 Samples of Questionnaire Responses
- d. 2 Samples of Mind Maps used in Research Process

a. Action Research Descriptions

Report 1

Taking my questions to a mummer's play at the pub

Mummers Play, Bay Horse Pub, Totnes

19 July, 2008

The narrative of the seasons is the theme of many stories from many different cultures around the world. The play that I attended last night tapped into this tradition bringing together the seasons (and the British preoccupation with weather and sun) through a battle in rhyme (amongst protests from an actress embodying the Totnes Tourist Board and an eager visitor to Devon).

Original Plot:

Autumn kills the sun, but the Doctor (paid in Totnes pounds no less) revives him. With the help of the sun, he harvest mother gives birth to a pumpkin harvest baby, symbolic of all bounty of mother earth. Autumn and winter try to steal the babe but all is soon put right and the babe is allowed to live and serve the people with his bounty. Then the anthropomorphic Spirit of Climate Change jumps onto the stage and is booed as he describes his position in the world and those who believe in him and those who don't. The sun, previously, a purely "good" force is now cast in a new light in the context of greenhouse gasses. Climate change is booed off and the play ends with a song in rhyme referencing its different characters and themes.

(As an aside the costumes were wonderful homemade hats and capes of colorful streamers. The man and woman who produced the play were sweet, genuine and gentle. The man, Peter, when asked for a speech and was truly speechless. After a moment's silence, a little voice came out of him complimenting the actors on their enthusiasm and good work. He was tall and thin and dressed in rumpled blue jeans. I felt such warmth for him. His genuineness and shyness reminded me of my Uncle John)

Report 2

Taking my questions to church

St. Mary's Church, Totnes

20 July, 2008

Peace be with you....

Genesis.....

Journey to God, stories map the way.....

Prayers bellowed out in the resonant chamber of the church, invoking a thick strata of stories, familiar, but unknown to me. Organ tones accompanying hymns resonate with my internal organs and fill me with music space. Open to the words, I am singing in unison with the congregation. A reading from the Old Testament tells a story that I do not understand and can barely remember. The Bible was read while splayed on a golden eagle. I imagine the words coming out the eagle's beak, the instructive calls of a predator.

The sermon is about wheat and weeds, the children of heaven and hell. Why can't it just be wheat and weeds? Then an episode of Black Adder and another story of a woman damned to hell suffering painful punishment (while the preacher seeks to dispel the misconceptions of the heaven of white nightgowns and golden halos and the hell of red embers, horned devils and tridents). While trying to redefine heaven, less as a physical place and more as a state of being "in sharing the love of God" he tells the story of the woman who asks for another chance at heaven. And when one good deed that bore fruit in her life is found, she is given a tiny strand of rope on which to climb to heaven. But as she's climbing people around her grab at her, trying to use her get to heaven themselves. Rather than supporting them she tries to fend them off and in so doing, breaks the rope and her only chance of climbing out of hell and up to heaven.

Are there stories that reference heaven and hell, but not as physical places? Perhaps the contemporary preacher's challenge is to bring these ancient stories into a contemporary context. In Christianity there is an extensive Narritory of the places of heaven and hell and the people who've gone there.

Christians seem to assume their identity through professing their belief in a particular story, the story of Jesus Christ as the son of God and the Savior of Mankind.

Perhaps it is the screen through which I am looking, but it seems that the church service is almost entirely woven together through stories and references to stories in the prayers, hymns, sermon etc. In this experience, story was the means through which the message of the sermon was given. Stories were revisited to pull and emphasize different elements. However, rather than the story living as an unendingly rich wellspring (even in the story of the wheat and the weeds) the moral of the story was prescribed and clearly included, not left for interpretation. For me the story would have been much more powerful if the prescriptive elements had been left out. I really enjoyed the storytelling by the preacher. He obviously has honed his skills in capturing an audience and in a short space of time fitting in lots of meaning. Stories seem to play an integral role in the Narritory of a church service. And it seems also that they perhaps are important on the journey of a Christian to find God and their way to heaven.

Report 3

Ride to Newton Abbot

26-27 July, 2008

Trains are moving story capsules – another world moving through worlds – stories step on and off at each stop and temporarily co-mingle while moving from place to place.....

Report 4

Taking my questions to the University of the Trees

CCANW, Haldon Forest

26-27 July, 2008

I was amazed by the multiple references to story that arose during the different exercises that we did. Perhaps it was an example of me finding what I was looking for, but I was stunned by how many times people mentioned narratives spontaneously arising out of their experiences, or stories forming from dialogues, rhythms, walking, conversation etc. In one of the exercises that we did with Chris Sealey, one person said that they immediately started making up stories with the unknown situation that she faced.

Vulker Harlan

“The Earth as a Whole is a Tree and the Tree as a Whole is the Earth.”

Exploration of the form of the tree as a metaphor engendering different approaches to life cycles and processes on earth.

Are stories instruments of metamorphosis?

Sling Experience

Using forms that seem a bit strange destabilizes people's perceptions and create openings to alternate perceptions. A group of people being silent together yet apart creates thought-space. Everywhere on earth is potentially a university of the trees.

Each tree has a story of rooted movement. The growth rings of the tree are like waves of communication radiating out from each of us, as people.

Verticulture.....rooted movement
swaying with feet-connected to ground
Who feels this
with a beating heart?
Clustered experiences
whispered close
Toes touching toes
changing light with sway
swinging with feet on ground
Images emerge from bark
One-word story drops
Small unexpected sweets

b. Questionnaire

Story As a Way of Knowing: A Questionnaire for MA Arts and Ecology, Dartington College of Arts Claire Long

Stories come in many forms. They are all around us if we have eyes to see them. In my dissertation, I am writing about the many roles stories play in our lives; how they help us come to know ourselves, each other and our world. In my research I'm looking at different ways that people use story and narrative in different contexts and professions, to maintain traditions or create change. I invented the word "narritory" to describe one type of story that I'm particularly interested in. Narritories are stories created from direct experiences of new territory.

I'm asking the following questions to help me with this research. I am very interested to hear about your experiences with story. If you are willing to respond to some of the following questions to help me with my research that would be wonderful. Please feel free to respond briefly or at length to whichever questions you like. If you want to respond briefly to one, that's fine. Or if you want to respond at length to all the questions, that's fine too. I am grateful for whatever responses you give. Thank you for taking the time to share your experiences with me!

Questions:

1. For you, what is story?
2. Can you tell me about a time when story or narrative helped to create or reinforce your identity?
3. Do you use stories in your work? If so, how?
4. Can you tell me about when your experience of a new place or territory (physical, mental or spiritual) created a significant new story in your life?
5. Can you describe a time when story helped you to acquire specific knowledge?
6. What's the first lie that comes to mind? Is it one you heard or told? What was its purpose or affect?
7. Can you describe a time for you when story helped you to meet or connect with Other? (e.g. with another person, your neighbor or a stranger, with an animal, a plant, while traveling, at work etc.)

The sooner I get your responses, the sooner I can reflect on them. If you can send your responses to me before August 20 it would be helpful for my dissertation deadline. But please send them anyway if that date is too soon for you. If you would like to remain anonymous, should I choose to quote you in my dissertation, please indicate this in your response. Otherwise, any of your ideas that I quote or integrate into my dissertation will be precisely and properly cited.

Thank you for your participation in my research!

c. 2 Samples of Questionnaire Responses

Emily Brown Questionnaire Responses

8. I think I define this pretty broadly as any time a series of events, real or imagined, is recounted. I think there can be a multitude of different purposes—entertainment certainly, but also to remind people of a particular morality or worldview, to reinforce identity, to educate, to instill a sense of connection between the audience and the storyteller or subject(s) of the story (oh so many of these at the democratic convention). In some ways, some stories also are like the theme to a song that is then rendered differently depending on who is telling them. They are performative in nature when there is an audience, so there is a lot of anthropological performance theory that could be drawn upon in some situations. I think they are also uniquely psychological, because I think people use stories to frame the past as a way of making history (in the broadest and narrowest senses) more concrete (and the more definite the more often repeated).

9. I don't think I could pinpoint a single story, but I find my dad's stories about his time as a boy in Texas very powerful in this way. He talks about oiling windmills with his uncle, riding his bike miles to swim in stock tanks, and watching his aunts can jar after jar after jar of fruit, and so forth. What comes through for me is his connection to the values of family and land that those people had, and how much he values that himself. I think they are powerful for me because when my family moved to California, I was faced with people with very different values and felt very out of place. For a long time, it felt very difficult to not fit in well, but as an adult, I've come to realize that I am much happier embracing the values of my dad and my extended family as a whole than I would have been had I decided that being beautiful and thin and rich was really the most important thing. Somewhat more secondarily and more frivolously, I think that those of us who do fieldwork under extreme conditions (remember the wind at the Bullfrog Fire and how cold it was at the Butte Fire?) use stories of those moments to make ourselves feel tough, cool, and hard-core.

10. Archaeology, in some sense, is all about storytelling, as we are interpreters extraordinaire as we explain what all the physical remnants of the past mean. It is a challenging position to be in, actually, because on the one hand we have all these scientific methods and technologies that are supposed to objectively quantify and measure and categorize what we find. On the other hand, it is ultimately a human being who draws conclusions about what has been found and communicates that to others, and so there is ultimately a narrative that is created and is subject to the biases and worldviews of the people doing it. For example, for a long time Chinese archaeology was viewed as a farce because all the conclusions Chinese scholars came to were driven by the need to show the deep roots and overall "rightness" of Communism rather than real scholarly inquiry into the past. Telling the stories suggested by the archaeological record should also mean a lot of self-reflexivity about one's own lens, bias, motivations, and agendas. The past is so often used for political ends as far as the creation of identities, the recounting of past wrongs, and

requests for compensation, that sometimes one's archaeological narrative can have very real political, modern consequences.

11. I have often had to try to express to people how difficult the transition to living in NY was when I was there for graduate school. New Yorker's have a reputation for abruptness and/or rudeness anyway, and I find myself telling this story to illustrate my experience of this in a humorous way. I was standing in line at a grocery store, and the single father with two kids (clearly desperate to find a girlfriend) was trying to make conversation with the woman at the checkout counter. She ignored him to the point where she wasn't meeting his eyes or saying even one word in return to his efforts to make conversation. Finally, collecting his groceries and turning to leave, he said, "You know, it wouldn't hurt you to talk to people, tell them to have a nice day or something." She finally responded, saying huffily, "It's printed on your receipt."

12. I think that with the exception of narrative jokes (and even these can be signposts about identity and worldview), all stories contain information.

13. This isn't so much about outright lying as the difficulty I have in promoting myself and my businesses. I think I have a tendency to like brutal honesty will go over better on a project bid or a grant application than a small white lie. I will write, "Though Aspen CRM Solutions is a very small company with only two principles, we have a proven record of assembling teams catered to specific projects, large and small". Jeff will come along and tell me to take out the part about "very small" with "only two principals". And of course he is right. Also, I am one of those bad friends that won't tell you if you have spinach between your teeth.

14. I can't think of a particularly powerful example (the thing that came to mind was my new printing client with whom I talk about cats since she has 5). But some thoughts on this subject are these. I think stories are particularly powerful ways of connecting with the Other exactly because they are culturally and personally constructed. The audience hears not only the events in the story, but the interpretation the storyteller gives them, and that gives the listener a tremendous amount of information about the speaker that is both explicit and implicit. When there is evidence of common ground or common interest, stories are a powerful way to connect. When there is clearly a difference in perspective stories may reinforce that difference or pave the way for reconciliation.

Anonymous 1 Questionnaire Response

1. 1) the DRAMA we get caught in to justify our emotional reactions or the MENTAL TRIPS we adopt to divert our attention from the here and now and present sensations... In the sense of GETTING CAUGHT IN THE STORY...

2) PAST EXPERIENCES SHARED WITH OTHERS, so that we can realize what we share and have in common, rather than how different and unique we are...

3) NEWS -- the world outside ourselves becoming part of us... so we can internalize the pain or joys as if we went through it ourselves. Opportunity for vicarious experiencing.

4) FICTION -- invention, that which is untrue or so based on human nature that it seems even more real than the mundane lives we live that might bore readers

2. Biography of those who gave their lives to Service : Florence Nightingale and Albert Schweitzer deeply shaped my image of who I identified with and wanted to become but never did, so unfortunately the discrepancy has caused me some discouragement.

3. Not really, but as a Human Design reader and teacher, it would be helpful to cultivate that skill of recounting other people's experiences, similar experiences.

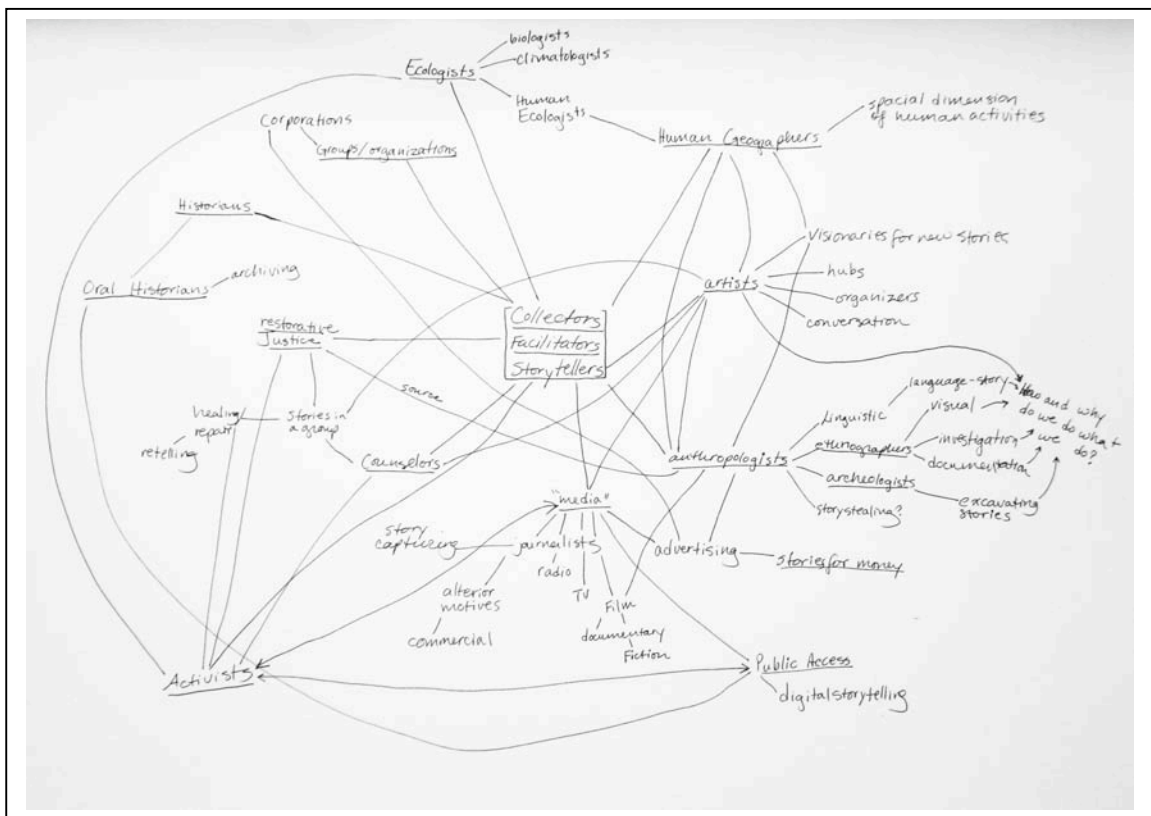
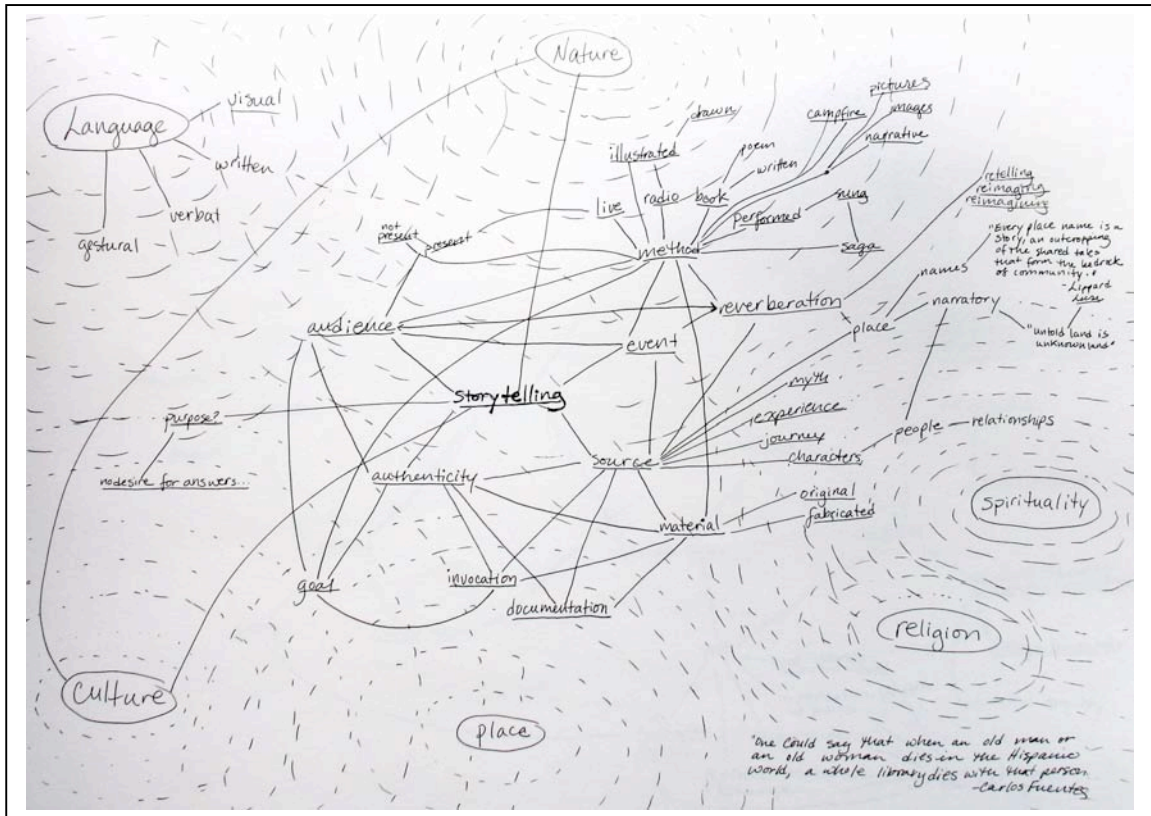
4. In Ireland, on the Hill of Tara, in 1993... on a mound that I imagined was the location where the ancient religious leaders received their coronations, I asked Spirit for a message and this is (approximately) what I heard or sensed ; The Time has not arrived yet when all people will know this but you are planting the seeds for this to come to be --- that people will know THAT ONE LOVE DOES NOT EXCLUDE ANOTHER.

5. I'd enjoy hearing other people's answers... not sure what kind of example would fit here.

6. I lied to get a better grade on a Math exam in childhood. I'd gone into panic at an exam and then later brought a perfectly composed answer to one of the questions (I think geometric drawing) and said that it had dropped out of my exam and I'd found it in my papers. The teacher did re-assess the grading and my marks went up significantly but I felt so guilty for my lie, that I didn't enjoy the improved grade. (Please keep this one anonymous, because it's so embarrassing.)

7. Yes STORIES regularly connect people... the telling of our own stories, our own experiences is bonding and usually does help us to connect. What can be divisive is if the person wanting empathy receives a response that is not what they were asking for, like advice or judgment... I've often been on that side of giving advice rather than listening compassionately and letting the person form their own conclusions and to decide alone what is the best course of action/strategy... When I hear my friends out and then when invited give feedback, we do end up connecting and feeling closer.

d. 2 Samples of Mind Maps used in Research Process



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