

CHAPTER 13

From Wilda to Disney

Living Stories in Family and Organization Research

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The purpose of this chapter is to introduce “living story theory” and a “critical antenarratological” methodology. The key elements of living story theory are systemicity constraints: simultaneity, fragmentation, trajectory, and morphing. The result is a “story fabric,” a weave of living story threads between times and places. A critical antenarratology is a combination of “critical theory” and “antenarrative” study. An antenarrative is a “prestory” and a “bet” that fragmented, tersely told stories, missing the usual coherence of a beginning, middle, and end, can be transformative to a social systematicity. *Systemicity* gives more attention to unmergedness and unfinalizedness than do traditional models of *system*, which tend to be univocal and monologic. The chapter gives examples of living story research about my grandmother Wilda and Disney Corporation.

Introduction

In this chapter, I propose a middle ground called *living story* between narrativists, folklorists, and antenarrativists. I begin by defining *living story*, proceed to develop my thesis, and then introduce a method to study living stories that I call *critical antenarratology*. I follow with family research into living story, into Wilda, my grandmother on my mother’s side. Then, I get into Disney research, which I have been doing for over a decade. What connects the two pieces of research is what Derrida (1994) calls “hauntology” (p. 10). What is hauntology? Hauntology is a pun

on *ontology* and refers to the specter (ghost), which is neither being nor nonbeing. Derrida plays on the fact that ontology and hauntology, in French, sound exactly the same. *Living story* is neither being nor nonbeing: it is a form of haunting. The living story is between dead and alive, between forgotten fragments and revitalizing those into one's own life. Story or narrative research can be an interpellating, a way of objectifying and tidying up oral records into a deadening text (Boje, Alvarez, & Schooling, 2001). The past of Walt Disney cannot be separated from his haunting presence in contemporary Disney. Reconstructing Wilda's living story cannot separate her past from my living present. Hauntology is what connects the two living story examples I will explore.

Kaylynn TwoTrees (1997), a Lakota storyteller, taught me elements of living story. "What is the Lakota penalty for changing a story, telling a story wrong or without permission?" I asked. "It is death," TwoTrees replied, "because the story in an oral culture is the entire living history of the community." She stresses three aspects: First, living stories not only have relativistic temporality (i.e., bridging past and present), there are times when a story can be told (e.g., seasons). Second, living stories have a place, and places have their own story to tell. Finally, living stories have owners, and one needs permission to tell another's story of a time or a place. This is similar to what the Navaho say about story—living embodiments of Navaho reality, living dramas, language that creates reality, not the reverse (Toelken, 1996). Not getting the story straight has its consequences; stories that were told badly by Toelken, and perhaps without permission, in the wrong place and time, were affecting his "mental and physical imbalance" (p. 55). There is a crucial point here, the idea that story is more than interpretation, and a living story transforms the "real."

Defining Living Story

Living story transforms that which it stories, in moments of living performance. Living story picks up and sheds context and characters, twisting, turning, and morphing along various social trajectories until versions die (perhaps to be reborn, who knows when). Living story has many authors and as a collective force has a life of its own. We live in living stories. Living story is a collective social process and has no existence apart from, and is indeed inseparable from, the event during which the story is performed (Boje, 1991; Georges, 1980). That is not to say that *living story* is only oral performance, it can be written, photographic, or videographic; it resides between many modes of expression. Each of us has living stories we do not quite comprehend that unfold; we are born into family and thrown together in various organizations; we become part of one another's living stories in societies, and we cocreate a *systemicity* of living stories. I use the term *systemicity* (short for *systematicness*) instead of *system*, following Bakhtin (1973, 1981), to acknowledge the unfinalizedness and unmergedness of chaotic parts of the social (Boje, Enriquez, González, & Macías, 2005).¹

I frame the research problem of living story as the opposition of coherence (narrativity) and incoherence (antenarrative) and of being in between. Antenarrative is

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defined as a “prestory” and a “bet” that terse fragments of not yet coherent story can be transformative to a social systemicity (Boje, 2001). We can look at the dance of story-incoherence and narrative-coherence as part of what is living storytelling. For ease of presentation, I refer to this basic opposition of coherence and incoherence, narrative and antenarrative as living story. There seems to be a hegemonic tendency to tell the cohesive story, in family and in organization research (Barry, 1997), in ways that make antenarration invisible. The trajectory of a living story from antenarrative emergence to final dissolution reverberates through a social systemicity, according to particular collective dynamics (these are explored in the following, after my thesis is developed and the critical antenarratology method is introduced).

My thesis is that living story is part of a systemicity bigger than what previous studies and theories of storytelling have explored. I believe the reason for this is that our story definitions are constraining researchers and practitioners to see only a minuscule portion of the actual living story fabric of a social systemicity. In organization narratology and folkloristics, “proper” story is defined quite narrowly: (a) following Aristotle (350 BCE/1954), as having a beginning, middle, and end (Gabriel, 2000), with a linear (developmental) plotline that assumes “a solution to a problem” (Czarniawska, 1997, 1998) and (b) in traditional views of system (von Bertalanffy, 1956, 1962) that share full-blown stories from person-to-person, as one might share a book or e-mail attachment.² Living story theory contributes a different direction in story or narrative research by going beyond the story-as-dead-text collection approaches focused on plot or motif-index-classification (Thompson, 1946). The theory explains how living story keeps changing and rearranging context. Living story theory is defined here as the emergence, trajectory, and morphing of living story from antenarrative-conception to the death of decomposition and forgetting to tell anymore.

Strands of narrative and antenarrative are interwoven, raveling and unraveling, weaving and unweaving in families and storytelling organizations and in societal discourse. *Storytelling organization* is defined as “collective storytelling system[icity] in which the performance of stories is a key part of members’ sense-making and a means to allow them to supplement individual memories with institutional memory” (Boje, 1991, p. 106). I think it is the relation between proper and improper story that makes it living story and unleashes transformative complexity dynamics in storytelling organizations (Boje, 2005). It is the storytelling organization struggle to control and to amplify that keeps story living, changing, and rearranging. It is collective ongoing, simultaneous, fragmented, and distributive restorying by all the storytellers reshaping, rehistoricizing, and contemporalizing. In Bakhtin’s (1973, 1981) conception, it is dialogized heteroglossia, the opposing centripetal (proper control) and centrifugal (improper amplification) forces. The living story fabric of a social system (be it family, organization, or society) is a complex collective-weave of many storytellers and listeners who together are co-constructing (along with researchers) the dynamics that reduce living story opposed by antenarrative forces of more amplifying-transformation.

I am interested in the relationship of living story to its living story fabric, to the emergence of less coherent antenarratives, constraining monologic-linear-narratives,

and more dialogized stories, and the hegemony of the living story fabric. The next section introduces critical antenarratology as a method of studying living story.

Critical Antenarratology Method

I propose critical antenarratology as a method of tracing and pre-deconstructing an ongoing interweaving antenarrating that is always composing and self-deconstructing. In a study of Enron, we refined our definition: “Antenarratives are bets that a pre-story can be told and theatrically performed that will enroll stakeholders in ‘intertextual’ ways transforming the world of action into theatrics” (Boje, Rosile, Durant, & Luhman, 2004, p. 756). There has been increasing interest in antenarrative theory and research (Barge, 2002; Boje, 2001, 2002, in press-a; Boje et al., 2004; Collins & Rainwater, 2005; Vickers, 2005).

A critical antenarratology is rooted in the *critical theory* work of Marcuse, Adorno, Horkheimer, Fromm, and critical theorists who have followed them, such as Clegg, Willmott, Knight, Parker, Jones, Hussard, Oswick, Alvesson, Grimes, Nord, and others. There is quite a long list of folks (“critters”) attending conferences such as Critical Management Studies, Critical Discourse conferences, and the Standing Conference for Management and Organization Inquiry (sc’MOI).

The differences between narratology’s *story-as-text* focus and critical antenarratology’s living story allow important insights into collective storytelling processes. First, in story-as-text research, the text is not being treated as a social production. In the text approach, one merely apprehends a text, without attending to the authors, beholders (readers), characters, and directors of living story production, distribution, and consumption. Second, in critical antenarratology, the analysis does not stop once a text is apprehended; analysis continues by sorting out the ways living stories of various persons are brought together in times and places. Third, there is a tendency in story-as-text research to develop a story more coherently into narrative reduction. In critical antenarratology, in contrast, telling and listening are socially constructed in situ in a systemicity context that is more ephemeral, emergent, theatrical, multistylistic, and dialogic. Fourth, with a critical antenarratology approach, we can study the interplay of living story, cajoled narrative, and history. History produces story-as-text, reducing collective storytelling processes to a few stories told by elites, about elites. In some history studies, the power of the storytellers to spin or slant a story is ignored. The old cliché that those with the sword write history has merit. History is written from the point of view of the victors, not those who are vanquished (White, 1973, 1978, 1987). The story-as-text approach, while pointing us to intertextuality, falls short; it is about one point of view. Fifth, critical antenarratology focuses attention on hegemonic processes of collective storytelling practice that privilege some tellings over others and create a heroic façade. Antenarration and narration can serve the elite as well as the marginalized, the oppressors and the oppressed. To be more precise, critical antenarratology expresses a cynical view of family and organizational storytelling; narratology

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without antenarratology limits focus to the positive stories of elite storytellers, while marginalizing stories of the less powerful and less fortunate.

From a critical antenarratology perspective, managerialist organizational storytelling is biased to one positive (or appreciative) story of an elite point of view. It is what Marcuse (1964) calls *one dimensional*, a product of what Horkheimer and Adorno (1972) term *culture industry*. Story becomes dead narrative or epic history, constituted in spectacles of mass illusion by the culture industry, now triumphant over reality. Finally, rather than study antenarratives instead of narratives, I explore interactions of story-as-text *and* living story apprehensions of the collective storytelling process that is heteroglossic (centripetal and centrifugal).

Having defined critical antenarratology, next we can examine the dimensions of the story fabric in family and organization contexts.

Four Qualities of Story Fabric

Story fabric is the systemicity of living stories unfolding simultaneously in families and in organizations. Story fabric is defined by four qualities along the landscape and time dimensions: first, the landscape of *simultaneous fragmented* antenarrative performances as well as full-blown or partial living stories; second, the *morphing* story along *trajectories* across temporalities (past or future into present) in living stories.

Simultaneity

First is the constraint on living story systemicity of simultaneity; many stories are being told simultaneously across the landscape of here-and-now. *Tamara* is the name of a play by John Kriznac that takes place in a mansion with several floors, with a story performance in each room; *Tamara* explores how storytelling is simultaneous in about a dozen rooms, and a member of the audience, rather than being stationary, observing a single stage, must choose which room to enter. Depending on that choice and the order of rooms entered, one will walk away with understandings of who did what to whom that are different from those of someone making different choices (Boje, 1995). People do not visit every room; people are not able to be everywhere in the landscape to experience all the simultaneous action; in short, one cannot be everywhere at once. If there are a dozen stages and a dozen storytellers, the number of storylines an audience could trace as it chases the wandering discourses of *Tamara* is 12 factorial or 479,001,600. *Tamara* is a simultaneous landscape of multiple storytellers and listeners co-constructing living stories that co-construct meaning, depending on one's choice of which rooms to visit during the play. The key implication is that *Tamara*, with its simultaneity and choice constraints on meaning, is much more like real life than a story performed on a single stage, with everyone in a stationary audience, unable to move about.

Fragmentation

In the simultaneous story performance and choice-making landscape, there is a good deal of fragmentation. People do not tell full-blown stories from the beginning to the end; tellers leave most of the story to the imagination of the listeners, who fill in blanks, pauses, and silences with stories of their own. Oftentimes, listeners tune out a teller getting carried away with telling a story to themselves (Stein, 1935). The other aspect of fragmentation is the distributed nature of storytelling in *Tamara*. This aspect of fragmentation refers to seeing or hearing only a part of the unfolding story because not only spectators but also actors rove from room to room, and these actors reveal new aspects of their character that, if missed, lead and mislead interpretations.

Trajectory

Given the simultaneity and fragmentation in a storytelling system, the collective dynamics give rise to what I am calling *trajectory*. It is not the trajectory of a coherent, whole story with a beginning, middle, and end. Rather, it is more of an antenarrative trajectory, a condition of emergence of coherence out of incoherence in storytelling systemicity. The trajectory is the passageways of an emergent antenarrative as it picks up and sheds meaning along different places and across different temporalities. We did a preliminary study of the antenarrative trajectories of Enron as the corporation went from an exemplar of the “New Economy” of free market energy trading to a debacle of bankruptcy and executives being led off to jail in handcuffs in a theatric spectacle staged to make it appear that the State was in control of the corporation (Boje & Rosile, 2003; Boje et al., 2004).

Morphing

There is a morphing of living story elements (choice of incidents, characterizations, implications) that change from one performance site in the landscape to the next. Morphing the story is part of what spin is all about: changing a story that is problematic to some stakeholders into a more legitimating account for self and others. Morphing is also what happens when each new occurrence in the present prompts storytellers to restore reminiscences of the past to highlight values, persons, or episodes differently (Rosile, 1998). There is a drifting of content as new elements are emphasized and some are jettisoned or skipped over. Morphing is part of the constant ebb and flux of rehistoricizing. It is what makes living story transformative to context.

Simultaneity, fragmentation, trajectory, and morphing are qualities of living story fabric that are centrifugal and opposed to more narrative forces that reduce story to a linearly developed beginning, middle, and end. Next, I present living examples of the critical antenarratology study of the story fabric in family tales about my grandmother Wilda and organization tales of Disney.

Wilda Shelton

It was August 8, 2003; I was 55 when my mother, for the very first time, told me anything about the early life of my grandmother (Boje, 2005).³ I did not even know her name until that day; she was just “grandma” to me. “What is her name?” I asked. “Wilda” my mother replied. “Wow, what a fantastic name, like Wild with an ‘a.’ Why did you never tell me about her?” There was a very long pause. “You visited her a few times, you were very young” replied my mother. I was 9 when we moved away, and I did not see her again until age 18, for just a moment, the very last time. Her fragment, and my reminiscence were interrupted suddenly. My mother began telling me about a person I never knew. In 2005, she told a version a bit different from the August 8, 2003, version: “Wilda could do anything. She could fell a grouse with a rock, live for months in the wilderness on berries and fish. Wilda was a trick rider in the rodeo, at a time when women did not do that” (Boje, 2005, p. 345). Another long pause, and I began to fill in the silence, wondering what Wilda was like, wondering how she had gone against the grain of society and become so wild.

My mother did not tell me about Wilda, the wild roping, hardworking woman of the wilderness. She said it was because her memories of the Depression were so hurtful. She did not want to recall living in tents, cabins, and caves, doing stoop work on the vegetable farms, that her dad was a bootlegger and a shepherd, or that her mother lived off the land. My mother was embarrassed by the wild life and preferred to live in the city, watching television and pretending to live the middle-class life in her double-wide.

The June 2005 interview included my mother (Lorane), sister (Karen), one of two brothers (only Kevin, because the other brother, Steve, is a heroin addict who sends us e-mail every year from Manhattan but never replies to our messages), and my cousin (Renee Flansburg). Together, we have been consulting photo albums; studying documents copied from hospitals, county, and other records; and visiting grave sites. In addition, I have been reading the history of the times when Wilda was a young rodeo star, marrying at 16, and heading off into the wilderness of Washington and Idaho.

I paid particular attention to Native American history. Although Wilda was not Native American, her brother Gerald married Stella LaClaire (actually, we can find no record of the marriage), a Native American (we cannot find which tribe), and had a child named Georgina. The fragments of my living story, of Wilda, are widely distributed. Yet there is an antenarrative cluster and trajectory when it comes to family ties to Native Americans. Wilda remarried to Percy Brown, who we suspect had Native American blood because his mother abandoned “Brownie” (as we call him) to be raised by Indians; we suspect it is the Yakima tribe (but we do not know for sure). As with many people’s family stories, there are a great many black holes, family secrets, and people written out of the family history. And there is morphing in the telling—it is now socially acceptable to be Native; in Wilda’s time, the genocide was still terrorizing tellings.

For example, on my dad’s side of the family tree, there was a brother to his dad named Edward Boje who married a woman of the Puyallup tribe (we do not know

her name, nor is there a marriage record), and Edward and his bride were ostracized. Edward's name was lined out of the family bible and was never spoken of again, not even in whispers. It was just a few years ago that I learned of Wilda and of Edward and Gerald's wife, Stella LaClaire, their daughter Georgie, and all the unspoken Native American influence in my family ancestry.

In June 2005, I returned to my mother's home, and she agreed to tell me more about Wilda than I was disclosed in the August 2003 visit. My sister Karen and my cousin Renee Flansburg were in Yelm Washington; I went up to Seattle to visit my brother Kevin, who told me more fragments. Slowly, we co-constructed our living story of Wilda as a young woman; it took more shape as we read her poems, studied the photographs and the birth, death, and other available records. I also read histories and novels of the period and began to re-create the younger Wilda, the one who existed before I was born. Her poems are fluffy romantic fantasy, yet they display a love for Brownie, the great outdoors, and for her children, her grandchildren, and her dog.

This poem is titled by Wilda *Listening 1956*:

Listening, I hear the quiet stillness of everything; no whirr of wings, or
chirp of bird. Nor sound to break this holy moment as our creator pauses
for a breath to permeate the atmosphere, of his Being.

All creatures know, within, of his presence; each leaf and plant or growing
thing.

The rush of wind, rustle of branch . . .

The lap of water on the sand; resume the steady course of time.

To all who know the rhythm; be still, be still and listen.⁴

Wilda did not have the abhorrent view of wilderness or poverty; my mother wanted no part of either; I am drawn to nature and can feel its rhythm pulling me.

Wilda's living story is a piece of research in progress. It takes a good bit of forensic detective and archaeological digging to get Wilda story fragments, to reclaim little people's history from elite history.

Wilda's living story is part of an ever-changing and rearranging tapestry, a story fabric that is collectively woven and unwoven. It morphs as each new tidbit is discovered. Yet the family social systemicity interwoven into the fabric of living stories is an unmerged, unfinalized tapestry, with all kinds of black holes in it. Wilda's story, to me, is interesting not only because I get to discover my relationship to a great lady but because her story fabric is in tatters, much already so forgotten and unrecorded that I can only glimpse disappearing fragments.

I confess something haunts me: The living stories of how much prejudice and hatred between immigrants and natives spews in the Americana "melting pot." In what I will share with you, the reader, I am putting Wilda's living story into the context of prohibition (her first husband was a bootlegger) and the Great Depression (my grandmother and mother lived in shacks and tents, some with dirt floors). I have been interviewing horse people to find out about trick riders, and

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blacksmiths to find out about what life was like for Wilda's father (he opened a blacksmith and livery stable business after failing to make it as a wheat farmer) and reading texts about life on the Oregon Trail and about people resettling from Iowa to Washington.

I began by telling you Wilda's living story in a rather straightforward fashion but did not reshape it into some kind of coherent storyline. To be candid, I know a few pieces, some fragments, and have lots of speculations of various family members but only a few facts. We are still piecing it all together. In terms of method, my mother and cousin got to swapping stories (June, 2005), my sister inserted dates based on archival research, and I typed the co-construction into my laptop. This is the result:

Wilda Shelton was born on January 28, 1902, after her parents crossed the Rocky Mountains in a covered wagon on the Oregon Trail, from Iowa to Washington State. It was hard times and a perilous journey; Wilda's older brother, Henry Wayne Shelton, was born on the Oregon Trail (January 16, 1897) and died within a month (February 1897) before the family reached Goldendale, Washington.

Wilda's younger brother, Gerard Shelton (born June 13, 1904; died August 18, 1937), was married (or had a common law marriage) to a Native American, Stella LaClaire; they had a child named Georgie (maybe short for Georgia).

Wilda's parents were William Henry Shelton (born July 26, 1863, in Brownstown, Indiana; died August 18, 1946, in Toppenish, WA, buried at Tacoma Cemetery in Yakima, WA) and Virginia Tuttle (born March 13, 1863, in Wayne County, Iowa, and died October 11, 1944, in Toppenish and was buried in Yakima, WA; my sister went to the grave site). Growing up, we Boje children were told that a Tuttle (ancestor of Allerton lineage) crossed over on the Mayflower in 1620). I did more research (Society of Mayflower Descendants, 2005): It appears that an ancestor (Francis Eaton) to Wilda's first husband, Raymond Eaton, could have been on the Mayflower (this has to be confirmed).

At age 16, Wilda lived common law with Raymond Eaton (born April 17, 1894; died in the 1970s, no exact date known—we have not found a grave). Another version of the tale is that she married Raymond, the marriage supposedly having occurred on or about January 1, 1920, at a Baptist Parsonage in Goldendale, WA. The date of the supposed marriage is just 19 days before the Prohibition Amendment took effect throughout America; it was already law on January 1, 1916, in Washington State. In fact, Initiative No. 3, passed on November 1, 1914, Election Day, by the citizens of Washington State by a margin of 52%, just did not take effect until January 1916. The Prohibition Amendment (the 18th amendment to the U.S. Constitution) was effective from January 20, 1920; prohibition was repealed on April 15, 1933. Wilda and Ray were poor. I make this aside to tell you prohibition was an industry employing poor folk.

As my mother tells it, "Ray was gone for entire seasons, not spending any money, living off the chuck wagon, saving it all, to bring back to his family. It was the depression [1920–1933] and times were hard." Ray lost an eye to dynamite in a mining accident; he became a bootlegger during the depression, hopping a freight train to head off to bootlegging territory. At other times, Ray was just another hobo looking for work. My mother says "he was gone months at a time." Wilda and her

daughter Lorane lived off the land, waiting for him to return, or were holed up in a tent city during the picking season. Wilda worked alongside the men. Other seasons, Wilda was out in the woods and would have to kill a pheasant (other versions say squirrel, rabbit, or grouse) or catch a fish to exist; this kept on for about 4 years. When Wilda was 20, their child (my mother Lorane) was born (November 4, 1925), during the Great Depression.

Wilda and Ray split up about 1927, a couple of years after Lorane was born; the stock market crash was on Black Tuesday, October 29, 1929, but they had no stock. And these were the depression years before the New Deal (1933–1938). Wilda moved from the wilds to the town and became a telephone operator. That is when Wilda met Percy Brown and left Raymond Eaton for ever.

Percy Brown was born on March 17, 1894, in Ellensburg, Washington and died on March 20, 1970. His mother's family name was Stutsman; we do not know her first name, and we do not know who the father is.

Why Wilda left Ray Eaton for Percy Brown (Brownie, as he was called) is a mystery. Brownie had many sides to him: Some hated him, most feared him, some liked him. My mother says Brownie was a monster. Wilda, my mother says, "could have left Ray out of sheer loneliness of living months on end in the wilderness, and the camps, while Ray was off bootlegging, or with the sheep, or prospecting, and dreaming of striking it rich." My mother speaks of Brownie in bitter tones, repeating the phrase *sadistic bastard*; "he made a pass at me." "Do you want me to type that in," I checked. "Yeah, it's okay," she replied in whispered tones. My cousin Renee (my aunt Val's daughter) does not remember Percy being a monster. He never made a pass at her. She often went fishing and hunting with him and Wilda and loved every minute of it.

My sister Karen and I have another theory as to why Wilda left Ray for Brownie; we think that Wilda went off with Brownie because of his Native American upbringing and his wilderness savvy. We don't know for sure if Brownie had native blood; his mother might just have decided she was too young and poor to raise her infant. We learn a little from studying the family photos, records of births and deaths, and getting my mother to talk. We speculate that Wilda's brother may have married a Native American woman named Stella LaClaire. There is a picture of Stella with her child wrapped in a papoose: Her name is Georgie (short for Georgia, we think; there are no records of them anywhere, erased from history). In talking to my relatives, the best guess is that Brownie's mother abandoned him shortly after he was born in Ellensburg, Washington, on the closest Indian reservation, which would be the Yakima. As my cousin tells it, he was older; "Grandpa [Brownie] was dropped off at the Indian reservation when he was 3 years old and did not see his mother again until he was 16 and bought him a motorcycle. That is why he learned to fish and hunt like he did." My mother says, "No, it was when he was born." Cousin Renee continues, "Mama (Val) said he always said *Ikkes Cuppa Whappachee* and drove her crazy trying to figure out what it meant."

Brownie's mother married a rich man, and they had a son named Claude, who grew up in a life of wealth and privilege; Claude became an executive at Shell Oil. Percy's story is fit for a movie, a story of two brothers, Percy raised on the reservation, and Claude raised in wealth and privilege. Percy would go to work for Claude,

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at Shell Oil, but was soon let go. When Percy was older, his uncles taught him to run steam shovels and build and grade roads; he also worked as a constable in a state forest and then for the railroad.

When Percy met Wilda, he was working as a forest ranger, in the deep wilderness of Washington. In an old shoebox, we found pictures of Percy and Wilda riding horses in the deep forest. Percy and Wilda lived common law from about 1927 until they finally got married on May 22, 1953. This is a story my mother and Renee knew but my sister, brother, and I had never heard:

While Wilda and Percy lived in the Washington State forest [mother and cousin debated the forest's name but could not agree], they found a deer, whose mother had been shot by hunters. They built a pen for the young doe. A hunter came along one day, finding the baby deer, caged in a pen, just raised his rifle and shot it dead; he left the carcass lying there. "It's like killing Bambi," I interjected [nods all around]. Percy and Wilda tracked him down, and after a fight, Percy took the man's rifle away from him, and kicked the hunter out of forest. He was ready to kill the man.

My mother always shies away from talking about her past; she particularly does not want to talk about Brownie. I know he ran over her tricycle on purpose, and after Wilda and Brownie conceived Val (short for Valamina, born August 1, 1928), Brownie got meaner. Lorane and Val had an intense sibling rivalry that lasted all their lives; yet during Val's last 15 years, they lived in trailers, not 30 feet away from each other, still feuding, some months not talking to each other, but sharing the same piece of property. Last time I saw Val she was getting relief from cancer, puffing on a marijuana joint: That was just before she passed away.

What little love Brownie had, my mother (Lorane) says it was dispensed to Val. "He gave her privileges I did not have." I asked mom if it was alright to tell you that Val and Brownie often went off fishing and hunting together; how Brownie seemed to treat her right but would lock my mother in the woodshed hours on end to punish her for trivial infractions such as not sitting perfectly still or not finishing some food that she hated. He would never let her out of the yard. Another fragment she said I could divulge here: Brownie made passes at her when she got to be a teenager. Mom looked and dressed just like Veronica Lake (you should see the photos). Brownie, she says, was sort of schizophrenic—not bad all the time. She says, "He would make the children beg to take them to the dime movies; three shoes for 10 cents. But first they had to be very good, and if they did not do exactly as he said, it was always, 'you are not going.'" I recalled such incidents from my visits with Brownie.

My sister Karen and I believe that Wilda practiced Native American spirituality until she got older (around 71) and was converted by missionaries to Mormonism. Renee says Brownie would send the missionaries running until he passed away; we think it was then that Wilda converted from Native American spiritual practices to Mormon ways.

Wilda's first husband, Ray, stayed in touch with his daughter Lorane, about every other year when she was in the States. In the year 1961, after my dad and

mom split up, mom returned to Washington from Paris with the four kids. I recall Ray visiting his only child, Lorane, and his grandchildren, of whom I am one (I was 14). Ray had a glass eye or wore an eye patch. At that visit, Ray was a hermit and shepherd when he was not off gold and silver prospecting in Idaho. My cousin says, "The thing I remember is I said [to Ray], 'what you mean you have a glass eye; what are you talking about?' He reached up, popped it out, and rolled it across the table at me. I was afraid to pick it up. I was real young when that happened. It was on [35 North] Proctor" (north end of Tacoma, WA)."

Ray would keep visiting Wilda and my mother and us kids. My little brother (Steve) and I used to steal into his room when he visited our mother (Lorane, his daughter) and us the grandkids. We found him snoring and heisted the glass eye out of his water glass. By stealth, we crawled back to our room and did play marbles with the eye. We thought we would never be found out because of all the precautions we took. We polished the malevolent eye and inspected it carefully for nicks and chips, and finding none, we put it back in the water glass and poured the water to the finger mark we had left. He spotted our game on the second visit, and this would be his very last visit ever to us. He ranted and raved; we thought he was going to explode. He told us how he hated towns and all civilization and put the black patch over his vacant eye and left forever. We felt quite bad—how many of us have a grandfather who has a patch over his glass eye, lives in the mountains of Idaho in the caves, and herds sheep to buy the provisions he needs to survive all alone?

Piecing more story fragments together, one can get some sense of what Wilda's life was like. We are co-constructing a young woman out of reminiscences, some stories we heard growing up, and other stories pieced together with bits of records, poems, and photos.

My mother (Lorane Joyce Eaton, daughter of Wilda and first husband, Ray Eaton) told me this story (June 2005), a slightly expanded version of what she told me before (August 8, 2003, see Boje, 2005, pp. 344–345). I want to focus now on a pause. "Wilda," says my mother, "could ride a horse better than any man." [Mom's voice rose at the end of the sentence, when it usually trails off to a whisper.] There was a long pause, a pregnant pause (4 seconds), and she continued, "She did trick riding at the Rodeo with her brother Gerald, and that was when that kind of thing was just not allowed. She could kill a rabbit at 50 paces by hitting it between the eyes with a stone. Her parents were away for months at a time but never worried because Wilda would take care of them. Wilda could live in the wilderness, knew how to catch a fish with some string and bent wire, and knew the names of all the trees and bushes and all the herbal remedies for things." In that telling, my mother had become wild (during that pregnant pause), she was once again the "Blond Bomber," her nickname when she played basketball in high school, and would fight anyone who got in the "paint" (that area in front of the net). She says, "some girls had razor blades in their hair, but I just charged em anyhow." My cousin adds another fragment, "Wilda would prop her leg up on the saddle and roll up a cigarette with one hand. When they [Wilda and second husband, Percy] worked in the forest, they did not have a telephone but could shinny up the pole and make a phone call using a clip on phone thing; she was a switchboard operator at one

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time.” We recalled visiting Wilda and the “wilderness salads” she made, “picking what we thought were weeds from a field, lots of wild flowers and dandelions tossed together.” My sister continues, “Wilda knew the names of plants and what each one was good for.”

Wilda Brown died about 1972, and I was not told about it. So far I cannot find a record of just when and where she died. Living stories are like that—lots of loose ends, and each new discovery presents more loose ends. I met her when she was older, a silver-haired grandmother with leathery skin, hugging me and giving me cigarettes before I knew how to smoke, and then telling me about a native spirituality I did not comprehend.

Wilda’s story is interesting because it goes against the grain of colonization. The Wilda living stories name the juxtaposed history of family ancestry with societal narrative, in our case the white culture’s rejection of Native American culture during colonization. Wilda left the comforts of white culture to live in the wilderness with her parents, then with Raymond, and for decades with Percy. Wilda was a wilderness woman, a trick rider in the rodeo, and lived off the land. Gerard Shelton and his Native bride (at least we think they married), Stella LaClaire (and daughter Georgie), could not find peace in Washington. These are not the only stories of this sort. On my dad’s side, my grandfather’s brother, Edward Boje, fell in love with a Puyallup Indian woman (again, we do not know her name), and they moved onto the reservation and had children, Glen, Ida, Alex, and Fred, with the last name of Boje. We know that there were Native American Boje descendents living on a Cheyenne reservation in Wyoming, but they too have forgotten her name. The Boje family wrote them out of family history, refusing to utter their names.

These living stories thread the past into the present and can, in my case, allow a critical antenarrative reading of family story’s relation to national and tribal history. Living stories of our ancestry juxtapose and fractionate with societal hegemony and our contemporary living stories. As Clair (1997, p. 323) puts it, “no story stands alone.” This research changes my living story; my ethnic and racial identities are unfolding. Living story research is a way of dealing with the organizing of silence about secretive ancestral identities, identities marginalized in the melting pot. In living story, “those silenced voices can be organized in ways to be heard” (Clair, 1997, p. 323). For example, my sister Karen pursues Native American healing practices, wears her beads, and does her drumming. In the case of Edward Boje and Gerald Shelton, their voices were muzzled; their living story was put to death. Reconstructing these living stories gives me a passion for finding out the names of birds, plants, and trees and learning about the history of the Apaches in the Organ Mountains of New Mexico, which I can see from this window above this very keyboard.

In this way, Wilda’s stories are a kind of hauntology, a specter-ghost “becoming-body” (Derrida, 1994, p. 6). They raise my critical concern about why there was so much secrecy and hatred around Native American relatives. In the case of Gerald, he was literally beaten to death, and his wife and child went off with my grandmother, Wilda, into the wilds. The story told is that Gerald had left the rodeo circuit to become the town drunk. As my mother tells it, “the sheriff got tired of arresting him, and one night, he and a deputy beat him to death.” In the case of

Edward and his nameless bride (and children), it was death by shunning, the hegemony of silence that Clair (1997) writes about as part of the nested stories of family, tribal life, and colonization in the great “melting pot.” Clair’s (1993, 1994, 1996, and especially 1997) work resituates personal narrative. Her work nests ancestral, gender, political economy, and societal narratives. In my telling, we get to glimpse the interaction of antenarrative fragments, some simultaneous, some morphing, making trajectories about lost Native American roots in a society bent on forgetting such a heritage.

Finally, these Wilda stories, for me, juxtapose Native American history with European colonization during the dawn of the Great Depression. Colonization is generally celebrated in the United States. Yet the other side of the story is about repopulating Native lands with Europeans while extracting resources from native ecosystems to ship back to Europe. As Native resistance increased, the colonists cleared the land of Natives in acts of genocide. Colonies were like chess pieces on the New Europe game-board. “Pieces changed hands. New Amsterdam for the Dutch became New York for the English. King Georgia was winning” (Amble, 2005).

White and Epston (1990) point out that each story of a family is an ideological representation and is embedded in the family system. The story fabric of my family living stories has been torn asunder by murders (that of Gerald and a murder of my aunt Dorothy, on my dad’s side) and a long succession of divorces. The divorces begin with Wilda’s and continued with my parents’ and those of three of my siblings, and then there are my own. To restory Wilda is a way of healing some family memories, to find in Wilda a wild passion for living, a forgotten sense of nature spirit, a way of vitalizing me.

For Clair (1997), nested stories (family, tribe, society) focus on the importance of naming acts of oppression and on how the oppressors have named those same acts. The oppression I have in mind relates to how a society (and its academic disciplines) enforces ways of narrating a story that are hegemonic. I can locate the oppression of Gerard, Percy, Stella, Georgie, and Edward (and his children) in the grander narration of U.S. history and the treatment (name it genocide) of Native Americans. Living stories of oppression have a material existence in discursive practices of families, tribes, organizations, and nations—at least that which has not been Disneyfied.

Disney

Why turn to Disney after telling Wilda stories? I want to make a link to the way in which family ties relate to organization storytelling. Spins and counterspins set up the *story fabric* of organization as well as family storytelling. Disney is also both family storytelling enterprise and organizational storytelling.

I continue the theme of hauntology (Derrida, 1994). Walt’s ghost still walks the Magic Kingdom; and as employees would whisper whenever Walt approached, “man is in the forest” (a line from the Bambi movie). Why? Because, unlike the official stories about Walt, there are many marginalized accounts by former employees

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and a few executives that depict a maniacal Walt, one who ruled his kingdom with an iron, paternalistic fist.

In the official lore, Disney began as a partnership between Walt Disney and Ub Iwerks (later written out of the official history, reduced to an artisan, a drawer of cartoons, not a partner). Walt is characterized as the iconic hero of the American Dream. Walt's is the grand narrative of rags to riches. He came from the Midwest town and moved to the big West City to become wealthy and powerful by being the entrepreneur. Walt did not invent cartooning or animation, and Taylorism of the animation industry was well under way when Walt and Ub formed their partnership.

There is something unique about Walt; Walt was the manager of other people's talent, and he used story as a way to control others. Walt's way of controlling Disney was to keep it flat, with few layers in the hierarchy, and to storyboard every kind of project from cartoon to movie to theme park. Ron Miller (a relative by marriage) took over after Walt's death but was, unlike Walt, not much of a storyteller. Ron was an accounting type and had such a meek personality that people kept making decisions the way they imagined that Walt would have done. At every meeting, someone would say, "What would Walt have done." This is one example of how resilient a storytelling system is to changing its story fabric, even after the demise of its leader. Ron Miller (Walt's son in law) could not shake the "hauntology" of Walt (Derrida, 1994); Michael Eisner fares no better. Living story is a hauntology because a story, like a ghost, is between dead and alive. And living story just keeps changing and rearranging.

The following excerpt from a transcript of a stockholders' meeting shows Eisner invoking the Disney hauntology in a way that brings in voices other than that of the dead Walt (Boje, 1995):

In 1923, Walt arrived in Hollywood with drawing materials under his arm, \$40 in his pocket, and a dream. Waiting for him at Union Station was his brother Roy, who would dedicate his life to making Walt's dream come true. Together with their wives, Lilly and Edna, working alongside them at night around the kitchen table, they struggled to keep a tiny studio alive. (p. 1020)

Eisner restoried Walt stories, fighting the specter of Walt, giving impetus to new organizing processes such as the move away from Walt's storyboards in favor of scripts, the kind that Eisner was familiar with at Paramount (Boje, 2005). Eisner discusses how there were no scripts at Disney for animated films before he took over:

I couldn't follow it. I'd go down there and they'd go through the storyboards. And you go through one storyboard and they'd bring in another storyboard. And I'd sit there for hours and I couldn't remember what was in the first storyboard. And it was a hard process for me to deal with. I'd been used to working in the script area. . . .

And every time I'd say: "How was it done in the past?" And I'd hear about Walt. He'd just be there and he'd jump up and down and he'd go back and

forth between things and so forth. And Roy Disney (Jr.) told me a story about how he (Walt) sat on his bed when he had the flu or the mumps or something and told the entire story of *Pinocchio* in the bed. And I finally discovered they did have a script.

And the script was in Walt Disney's head. We didn't have Walt Disney. And therefore we didn't have a single mind, tracking the entire movie. We had (a) committee of minds. And that was the problem. And now we do scripts. (p. 1023)

Eisner is telling his story in a way that deconstructs Walt's hauntology. He is pulling on one of the strings of the story's fabric and, in the process, unraveling the legend of dead Walt.

Walt's hauntology lived on despite Eisner's other ways of telling. Walt stories continue to take hold of collective storytelling practices at Disney. Roy Disney clashes with Eisner's new ways of storying "what Walt might have done" (Boje, 2005, p. 1020). Roy Disney's (2003) Letter of Resignation became part of the story fabric of organization overcoming family life at Disney. It mentions another hauntology, the death of Frank Wells (Disney, 2003).

Initially, Eisner put together a competent team of executives, but then Frank Wells died, and Katzenberg and many others had their falling out with Eisner. In official Disney storytelling, Eisner does no wrong, but in unofficial works such as Stewart (2005), Eisner is storied as just as iron fisted, autocratic, and micromanaging as Walt. Hauntology is being noticed; some suggest "Katzenberg felt that the spirit of Walt Disney was guiding him," while Eisner thought himself to be "the reincarnation of Walt Disney" (Elle, Verrier, & Bates, 2005). Roy Disney had been leading the call to get Eisner replaced and had finally succeeded. Eisner's honeymoon with Disney was all but over.

Fast forwarding to contemporary Disney, inside the Magic Kingdom, there are living stories of a struggle for power between Roy Disney (Walt Disney's nephew) and Michael Eisner. Eisner's almost 21-year rein is almost over (1984–2005); Roy was allegedly squeezed off the board by Eisner and then resigned; and Bob Iger took over as CEO on September 30, 2005; Eisner retains a seat on the board (Disney Press Release, 2005). Iger took over a company with more than \$30 billion in revenues and a net income of \$2.3 billion. Roy Disney and Stanley Gold, two former board members, are still opposed to Iger, a longtime friend and confidant of Eisner.

Disney and Gold released a statement saying, "We find it incomprehensible that the board of directors of Disney failed to find a single external candidate interested in the job and thus handed Bob Iger the job by default," they said. "The need for the Walt Disney Company to have a clean break from the prior regime and to change the leadership culture has been glaringly obvious to everyone except this board" (Kurtzberg, 2005).

Roy E. Disney and Stanley Gold filed a lawsuit (May 9, 2005) seeking to invalidate February's board election and March's selection of Iger. There is even a Web site called SaveDisney.com that Roy has put up (Elle et al., 2005).⁵ Disney and Gold (2005) have also been putting articles in the *Los Angeles Times*:

Of course, we've since learned that the search involved only one real candidate—Eisner's handpicked heir apparent, Disney President Robert Iger. By caving in to Eisner's demand that he be allowed to sit in on interviews of potential successors, by not even attempting to interview a single outside candidate until after its annual meeting in February, by refusing to insist that Eisner commit to leaving the company as soon as the new CEO was named, and by not objecting to the aggressive public relations campaign Eisner had his minions wage on Iger's behalf, the board effectively endorsed the notion that "the fix was in" and virtually guaranteed that no serious outside executive would be willing to be considered for the job.⁶

A new book, *DisneyWar*, by Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist James Stewart (2005) alleges Iger's judgment was poor and he had a tendency to kowtow to CEO Michael Eisner. An article in *Fortune* amplifies some of Stewart's charges:

Eisner was so consumed with top-tier dysfunction, he practically ignored Iger. When he did take notice, it wasn't with a ringing endorsement. Early on in Iger's tenure, Eisner wrote the board about Iger's prospects for becoming CEO someday: "He is not an enlighten [sic] or brilliantly creative man, but with a strong board, he absolutely could do the job." Eisner claims he has overcome his doubts: "I bought into the cliché of Bob—that because he didn't get on top of the table and rant and rave and act like a fool, he wasn't a creative, passionate person." (Sellers, 2005)

Disney is also an enormously more complex global organization with a higher diversity of theme parks in various countries bending a global mold to fit local tastes in food and story. In Walt's day, it was one studio and one theme park; now there are multiple TV networks, a fifth theme park opening, a cruise line, merchandising in the malls and airports, publishing houses, real estate, including hotel resorts, publishing houses, and more.

There is a dynamic relation of Disney's official story and the living counterstories. Disney's annual reports and official biographies are a study in spin, in presenting one way of telling while ignoring the other ways of telling stories about the Magic Kingdom. Their official stories are centripetal, tugging at the centrifugal ways of telling to calm the whirlwind of reporters, activists, and special interest groups that swirl around Disney, forever unraveling the official ways of telling, juxtaposing these with the counterstories (Boje, 2000).

After Roy was out, Eisner put his spin on it—that by replacing Roy and longtime insider Stanley Gold with two new board members (Aylwin Lewis and John Chen), Eisner was making an effort to make the Disney board more independent of the Disney family, and served to add outsider's voices to the boardroom. Of course, there are counterstories that just the reverse had happened, that there are now fewer independent voices and fewer calls for Eisner to plan his succession (Gross, 2004).

The Disney storytelling machine has its work cut out—to restory Iger into a leaderly CEO, one who can lead the empire especially after Stewart's (2005) exposé. The spin is on, and the new image is being cast.

Where Eisner is a micromanager, Iger is regarded as team-oriented. If Eisner favors funny Disney ties and drives a yellow Volkswagen Beetle, Iger is a fashion plate who favors a sleek Porsche. Smooth and cautious, he is known as a man who chooses his words and actions carefully. (McCarthy & Levin, 2005)

Stewart's (2005) book was released just as the Disney board was deliberating on making Iger their choice for CEO. Iger is being presented by Disney as a team leader, not at all what Stewart portrays. In short, there is simultaneous story action, fragmentation everywhere, trajectories that are clashing, and attempts by Disney and its critics to morph their versions.

As Disney opens its Hong Kong theme park in August 2005, the workers are learning that Disney workers are called "cast members." They don't go to work, they "put on a show," and when they are out in the park, they're "on stage" (Disney's Hong Kong Workers, 2005). When the Taipei workers return from their training in Disney Florida, Wynn Poon, 29, who is being trained as a greeter at the Epcot park, is not sure it will work. "Chinese culture is more conservative and they're not that expressive about feelings," said Poon. She is imagining the response she'll get back home when she tells Disney visitors, "Have a magical day!" "People will say 'Oh you're insane! You're crazy!'" (Disney's Hong Kong Workers, 2005). This is Disneyfication, making the Chinese employee into what Van Maanen (1991) calls a "smiling robot" in the "smile culture" of Disney (cited in Boje, 1995, p. 1020).

With a change in CEO, the Disney corporate empire is restoring its living story fabric to claim its new CEO as hero. Even before the new CEO took office, the "central strategic planning committee" of Disney disbanded (Stewart, 2005). The story being constructed is that Eisner overdid the centripetal force, whereas the new CEO will give all divisions more autonomy, and the system overall will be more centrifugal than under either Walt or Eisner. Time will tell if the prestory (an antenarrative) will continue its transformative trajectory. Or will this be yet another example of a story that is centripetal, out to control, to set out a spin, that cast members are supposed to accept as the latest script change?

Discussion and Conclusions

I want to discuss the theory embedded in my presentation of Wilda and Disney fragments. Wilda and Disney are theorized to be living stories: in the moment, unraveling and unraveling simultaneously, distributed, fragments, and morphing in spin and counterspin.

Wilda and Disney are story fabrics where what is patched and covered over keeps coming undone. I think it is important to study many sides of the story. Storytelling is a collective process, tellings by many tellers. A critical antenarratology addresses ways in which one way of telling is counter to another way of telling. Antenarrative trajectory, the interplay of centripetal and centrifugal forces, lets us explore what is dynamic in the interrelationship of living story of family, organizations, and society. It is a method of exploring the landscape, of looking at the opposition of official and marginal ways of telling, and of looking at how coherent

narratives are opposed by more unraveling stories. Living story is theorized as the interplay of narrative coherence, antenarrative (prestory) trajectory, and more dialogized stories (with a multiplicity of styles, logics, and voices).

The ways of telling and not telling are very telling. The ways of telling emerging in the present are changing from the ways of telling in the past. There is less “answerability” for what one tells and how to listen ethically to a telling (Bakhtin, 1990). Answerability is the plurality of ways of telling in one time and another (even anticipated times) and ways of telling in one part of the landscape versus another. Dialogicality is not the same as dialogue. Dialogue is people in a common time and place. Being dialogic can be across times and places.

A problematic research implication is that what is being taken as a “proper narrative” (or story confined to narrative coherence) in the vast majority of research projects excludes all the many diverse fragmented, morphing, distributed, simultaneous living story forms. In short, the story fabric is only being partially imagined or investigated. The implication of the living story theory, with its focus on simultaneity, fragmentation, trajectory, and morphing is that a story is much more ephemeral than is plotted in Aristotelian poetic narrative approaches or in motif indexes of folkloristics.

Living story is embedded in systemicity and an environment that is intertextual, nested, and dynamic because it is unmerged, unfinished, and partial. Coherence is overgeneralized. There is a relation between living story and systemicity that needs to be explored. It is not a choice of mechanistic, organic, or open systemicity of some kind. Rather, it is a multilanguaged, multilayered systemicity at the higher reaches of Boulding’s (1956) scales of system complexity. In this higher-order systemicity-complexity (Pondy, 1976, 1978; Pondy & Mitroff, 1979), I think it is possible to explore Bakhtin’s (1981, 1990) concern with heteroglossia (the opposition of centripetal and centrifugal forces of language that are dialogic). I have stressed here that there is ongoing degeneration and the whirlwind centrifugal forces are opposed by the forces of coherence, which are more centripetal. It is a theory that allows us to see how narrative and story forces are different yet implicated in our families, organizations, and societies.

In current work, I am attempting to relate four types of dialogism to the fields of system theory and strategy (Boje, in press-b). And each of the four dialogisms is beyond Boulding’s Level-4 open system theory. First, there is polyphonic dialogism, the full-embodied voices expressing different logics and ideologies. Second, there is stylistic dialogism, where instead of voices what is dialogic is a multiplicity of different styles (*skaz* of everyday speech made into corporate speech, such as *Just Do It* or *I’m Lovin It*; letters to shareholders, photos, science-sounding charts and numbers, etc.). There is an orchestration of multiple styles, including in décor, in gestures that express story without words at all. Third is chronotopic dialogism. A *chronotope* is defined by Bakhtin (1981) as a relativity of time and space after Einstein. Bakhtin identified some 10 chronotopes in more dialogized novels, where a variety of chronotopes become dialogic to one another. In Wilda and Disney, there is a juxtaposition of different chronotopes (biographies, autobiographies, romantic adventure, everyday adventure, and various folkloric chronotopes). One chronotope in a narrative is not dialogic, but put several into intertextual relation,

with either other narratives, with stories, or with both, and the result can be dialogic. I say *can* because it is not their being multiple or being juxtaposed but the manner in which they answer and challenge one another that makes them dialogic. Fourth is the architectonic dialogism. This was the first in the series of dialogisms that Bakhtin theorized in his career but was translated into English only more recently (Bakhtin, 1990). This is at the societal level of discourse. It is an extension of Kant's work on cognitive architectonics, by looking at how cognitive discourse interanimates with ethical and aesthetic discourses. I am interested in how the interanimation of multiple discourses is related to complexity dynamics. Story and narratives are domains of discourse. At the societal level, discourses affect the organization. Within the organization, the multiple discourses are affected by and affect the embedded environment of societal discourse.

What is exciting is how the four dialogisms begin to interact or interanimate. How is it that polyphonically dialogized tellings interanimate with stylistic, chronotopic, and archetchnoic dialogisms? For it is at this level of multidialogic complexity that we begin, I believe, to explore Boulding's more complex orders of systemicity, which are beyond open systems. Indeed, if the third level (control) is first cybernetics of deviation-counteraction (or the centripetal), and the open system fourth level is deviation-amplifying (or centrifugal), that is a crude approximation of heteroglossia but still does not get us to higher orders of complexity. We (Boje & Baskin, 2005) called for a "third cybernetic revolution" in system thinking. We see possibilities of looking at what Boulding saw as image, symbol, social, and transcendental orders of complexity (Levels 6–9). I think polyphonic dialogism takes us beyond an open system, as well as mechanistic and organic frameworks, too deeply rooted in simplifying narratives. To get to image storytelling (Level 6) brings us into an examination of multistylistics. Chronotopicities or what Boulding saw as a need to look at history, symbolism, and self-reflexivity (Level 7) is another necessary move. Since Boulding saw social networks at the societal level as an even higher order of complexity (Level 8), it seems that architectonic dialogism can help us explore this level. Finally, Boulding imagined transcendental, a relation between what is knowable and what is unknowable. In my exploration of Wilda living stories, I was consciously looking at spiritualities, at what I think is a dialogism of the four dialogisms that Bakhtin imagined. I named this dialogism of dialogism the *polypi* (Boje, 2005).

The critical antenarratological method is about the dialogic manner of the living story, it is multidialogicality, the interplay of not only polyphonic voices but the entire polypi of dialogisms. One-dimensional narratological methods take one way of telling a dialogically living story, such as a managerialist account, or some official way of telling. Marcuse's (1964) *One-Dimensional Man* was a reaction to ways of telling that were biased in academia to telling only the positive story. Today, that argument is very much alive. For example, in organizational development work, "appreciative inquiry" commends itself for being one-dimensional, for sticking to the positive story, labeling any critical inquiry as negative science (Srivastva & Cooperrider, 1990).

In *Tamara*, people cannot be everywhere at once, the telling morphs as we chase the living story from room to room, from place to place. A family or an organization is not a story performance on a singular stage with a stationary audience, respecting the boundary of the invisible fourth wall of the theatre. Living story

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fabric is thoroughly dialogized. There are many stages of distributed simultaneous story action; one must decide which rooms to enter, which doors to unlock, and which skeletons to bring out of the closet or leave in their grave. There is no such thing as common experience, no such thing as common sense; the sense is fragmented, the stories are not mostly coherent, they are mostly disputed and morphing before the ink is dry.

Dead stories are the subject of most research. These stories are dead the moment they are ripped from their performative context, repackaged into coherent tales that are put into collections, themed, or indexed. The meaning of living story is embedded in socioeconomic context. The accepted “way” of telling a living story is also contextually embedded. While academic disciplines have their definitions of what is and is not a story, the socioeconomic system has its own rules about story, who can tell a story, how a story is restored. Each academic discipline has its own ways of researching and telling living stories. I have chosen a “critical antenarratological” approach, a mix of critical theory and my antenarrative work, a mix of several dialogisms I called *polypi complexity*.

The context of living story is more than a social network of storytellers and listeners; context is also the answerability of multiple authors, many beholders, diverse characters, and the many directors that make up the dialogically complex systemicity of the living story fabric. Wilda haunts me, just as Walt haunts Disney.

Consulting Editors: Claudia Mitchell and Bill Maynes

Notes

1. Bakhtin (1981, p. 152) uses the term *systematicness* to denote unmerged parts and unfinalized wholeness—I abbreviated this to *systemicity*. Bakhtin (1973, pp. 4, 6, 12) develops unmergedness and unfinalizedness.
2. Czarniawska (2004) has relaxed her earlier traditional narrative restriction of “telling a story from beginning to end in front of an enchanted and attentive audience” (p. 38) looking at terse telling.
3. Boje (2005) is a set of interviews about Wilda conducted on August 8, 2003; the current chapter expands the analysis with interviews transcribed on June 2005.
4. The poem by Wilda Shelton is reprinted with permission of David M. Boje.
5. Roy Disney’s Web page SaveDisney.com, as of April 17, 2006, is no longer on the Web.
6. Reprinted with permission of ElitesTV.com.

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