Mgt 685 Storytelling Research & Consulting to Organizations Seminar

**Syllabus**

**Mgt 685 Description:** We apply various qualitative storytelling research methods (plot analysis, script analysis, life history, and restorying) to 'intervention research' projects. Students will conduct storytelling diagnosis and negotiate storytelling interventions with a local consenting organization. They will write it up for possible publication.

**Sustainability-Focused Class.** Our storytelling consulting class is focused on sustainability, on consulting to organizations in ways that improve sustainability. We consult to university, business, non-profit, and government organizations, who want to enhance sustainability in every way possible.

Class meets 2:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. Wednesdays, Business Complex Building Room 247, beginning Aug 29, 2012 and finishing on Dec. 14, 2012

INSTRUCTOR: Professor David M. Boje (575) 532-1693 call between 9 AM and 8 PM; Office BC 318; or email: dboje@nmsu.edu anytime

**OFFICE HOURS:** Mondays 12:15 PM to 1:30 PM - Frenger Food Court (by Dynasty, at a table); of call 532-1693 for appointment

Open to all Ph.D. students; and to any Masters student (by permission of instructor). Students from Education, English, Sociology, Anthropology, Education, Communication Studies, Rhetoric, and several other disciplines besides Business have expressed interest in a course that is about storytelling research as well as about how to use it in organizational change and development work. All are all welcome! Contact David Boje for more information. Please post flyer.

**CLASS FORMAT**

Each week there are two or three readings which you are expected to discuss and relate to your own project (which can relate to your own graduate interests) and/or to the class project we create together. We will obtain the needed IRB for both, if we intend to publish them. Last year, we worked as a class to bring about change in 'sustainability' at NMSU by interviewing leaders on campus, attending meetings of Sustainability Council, submitting our proposals to the President, Provost, and VP of Research, and submitted our work for publication. In previous terms we did an Arts Convention for Las Cruces. As we get going we will discuss our collective interests, and find a project that suits us all. As the term proceeds you will collect storytelling using 'ontological' protocols' (asking 'how' questions about the future), 'retrospective protocols (asking 'what' happened questions about the
past), and doing some 'conversation analysis' and 'action analysis' of **in situ** real spacetime-mattering storytelling. Restorying is a method for diagnosing the constraining 'dominant narrative' of an organization, and developing 'little wow moments' of exception that can be assembled into a 'new story' a new spiraling pathway to a different future than the organization was on in its environment. But what is environment? What is spiraling?

![Q-Spiral](image)

**Figure 1: Q-Spiral with upward (Gold) and downward (Blue) spiraling, at a choice point (+) between paths (dotted Red lines), as updrafts and downdrafts (Silver) buffet spiral-whorls, in an Environment defined by three dimensions: Performance (aka Materialscape), Timescape, and Landscape (drawing by D. M. Boje, July 18, 2012).**

Our focusing question this semester: **How to change the relationships between Organizational-Storytelling, -Spiraling, and -Spacetime-mattering in its Environment?**

**SCHEDULE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings Due data listed</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aug 29</td>
<td>Overview of storytelling and restorying; Today watch <a href="#">Quantum Storytelling Video</a>; Storytelling about past class projects: The Arts Scene; Sustainability at NMSU; Start thinking of ideas for our own class project and your individual project. Receive handout on the sustainability</td>
<td>Spirals are in a spacetime-mattering of updrafts and downdrafts. Spirals have directionality. See Boje (2012a, b) for 11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Reading Suggestions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sep 5</td>
<td>Discuss last year's sustainability project, and the Benjamin &amp; Arendt</td>
<td>Choose 3 to read:&lt;br&gt;- Merleau-Ponty (1962) chapter on Space&lt;br&gt;- Boje (2008) Intro&lt;br&gt;- Boje (2012a) Preface &amp; Chap 1&lt;br&gt;- Boje (2012b) Preface &amp; Chap 1&lt;br&gt;- Heidegger Chap 1&lt;br&gt;- Tosoukas (1999) article on Shell &amp; Greenpeace</td>
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<td>handouts in order to define 'storytelling' as 'speech' and live 'action'</td>
<td>in order to create 'storytelling', 'speech', and live 'action' of things and people.</td>
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<td>of things and people.</td>
<td><em>Storytelling, SpaceTimeMattering, and Spirals is our theme this semester.</em></td>
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<td>projects. How can we study the relationship between Storytelling,</td>
<td>How can we study the relationship between Storytelling, Spirals, and Environment:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Spirals, and Environment: defined as Landscapes, Timescapes, and</td>
<td>defined as Landscapes, Timescapes, and Materialscapes?</td>
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<td>Sep 19</td>
<td>Bruno Latour's Actor-Network-Theory. Agree as a class on what class</td>
<td>Choose 3 to read:&lt;br&gt;- Boje (2012b) Ch 3&lt;br&gt;- Read book 1 of the Strand dissertation for today for 'material storytelling.' Books 1 and 2 are online.&lt;br&gt;- Heidegger Chap 2</td>
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<td>project we will do, break down roles, and develop an antenarrative of</td>
<td>What is 'material storytelling' of Spirals in Environments of materialscape, timescape, and landscape?</td>
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<td>its future. Apply for IRB.</td>
<td>Book 2 of the Strand</td>
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**REQUIRED BOOKS**


Of these required books, I will be revising my online 2012 books, as I work my way through Merleau-Ponty. We did Heidegger in last term’s seminar, and before that we did the recommended books (Aristotle, Bakhtin, Barad, Latour, Morson, etc.), except for Arendt and Mead, which I worked with this summer, and will bring into the seminar as needed.

**RECOMMENDED BOOKS**


Boje, D. M. (2001). *Narrative Methods for Organizational and Communication Research*. London: Sage. [If not in bookstore, Order from Amazon](http://www.amazon.com) Has basic analyses such as deconstruction, theme analysis, grand narrative, plot, story network, etc. and introduces concept of antenarrative.


**WHAT IS STORYTELLING?**

Storytelling is constituted by three interactive facets: (1) narratives of the past, (2) living stories unfolding in the Present, & (3) antenarrative trajectories that relate narrative to living stories in quite different ways to the future. For background, please see [Ontological Storytelling?](#) [What is Living Story?](#) and [What is Antenarrative?](#)

A current Storytelling definition (Boje, Jørgensen, & Strand, expected 2013: 3):

"Storytelling, here, is defined more broadly, as something agential such as the iterative intra-active-material-storytelling domains of "living stories“ and "antenarratives“ in the theatre of action, which go beyond the classical narrative focus on structuralist and representationalist elements and retrospection (Boje, 2001, 2008a)."


In other words storytelling is the says antenarratives inter-connect retrospective-narratives with living stories in the theatre of action. Narratives often focus on epistemic (knowing), living stories (on Being-in-the-world) and the antenarrative connect them together quite differently. Organizations undergo transformations.

**Storytelling and Transformations**

"The most current of such transformations occurs in storytelling and generally in artistic transposing of individual experiences" (Hannah Arendt, 1958: 50).

Consultants and change agents use storytelling to effect transformations.

**Great Storytellers?**

"All great storytellers have in common the freedom with which they move up and down the rungs of their experience as on a ladder. A ladder extending downward to the interior of the earth and disappearing into the clouds is the image for a collective experience to which even the deepest shock of every individual experience, death, constitutes no impediment or barrier" (Walter Benjamin, 1936: 83).

**3 TYPES OF STORYTELLING**
1. 'Material Storytelling': This is the work of Anete Camille Strand (2011, 2012) from Denmark.

2. 'Ontological Storytelling': This is my own work applying Heidegger, Bakhtin, Mead, Deleuze and others.

3. 'Quantum Storytelling': See the film, read the books.

*How are material storytelling, ontological storytelling, and quantum storytelling related?* The old material ontologies have been giving ground to quantum storytelling.

**Four Antenarrative Trajectories**

*Antenarrative* is a bet and a pre-story that can aspire to be very transformative.

Antenarrative is a bridge between living story and narrative by four pathways: linear-antenarrative, cyclical-antenarrative, spiral-antenarrative, and rhizomatic-antenarrative. Two pathways between living story and narrative, the linear- and cyclic-antenarratives are from past predicted to recur in the future. This is known as conventional and ordinary retrospective sensemaking. The other two pathways are from the future to the past, and this is quite radical. The spiral- and rhizomatic-antenarratives are future-->present and future-->past destining, directionalities futurals, drafts (up or down, in & out, left or right quantum directions), and disclosabilites of quantum materiality in a vitalistic sense of living story. This term we are focusing on Q-spiraling.

**Action vs. Intervention Research**
There is an important difference between Action Research and Intervention Research. Its our job to sort it out. AR is a bit linear and cyclical, whereas IR is more about researching and intervening in the spiraling and rhizomatic processes of change.

RESTORYING

Our seminar will include methodologies for story research (deconstruction, theme analysis, grand narrative, plot analysis, etc.); will also include story intervention approaches such as “restorying” (defined as collecting the dominant (oppressive) stories of the organization that set up its posture and power, and then intervening to constitute a new story that has liberatory potential (White & Epston, 1990). Here is how Mike Bonifer and I are developing the restorying intervention:

1. CHARACTERIZE the dominant narrative as the problem, not the people as problem. Narrative empties out living stories, in-order-to focus on linear and cyclic-antenarrative recurrance.
2. EXTERNALIZE the problem, viewed as separate character from any individual, as an external entity? Mr. Spiral is a strange character in organizations, because we cannot see, hear, touch, taste, or smell spirals, and yet we can use tools and instruments to sense their shape and path-directions.
3. SYMPATHIZE What benefits does the organization derive from the problem? The benefits of spirals that cannot be accessed by sensemaking is that retrospective narrative is useless.
4. REVISE Disadvantages of the problem, benefits foregone, reasons to change. The negative consequences is one relies on instruments and tools to observe a spiral, even though direct sensemaking can not see, hear, touch, taste, or smell one.
5. STRATEGIZE Find a “unique outcome” from the past, even a potential, which allowed the organization to defeat the problem in the past; those little wow moments, concealed by the dominant narrative. One little wow moment, for me, is that I have tactile sensing of spiral energy flows. Another is that I can see the instrument measuring spiraling energy
currents. I have a storytelling awareness of spiraling even though my own five senses are not always picking up cues.

6. RE-HISTORICIZE Make the “unique outcome” the rule (instead of the exception) in a 'new' living story of freedom from the dominant-problem-narrative. There are times when I have spiral-awareness of updraft and downdraft environmental flows that cause the spiral to move or at least shutter.

7. PUBLICIZE Enlist support for the new living story. Use letters, ceremony, etc. with friends to reinforce 'new' living story web. What is the evidence of support and interest in the new Q-spiral-antenarrative and environmental-draft? I find some evidence in Heidegger (PLT, 1971, 130) for drafts: "orbit of the whole draft" turns and "parting against the pure draft" (ibid, p. 125). This gets at what I call 'inner ♥-space' of our Being-in-the-world ontological-existence, which in Heidegger (PLT" 130) is "the true interior of the heart's space." I find some evidence in Merleau-Ponty (1962: 244) for the "top and bottom, right and left, near and far" that is not from sensemaking by the five senses. I find some evidence from Deleuze (1994: 21) who says, "Spirals whose principle is a variable curve and the trajectory of which has dissymmetrical aspects as though it had a right and a left."


**BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVES**

1) Students completing the course will have a mastery of several story research approaches to studying *story behaviors*. Choice of methods depends upon the field sites selected. Students will be able to collect storytelling fragments in ethnographic field work, in documents, and in the non-verbal and non-text expressivity of art and architecture as well as the gesture and rhythm of storytelling theatrics. *Storytelling behavior* research and consulting is not about doing interviews or making collections of organization folktales, or narrative archetypes. Students completing the course will be able to collect and analyze field notes and recordings of storytelling behaviors.

2) Students will conduct field research (&/or consulting) on a New Mexico, long-lived "storytelling organization" using applicable research methods. It gets at the more epic aspect of storytelling. Epic looks at the systemicity of story behaviors, in their emergent, on-going *in situ* processes. Managerialist story consulting, on the other hand, imposes a cohesive-narrative-beginning, middle, end-dogma onto story that I call BME (see Storytelling Organization book). For narrativists story must have coherence: beginning, middle & end (BME); be linear in its development, and be monophonic (told by one informant in the manner that management prescribes). Epic story consulting addresses the entire storytelling organization as a collective constellation, in all its dialogisms (polyphonic, stylistic, chronotopic, & architectonic), that is ever-changing and rearranging in emergent complexity.

3) We will work on some things as a class; Students will conduct an "storytelling organization" intervention consulting project on a long-lived New Mexico organization. Students may work in teams, but each person must write their own individual independent sections of a project. a different kind of project that does not involve a specific site: story consultant Gabriel Gargiulo has asked for students to operationalize his story model using metrics; and other projects students suggest.

4) Ph.D. students are expected to produce a publishable-quality journal article for submission to one of the journals that focuses upon story research and/or story consulting practice in their chosen discipline. They are expected to submit it first to some conference,
such as http://scmoi.org, critical management studies in UK, Academy of Management, etc. Masters students are expected to produce a professional consultation report detailing story behaviors observed, and appending field notes and other documentation. Masters students are expected to do less reading than Ph.D. students.

5) Students learn the ethics of story consulting practice and research. This includes following New Mexico State University IRB Human Subjects procedures. Please have anyone doing interviews fill out the following consent form. Please review any material with the client that you intend to appear in any king of conference paper or publication. Click here for IRB Approved Consent Form (Feb 2007; renewed Jan 08; renewed Fall 2010). Please have interviewees complete a Confidentiality Form (copy to be stored in Boje's office, BC 318; give copy to interviewee)

PLEASE SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT THIS UNIQUE SEMINAR EXPERIENCE -

Annotated Bibliography from 2009

Storytelling consulting to organizations is a blossoming field (about 50 books on it at Amazon.com). Most of these story consulting approaches are pretty naive, with advice like teach CEO to tell a stump speech story, and somehow that will change the organization (Boje, 2005f).

Service Learning/Civic Engagement Requirement

Each year there are free-to-the-public service learning 'consulting by storytelling' projects with different sectors of the economy. An example is facilitating 2008 1st Annual Arts Convention, organizing task forces with local public, private, and grassroots organizations to bring together leaders of city, town, university, and commerce to develop the arts economy. Results included actual interventions, such as museum scavenger hunt, Winterfest to vitalize downtown businesses, and other aggressive marketing of Arts and Culture of Las Cruces and Mesilla Valley. This is also civic engagement: doing storytelling consulting intervention that bring about more socioeconomic ethics of justice and equality by working with government, economic, education, and small business communities. Service Learning/Civic Engagement applies course content to your volunteerism, and includes your reflexive processing of experience in your notebooking and in your report and presentation assignments. The aim of your volunteerism is a collaboration with community members to effect interventions that add value to your education and to the socioeconomic situation of the community. We will do this together, and perhaps a joint paper will emerge. The other activity is to do some aspect of storytelling in relation to your own specialty, perhaps relating the method or theory to your thesis work.

The storytelling in New Mexico, for example, affects the distribution of arts and cultural resources that metropolitan cities and the rural communities receive.

GENERAL SYLLABUS POLICY

- Incompletes ("I" grades): Given for passable work that could not be completed due to circumstances beyond the student's control (e.g., severe illness, death in the immediate family). These circumstances must have developed after the last day to withdraw from the course. Requests for "I" grades should be made to the instructor, but must be approved by the Management Department Head.

- Withdrawals: It is the responsibility of the student to know important dates such as University drop dates; last day to withdraw with a W is March 16. Moreover, it is the responsibility of the student to officially withdraw from any class that he or she intends
 o **Cheating**: Cheating will not be tolerated. Punishment for those caught cheating will be an 'F' in the course. The person will also be subject to further sanctions as indicated in the student code of conduct.

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**: If you have (or believe you have) a disability & would benefit from classroom accommodation(s), contact the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at Corbett Center, Room 244 (Phone 646-6840; TTY 646-1918). All medical info is treated confidentially. Do not wait until you receive a failing grade. Retroactive accommodations cannot be considered. Information, instructions & forms from the Services for Students with Disabilities Office are online at [http://www.nmsu.edu/~ssd/index.html](http://www.nmsu.edu/~ssd/index.html). **Accommodations**: SSD Office, 646-6840 (Corbett Center, room 244); Discrimination: Office for Institutional Equity, 646-3635, McLoughlin House.

Feel free to call the Student Accessibility Services (SAS) Office at 575-646-6840 or email at sas@nmsu.edu with any questions you may have on student issues related to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA and/or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act). Students requesting accommodations and/or services relating to a disability may seek assistance from the SAS Office located in Corbett Center, Room 244. All medical information will be treated confidentially. If you have already registered, please make sure that your instructor receives a copy of the accommodation memorandum from SAS within the first two weeks of classes. It is your responsibility to inform either your instructor or a SAS representative in a timely manner if services/accommodations provided are not meeting your needs.

Questions regarding NMSU’s Non-discrimination Policy and discrimination complaints should be referred to Gerard Nevarez, Office of Institutional Equity, 575-646-3635.

[http://lib.nmsu.edu/plagiarism/](http://lib.nmsu.edu/plagiarism/) NMSU’s policy on plagiarism. This appears to be a growing problem. It is fairly easy to Google excerpts from papers to check for plagiarism. If you find any cases, refer to the Academic Misconduct pages in the undergraduate (p. 21) or graduate (p.15) catalog. Thank you for your assistance on this matter.

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<tr>
<th>Student Responsibilities</th>
<th>Faculty Responsibilities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Within a few days of the start of the semester, register with SSD &amp; obtain forms.</td>
<td>1. Within five 5 working days after student gives you the forms, sign them, retain a copy, &amp; return originals to the student.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Within the first 2 weeks of beginning of classes (or within 1 week of the date services are to commence), deliver the completed forms to the instructor(s).</td>
<td>2. Contact SSD immediately if there are any questions or disputes regarding accommodation(s), disruptive behavior, etc.</td>
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<td>3. Within 5 days of giving the forms to faculty &amp; at least 1 week before any scheduled exam, retrieve the signed forms from faculty &amp; return them to SSD.</td>
<td>3. Refer the student to SSD for any additional accommodations.</td>
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<td>4. Contact the SSD Office if services/accommodations requested are</td>
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http://business.nmsu.edu/~dboje/690/[8/16/2012 8:31:41 AM]
not being provided, not meeting your needs, or additional accommodations are needed.