

Story and Telling

Copyright 2010 [Zha](#) :: All rights reserved

[Story and Telling](#)

[Introduction](#)

[The formation of story via telling](#)

[Conflict and resolution as story \(and/or\) Story and learning](#)

[Story versus non-story](#)

[The ratio of story to non-story](#)

[Why there is story](#)

Introduction

Consciousness is a type of storytelling. I'm telling myself a story about what is going on. That's how I experience the world; that story *is* my experience of the world.

If fifty people write a descriptive paragraph of the "same" object, you'll get fifty different paragraphs. Artists drawing a model, make different drawings. My psychological experience varies with the story I tell myself, even with the same external events. For me, all events are internal. I don't know if I'm a brain in a jar, I don't know if I'm in the Matrix. Independent of that technicality, the part of what I experience that I consider "my experience" is characterized by storytelling.

The words I choose, the way I paint my world, has everything to do with my experience. In families, in workplaces, in countries, and in solitude, the story I tell myself (that I do control) about what is happening to me (that I don't control)...that story is how I remember, how I understand, and a major part of how I perceive the world.

The story I tell myself (that I do control) is distinct from what is happening to me (that I don't control). Parts of me, parts of the otherness that is not me...parts of that I do not control. Parts of my senses, which are part of my storytelling apparatus, are outside of my control. In my look at storytelling I consider more primarily the distinction made via a paradigm of control than the distinction made via a paradigm of object or cellular individuation. I'm not as concerned with the fact that my stomach is inside the cell of my skin as I am with the fact that I don't control it.

The issue of control figures in critically to storytelling.

The story controls how we experience the world.

The uncontrollable elements of the world control some inputs to

the story.

The act of telling the story changes—even controls—the world.

It's not clear, even in the case of simple concepts, where the boundaries of control lie. With my stomach, I partially control it and I partially don't. Ultimately, everything is twisted into a knot (or perhaps a bow) where it is impossible to once and for all classify any particular perceived element as either controlled or controlling.

When I tell myself the story of my workday, talking about how things went and what they did, I am one of those things. I'm like an actor in a documentary about the neighborhood I live in...or like that documentary's writer or director. I'm reporting on myself. My report affects the neighborhood I'm reporting on. When I perceive my sister as crazy, and then tell myself that, or tell someone else that, I am materially affecting "the sanity of my sister"—if such a thing exists. Even if she doesn't hear me tell the story that way—even if with her I never use that word—I am still affecting a functional concept called "the sanity of my sister". Only if my sister exists in a world completely partitioned from mine could *she* not be affected by the story I tell. This world isn't like that. Everything is connected; we're in a hyperconnected world, via any paradigm. Physics, weather, information. It is clear through any of these that the present is a combinatoric result of *everything* that happened before, involving every other element. It is sometimes possible, in our sciences, to say how things are related; it is rarer that we can say that two things are not related—if we can ever say that. The existence, for me, of the concept "my sister" is sufficient condition for the concept of "me" and the concept of "my sister" existing in the same world.

When I talk about "my sister", I mean *the concept of my sister*. It's not important to figure out the difference between {my sister} and {the concept of my sister}—if the former even has meaningful existence. The concept of my sister, however, has life. This does not diminish the importance of my sister. She thinks of herself via {the concept of my sister} as well, though she probably calls it by a different name. And that concept is shared, it overlaps. The way I think of her is partially tangled up in the way of she thinks of herself.

Call {the concept of my sister} by the short name {x}. I'm carrying some ideas about {x}. My sister is carrying some ideas about {x}. It's just technicality whether I name {her concept of herself}>>{a} and {my concept of her}>>{b} and {the intersection of {a} and {b}}>>{c}...or I name {the union of {a} and {b}}>>{c}...or I define {c} and {x} independently (which is to say that I, my sister, and some other defining entity have various ways of defining interrelated concepts that are sometimes called by the same name). For now, I'm roughly considering something like {the concept of my sister} to be the union of what every defining entity conceptualizes, in

various definitions, hung on the names we all share for my sister. It doesn't matter, though, whether I'm talking about intersections or unions or using more complicated types of interlocking definitions. Just the fact that various defining entities are conversing using *some* of the same names (as each other are using) is enough to imply that the effects of discussion are global. It's not even possible to have meaningful discussion about whether we mean the same thing when we say the same thing. It's not important, either. When I talk about story and telling, and the story involves my sister, it doesn't matter exactly how everyone defines their terms; it only matters that the terms are interrelated. As long as they are interrelated, the effects of discussion are global.

When the effects of discussion are global, the telling of story affects the storytellers. That's when things get interesting.

...

[imagining a guy who's smarter than you, then think what he would do (Mamet)]

[storytelling re: moviemakers authors and storytellers who can imagine a world, even possible worlds, of speech or whatever elements, that is better than the world of people who *do* those jobs in real life...obviously some parts of, say, a heist movie, couldn't happen in real life, wouldn't be viable strategies in real life...except that fiction can precurse reality...but...a person who can imagine a dynamite explosives expert in a movie, in a story, even if the explosives expert is somewhat fictional, somewhat impossible...someone who imagines such an expert is rather more of an explosives expert than a totally factual explosives expert who is incompetent :: re: imagining a man who's smarter than you, then thinking what he would do...the incompetent explosives expert I'm describing fails to do this...in not imagining a more proficient explosives expert, that guy is not doing all he could be doing :: thus, people who imagine conversations more proficient than those had by their contemporaries, even though the conversations never happened, are in a fundamental way better at conversation than those contemporaries...as such imagination, as Einstein says, is more important than knowledge...imagination can give way to knowledge, but it doesn't work the other way around]

[what about people who interpret fiction, stories, and attempt to make them reality...people who rob banks in the style of Heat...are they crazy? misinterpreting fiction? and/or are they doing something that's in some ways sensible...trying to make flying machines after hearing stories of flying...sometimes when you do that, you kill yourself, and sometimes it works and you advance reality to its next phase]

[exchange of information like the dove sound made with one's

hands...I wouldn't have discovered that on my own because my rate of experimentation/discovery/change/mutation is too slow for me to have a good chance of discovering that in my lifetime...but the act of cultural exchange puts us in a hyperjack-like sequence switching...where I'm doing something that changes at a certain rate, and interaction with others changes my sequence...switches from sequence to sequence...so we're switching between sequences of long periodicity, based on interaction with other vessels :: maybe the vessel-unit needs a low rate of mutation/experimentation to survive for any length, and the method of selecting changes witnessed in others provides a safer way for an individual to explore possibility within its lifetime]

The formation of story via telling

...

Given this, what is the origin of story? Or: why do we tell? [Perhaps just ask this question here and grapple with in the last section]

Conflict and resolution as story (and/or) Story and learning

Story as events that challenge the world, possibly change it, such that the world reflects or has denounced the change

Political and familial stories, the story of personal development, the story of learning...the story of experience leading to learning and the question of why and how frequently we need/want to learn :: given that later I'll be discussing the ratio of story to non-story, I'd like to here discuss story as development, story as learning, story as can be seen as the drama of our lives by which we develop, so that I can later discuss story versus non-story having laid the backdrop of story as something that happens when we are telling ourselves developmental stories about life, that include hard work and tragedy

Story versus non-story

...

What is the difference between story and non-story?
We've seen what story is? What then is non-story?

The ratio of story to non-story

...

Is there a natural ratio, or a meaningful ratio, between story and non-story?

Are there limits to the ratio of story to non-story?

Are there psychological reasons, for a particular class of storytelling entity, for a particular ratio of story to non-story? Might we be more comfortable or accepting of certain such ratios? Why? What about the storytelling entity affects any such natural story::non-story ratio?

The expansion of story

That a story, listening to it, expands it's listener, it's teller perhaps. That a story enlargens the world of the recipient, perhaps the teller. That the experience of story changes who we are in an expansive way. It changes what we are willing to accept from reality. With education, experience, story, a person is no longer happy with the limited surroundings, company, job, that they were before. And through that, because of that, more story is told, more story is needed. Are there limits to the expansion of story? Is there an ultimate expansion of story; what would that look like? View this through the lens of the universe "waking up" as in singularity discussion. Is there a maximally expanded story universe? A maximally expanded story universe for a person, for a particular class of storytelling entity?

The expansion, via storytelling + cultural change, by which *someone* becomes a Tyra...Tyra became a Tyra, and *someone* will become a Tyra, partly by watching and learning from the existing Tyra[s], and that is a type of storytelling expansion, occurring across generations, within individual human lifetimes, ...

Why there is story

...

Why are tellers telling? What are we doing with all this telling, and the stories that arise from it?