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Outline

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References

It's all about algorithms (stories):


(Sir Terry) Pratchett's Narrativium:

"The most common element on the disc, although not included in the list of the standard five: earth, fire, air, water and surprise. It ensures that everything runs properly as a story."

"A little narrativium goes a long way: the simpler the story, the better you understand it. Storytelling is the opposite of reductionism: 26 letters and some rules of grammar are no story at all."

"Heroes only win when outnumbered, and things which have a one-in-a-million chance of succeeding often do so."
Competing storytelling organizations:
- News.
- Art.
- Music industry.
- Books, magazines.
- Movie studios, Netflix, HBO, Disney.
- Video Games.
- Social media: Facebook, Medium, Tumblr, blogs.

Cultural products from Pantheon:
- Writers, artists, movie directors, video game directors.

Understanding the Sociotechnocene—Stories:
- Claim: Homo narrativus—we run on stories.
- “What’s the John Dory?”
- “They’ve lost the plot/thread”
- Claim: The narrative hierarchy and the Scalability of stories.
- Research: Extraction of metaphors, frames, narratives, and stories from large-scale text.
- Research: The taxonomy of human stories.

Adjacent narratives—why mistruths and conspiracy theories exist and flourish:
- 1999 Gallup poll:
  - 6% of Americans said the lunar landings were fake.
  - 5% were undecided.
  - Video replay (The Comments).
- Buzz Aldrin has enough:
- JK Rowling doesn’t exist: conspiracy theories the internet can’t resist, The Guardian, 2017-10-27:
  - Highlights:
    - Per the title, JK Rowling doesn’t exist.
      - Q. “Is it possible that a person can write six thick books that are translated into 55 languages and sell more than 250 million copies in less than 10 years? — Nina Grunfeld”
      - A. “Yes. Yes it is.” — This course.
- Phantom time hypothesis:
  - The years 614–911 AD never existed.
  - Straight up jump of 297 years orchestrated by a first millennium cabal.
  - The year 2017 AD is really 1820 AD.
  - Good to know.
  - Holy Roman Emperor Otto III (@TheBoss37), Pope Sylvester II (@PSly2) wanted to live in 1000 AD, legitimize power.
  - Crushed by reality: Records of solar eclipses, comets, dendrochronology.
From the end of the interview:

NICOLAS HÉNIN: No, it was just like in a movie. And, by the way, even the people going to Syria, joining ISIS in Syria to fight, even these people see himself as movie characters. They play their own movie. This is why I think that the most powerful way to fight ISIS are not bombs. It is to kill the narrative. We have to write another movie. We have to build other heroes. And this is why I believe that the French are making big mistakes in the ways they, they fight ISIS.

We created, for instance, accounts on the social media named “Stop jihadism,” and this is [BLEEP], like they did not understand anything. And I did understand why we are so bad. It's just because in France we don't know how to write TV series properly.

Just because we have no imagination, we cannot just tell beautiful stories, create beautiful characters, beautiful heroes.

And this is what we have to do because in our world, in our societies what do people want? They want to become heroes. They want to be famous. They want to be, to be recognized.

Stories make us do all kinds of things:

The Comet Ping Pong Gunman Answers Our Reporter’s Questions:

“According to court documents, Mr. Welch said he had come armed to help rescue the children.”

“He did not believe in conspiracy theories, but then added that the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks needed to be re-examined. He has listened to Alex Jones, whose radio show traffics in conspiracy theories and who once said that Mrs. Clinton “has personally murdered and chopped up” children. “He's a bit eccentric,” Mr. Welch said. “He touches on some issues that are viable but goes off the deep end on some things.”

Massive informational misdirection as a cognitive denial of service:

“How the Chinese government fabricates social media posts for strategic distraction, not engaged argument”

King, Pan, and Roberts, American Political Science Review,forthcoming.

Make the truth a needle in a haystack


“Surkov turned Russian politics into a bewildering constantly changing piece of theater. He sponsored all kinds of groups, ...no one was sure what was real or fake. ...It is a strategy of power that keeps any opposition constantly confused.”
Stories generated the first surveillance state:

- Low tech, lost cost.
- Infrastructure maintained in the Social Wild by storytellers and storybelievers.
- Omnipresence and omniscience: The end of privacy.

The American Dream = Rags to Riches

- The story that anyone can become King or Queen.
- Story of individual, not the collective.
- But we know about fame and success: The presence of outsized fame in a social system means social imitation is a driver of value.
- Stories of societies can only hold if they have been and remain believable.

Claim: Stories must have real substance to endure

- Enormous disasters: Fabrications of real experiences.
  - Plain old making stuff up: A million little pieces... Oprah will get you.
  - Wikipedia’s has a list of famous fake memoirs.
  - Self-plagiarism and more standard badness: Jonah Lehrer.
  - Amazingly: Made up Bob Dylan quotes.
- Enormous power: Fiction that speaks to real experiences.

If not Trump, what? David Brooks, New York Times:

“We'll probably need a new national story. Up until now, America's story has been some version of the rags-to-riches story, the lone individual who rises from the bottom through pluck and work. But that story isn't working for people anymore, especially for people who think the system is rigged.”

“I don't know what the new national story will be, but maybe it will be less individualistic and more redemptive. Maybe it will be a story about communities that heal those who suffer from addiction, broken homes, trauma, prison and loss, a story of those who triumph over the isolation, social instability and dislocation so common today.”

Limits: The story trap by Philip Ball, 2015-11-12

- "We use neat stories to explain everything from sports matches to symphonies. Is it time to leave the nursery of the mind?"
- "...we might wonder if the ultimate intelligibility of the universe will be determined not so much by the capacity of our minds to formulate the appropriate concepts and equations, but by whether we can find a meaningful story to tell about it."

Competitive Punning, The Economist, 2017-08-12:

- Punster pseudonym: "Punder Enlightening"
- Being funny, a grand challenge for AI:
  - Pun-free paper title: “Generating Novel Puns and Plays of Word with Machine Learning”
- "Warning: This paper may cause the reader to groan to death.”
Kurt Vonnegut on the shapes of stories:

The Shapes of Stories by Kurt Vonnegut

Kurt Vonnegut granted worldwide fame and admiration through the publication of his novels, including "Slaughterhouse-Five," "A Man Without a Country," and more. But he was also an expert on the shapes of stories, he said, and at least as interesting as the shape of a political speech was the shape of a story.

The basic idea of his thesis was that a story's main character has ups and downs that can be plotted on a graph to reveal the shape of the story.

The shape of a society's stories, he said, is at least as interesting as the shape of its political speeches. Let's look at a clip.

Ron Swanson:


Partly inspired by Vonnegut's Shapes of Stories.

The emotional shapes of stories—Moby Dick:

The New Yorker, December 16, 2013, p. 56.
Online, interactive Emotional Shapes of Stories for 10,000+ books:

Frankenstein; Or the Modern Prometheus
by Mary Shelley

Online, interactive Emotional Shapes of Stories for 10,000+ books:

Harry Potter (all books together)
by J.K. Rowling

Online, interactive Emotional Shapes of Stories for 1,000+ movie scripts:
Pulp Fiction
directed by Quentin Tarantino

http://whyfiles.org/2015/in-10-languages-happy-words-beat-sad-ones/


USB in a book? What is this wizardry? Check it out at the Student Research Conference creative lounge. #uvrnresearch

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While sports are often analogized to a wide array of other stories, whether or not these stories are compelling to fans, and how different sports compare in the stories afforded insights into the narrative appeal of real games.

We are interested in a number of questions such as whether the game stories of a professional sport. We downloaded 1310 AFL games covering progressions from 2008 to 2016. Scores may be six points or one point as er ecords high lows scores are 239 and 1. Wins are worth four points, ties two points, and losses zero.

Games run over four quarters, each lasting around 30 min. Of interest to us here is that the AFL provides an excellent test case for extracting and describing the game story space of a professional sport. We do loaded 1310 AFL games covering progressions from 2008 to 2016. Scores may be six points or one point as record high lows scores are 239 and 1. Wins are worth four points, ties two points, and losses zero.

I. INTRODUCTION

PHYSICAL REVIEW E, 93, 052314, 2016. ©2016 American Physical Society

FIG. 6: Download statistics for SVD Modes with more than 2.5% of books. Modes SV 2 through -SV 4 (both-poleities of modes 3 and 4) exhibit a higher average number of downloads and more variance than the rest.

Another Great Moment in being Andy Reagan:

Harry Potter and the Chamber of Plot Devices:

Six basic shapes: Tragedy, Icarus, Oedipus, Rags-to-Riches, Man-in-a-hole, Cindarella.
The “I wonder who wrote this?” Great Man Theory:


Highly influential but it’s a trap! [8]

How to write a screenplay:

“Save the Cat” by Blake Snyder (2005). [10]

- 9 acts.
- Someone important to the main characters gets toasted in the second act, blah, blah.
- Believes irony is key.
- Logline = one or two sentence summary.
- Logline fails to be a summary of logline.

Seven “good” stories:


1. Overcoming the Monster × 2 and the Thrilling escape from Death (plot).
2. Rags to Riches (plot).
3. The Quest (plot).
4. Voyage and Return (plot).
5. Comedy × 2 (plot but really structure).
6. Tragedy × 3 (plot).
7. Rebirth (plot).

The Dark Power: From Shadow into Light (master structure).

The taxonomy of stories:

- Aarne-Thompson
- Folkloristics
- Academic area formally started around 1900.
- Motiv-based taxonomy.
- Online classification database.

Motivation: “As a simple, historical example from the Danish materials, no one has yet classified (according to the ATU index) the several thousand fairy tales in the collections of the Danish Folklore Archive (http://www.dafos.dk), nor does it seem anyone ever will.”

“I imagine a system in which the complexities of a folklore corpus can be explored at different levels of resolution, from the broad perspective of “distant reading” down to the narrow perspective of traditional “close reading.”

References:

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PoCS | @pocsvox
Stories are algorithms for life:

**Homo narrativus:**
- Provide dynamic paths and trajectories.
- If this, then that.
- Convey and reinforce how to behave, how not to behave.
- Full ecology of stories = Competing, self-defending operating system for people’s minds.

Aphorisms as algorithms:
- Pride cometh before the fall.
- A stitch in time saves nine.
- Look before you leap.
- Anti-aphorism: The one who hesitates is lost.

The boiled-down essence of stories:

The three fundamental events of (non-clone) life:
- Hatchings, Matchings, and Dispatchings.
- Stories encode survival algorithms.
- Survival algorithms for individuals and groups.
- Dynamic paths: the true, the possible, the unlikely.
- The unifying theme of existence is existence.

Super Survival of the Stories:

Study of Agta, Filipino hunter-gatherers.
- Storytelling valued well above all other skills including hunting.
- Stories encode prosocial norms such as cooperation.
- Like the best stories, the best storytellers reproduce more successfully.
Stories matter:

Used by Reagan and Bush in 1980.

Template used by many others including Bill Clinton.

References I


References II


References III


https://xkcd.com/657/


http://www.andrewdegraff.com/moviemaps/
The phylogeny of Little Red Riding Hood. 
[link to pdf]