A GENRE THEORY PERSPECTIVE ON DIGITAL STORYTELLING

by

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Dissertation

Submitted to the Faculty of the

Graduate School of Vanderbilt University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

Learning, Teaching and Diversity

December 2013

Nashville, Tennessee

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INTRODUCTION

Background of the Problem

In the past two decades, the dynamic convergence of technological innovations and literacy has given rise to new forms of cultural and literacy practices that are qualitatively different from their pre-Internet, print-based predecessors. Also, the burgeoning of the Internet and other digital technological innovations has enabled massive uptake and fast evolution of these practices, which have not only come to saturate and transform contemporary cultural lives, but have deeply altered notions of what it means to be literate in an increasingly global and networked contemporary society. In a global media culture that is increasingly dominated by user-generated content and design, enabling and connective technologies and social media, and interest-based, collaborative production of digital content, literacy researchers are faced with a range of conceptual, theoretical, and methodological challenges.

On one hand, entrenched notions of literacy need to be revised to cope with the new forms and functions of literacy use as embedded in emerging cultural practices. The relatively static and abiding notion of literacy, as sustained by the single literacy technology, the printing press, is no longer adequate in accounting for the multiple forms and functions of people's literacy experiences. For example, massive participatory models of production, as enabled by Web 2.0 technologies, have put the once solid, monolithic conception of authorship under attack. How do we identify and locate authorship for the *Star Wars Kid* remixes (a popular internet

meme that has widely circulated on youtube.com) when fecundity (a meme's capacity of being taken up by multiple individuals, with new meanings added each time) lies at the heart of the digital phenomenon (2007)? Also, social structures and boundaries that used to separate the novice from the expert, or the consumer from the producer, no longer hold fast. For instance, *Silence Speaks (*an international digital storytelling initiative) offers equally valid, if not more empowering, venues as its mainstream counterparts in supporting the uncovering of stories about violence, discrimination, abuse, inequality, and conflict. In the same vein, what we once conceived as valid textual meaning is under question when remix, hybridization, and experimentation of multimedia and multimodal resources have become cultural norms. For fans of popular cultural genres, such as *Pokémon* or the *Harry Potter* books, fanfiction sites are interest-based virtual communities that support their creative productions of derivative fictions and multimedia fan arts. In fanfiction writing, fans creatively remix plots, characters, and relationships found in the canonical work with experiences and knowledge found in their everyday lives to create stories and arts that are equally engaging and interesting as the canonical works (Black, 2006; Thomas, 2006). To be literate in terms of such emerging cultural practices, one needs to be a selective user of literacies and technologies, to constantly adapt to and initiate redesign of evolving cultural technologies, and to engage in contingent, often self-initiated learning. As such, received notions of literacy do not provide for adequate accounts of the multiplicity, complexity, contingency, fluidity, and plasticity of people's cultural and literacy experiences in digital spaces.

On the other hand, what we have come to appreciate as literacy skills still manage to travel into the messy and chaotic digital discursive scenes. Literacy skills that are acquired through schooling often work in concert with a repertoire of technological, cultural, semiotic,

and media skills and knowledge to determine, at least partially, the success of digital content production. For example, the ability to write coherently, affectively, and insightfully is an asset to be capitalized upon by an aspiring fanfiction writer. Acquisition of such abilities is also a collective goal to be achieved by a community of fan authors (Black, 1996). Similarly, a well-carried narrative and an acquired, well-rehearsed voice lie at the conceptual and affective heart of digital storytelling enterprise.

Insofar as literacy research is concerned, the digital space presents problems that are simultaneously familiar and strange. Such is the condition that this project is situated within and seeks to further illuminate. The review of literature, which has led to the conception of this dissertation, is framed around my thinking about two questions central to the studies of new cultural and literacy practices. What do the dynamics look like when an author (authors) works toward a digital story, a chapter of the *Harry Potter* fanfiction, a new version of the *Star Wars Kid* meme, or a *Call of Duty* machinima? More importantly, who (and what) brings meaning to and puts shape on discursive works through which such new cultural practices are performed? These questions are rather perplexing and challenging ones for literacy researchers, who are equipped with tools and knowledge accumulated in the pre-digital age of textual production and literacy research, which often fall short of fully capturing and adequately accounting for the elusive and fluid nature of digital cultural practices.

In what follows, I describe how I became interested in digital storytelling as a social practice, an area of research, and a focus for this study. I first draw on personal experiences with the social practice to lay out the general scope of this dissertation as guided by my research questions. Building on such experiential knowledge and motivation, I draw on extant literature to explain why digital storytelling should be considered an exemplary case of new cultural and

literacy practices. I then interrogate extant research on digital storytelling for ways in which

digital storytelling has been conceived and treated as an object of analysis. In doing so, I identify

gaps in extant theories and methodologies, which fall short of capturing the paradoxical nature of

digital storytelling as a both durable and dynamic site of social action. I then suggest ways in

which various dimensions of genre theory may help to fill in such conceptual and

methodological gaps. In offering genre theory as an alternative framework, I argue that the

conceptual and methodological constructs gleaned from this work can be extended to guide

research of a wider range of new literacy and cultural practices.

How I Became Involved in Digital Storytelling

In the fall of 2007, I was a graduate teaching assistant facilitating an English methods

course offered to pre-service teachers *en route* to their teaching certificate and future career as

English teachers. As a Chinese national who went through a different path in my earlier

educational career, I found myself, together with the pre-service teachers, learning about the

various theoretical and pedagogical traditions that were shaped by and would continue to shape

the educational experiences of these young professionals and their future students. I loved the

energy of the class and the community of colleagues I had come to know, to learn from, and to

share with. Amidst of lively discussions and engaged participation, however, there were

murmurs of excited anticipation that was becoming increasingly intense as the semester wore off

quickly. On the syllabus, the professor had indicated a rather unusual component to the course.

Each participant in the course, including me, was to create a digital story about oneself. I was

not as excited as the rest of the class. I could tell a story in Chinese; I was actually very good at

telling stories in social settings. But writing a story in English? Telling a personal story about ME to people I know professionally and was content to know professionally only?

Amongst others' cheers and my own secrete queasiness, the project arrived. I managed to trudge through the difficult task of organizing a story that I perceived to be appropriate for the context. It was a story about my name, how my life thus far had turned out to be a fulfillment of a prophecy embodied by my name. It was a personal story. And yet it was a safe story that did not reveal much of who I was. It was a story that could take on a public face. I organized and facilitated the technology workshops in the next six weeks, as the professor and I introduced and supported students' completion of the parcels of a challenging technical process one at a time. The virtual server crashed multiple times; people couldn't save or find their files; our scanners refused to yield much desired .jpeg files of appropriate sizes and qualities… The list went on. By the time my colleagues came to me, each with a finished story burnt on DVD, I felt a great weight lifted off my shoulders not only because we all managed a stressful process, but also because I found a convenient excuse for not completing my own story. I absolutely hated my own voice, with its accent and the drab story conveyed through it.

We held a movie premiere night. As storytellers, colleagues and friends gathered, we watched each other's final product for the first time. It was amazing how these stories had morphed from pages of un-edited written drafts to captivating short narratives that were filled with personalities and emotions; it was also amazing how the multimedia, including voiceovers recorded by the storytellers, digitally mediated personal images and amateur artwork, stretches of carefully selected soundtracks, and animation effects, have given faces, voices, and souls to the stories in ways that the written narrative could not present and represent. I was deeply impressed by the products and the process that enabled such products. Each storyteller became his or her

autobiographical documentarian in six weeks' time. The products, these terrific nuggets that captured rich experiences and insights, provided me with glimpses beyond the professional facades of the individuals and into the intimate and moving spaces that only personal revelation could give.

Three years later, after extensive reading into the literature around digital storytelling, several small, experimental research projects around it, and a break from my academic pursuit brought about by the birth of my two children, I returned to my doctoral studies, knowing that I would like to arrive at a more in-depth understanding of the social, cultural, and individual exigencies that gave rise to a great number of new literacy practices, digital storytelling being one of them. After having participated in a workshop offered by the Center for Digital storytelling and having finally found the appeal of my personal story and voice, I have grown even more intrigued by the expansive reach of the cultural practices on a global level, its conceptual and affective appeal at the individual level, and the reasons behind such appeals. That is, what ideological, organizational, and discursive features have contributed to the accelerating popularity of the cultural genre over the past 15 years? In what ways has digital storytelling morphed as it travelled across geographical, temporal, and virtual spaces? In what ways is digital storytelling helping to shape and structure people's telling of personal stories? And more importantly, how are individuals' storytelling efforts reacting to the multiplicities of established and new practices, including digital storytelling, oral storytelling, movie making, academic writing, and etc.?

Brief Overview and Purpose of this Project

Building on these personal and research interests, I raised these questions to guide my research. What does it mean to consider digital storytelling as a cultural genre? What constitute the genre system of digital storytelling? What does it mean to consider digital storytelling as a simultaneously durable and dynamic cultural genre? I developed this project to explore what it meant to consider digital storytelling, or any other new literacy practice, as a cultural practice that has taken on typified genre features and practices that are both stable and transformative. To do so, I attended to the collective experiences and knowledge of designers and participants from four focal digital storytelling programs to observe the genre practices of people going through the creative process. In that direction, I asked these questions. What are typified genre features of digital storytelling? What practical, discursive, and material structures have historically developed with digital storytelling? In what ways do genre practices encode the broader ideological and social meanings of digital storytelling? I also looked at the situated practices of organizations, programs, and individuals in creating stories that not only reflected socio-historically developed orientations, but also fulfilled contingent creative intentions. In that direction, I asked these questions. How are typified genre practices invoked in local productive activities? What ideological and social meanings are systematically indexed by genre practices and genre features? In what ways has the meaning potential, genre features, and genre practices changed overtime and across projects? In what ways are individual creativity accomplished?

It is therefore important to frame this study as an attempt to build theoretical and methodological tools for tapping into the complexities of a social practice that has acquired its own socio-historical trajectory of development. In order to lay the groundwork for socio-historical studies of the massive, wild, and complex world of online literacies, I have chosen to

look closely, but fairly broadly as well, at the invocation of digital storytelling across four different projects. In attending to each case of invocation, I attended closely to how a broader ideological orientation was formed, how practices were organized in typified ways to realize the overarching ideological goals, and how outcomes of such practices systematically articulated collective ideological and experiential knowledge. By attending to how the ideological, practice, and discursive dimensions of the social practice interacted to enable collective and situated meaning, I was also able to observe how digital storytelling maintained a coherent and recognizable shape over time on the one hand and was organized in ways that allowed transformation and change on the other hand. In a larger scheme of things, I was able to tell a story of genre evolution through the lens of four projects. In so doing, I demonstrated a socio-historical form of analysis, generating tools and ideas that other research can build upon, question, and revisit.

Review of Literature

In the review of literature that follows, I position my research in dialogue with extant scholarship on digital storytelling. In an effort to identify gaps in existing research, I start the following section with some "definitional" work. Instead of reporting available definitions and descriptions, however, I allow my theoretical work to guide my synthesis so that the account I am providing about is reflective of the socio-historical view I take. That is, I describe digital storytelling from the lens of genre theory in that I attend to the discursive, semiotic, practical, and ideological features that have stabilized over time and are recognizably associated with the genre of "digital storytelling." I then move to interrogate the different theoretical and methodological stances taken by researchers, with a focus on distinguishing the different loci of

research attention, while working to reveal how they each relate to the social historical view I take. I conclude this chapter with a critique of the three overarching orientations found in extant literature and offer an alternative theoretical position derived from such critique. By taking the position of a social historian, I create a space for considering genre theory as a theoretical tradition is can be productive in generating new insights and accounts of new literacies.

What is digital storytelling?

The term digital story can be used to umbrella a wide range of digital, multimodal compositional activities, such as a student creating a PowerPoint with embedded images and video clips, or an amateur film maker producing short video to be circulated on youtube.com, or an everyday individual creating a short video that carries certain inherent epistemological, conceptual and practical claims. For my enterprise, I approach digital storytelling as a cultural practice, which has acquired its own historical trajectory of development and is associated with an identifiable network of persons, documents, activities, tools, and institutions, often carried out within a framework with well-articulated conceptual, practical, epistemological, and ontological claims. Such definitional work is critical to my attempt to identify digital storytelling as a distinctive digital cultural practice, especially when it is considered in relation to an assemblage of similar, emerging digital cultural practices that might share certain forms and functions with digital storytelling. For instance, a *Call of Duty* <u>machinima</u> may share certain formal properties with a digital story, in its use of a narrative as a guiding principle of organizing multimodal resources, or just by the fact that a story is told in a short video. But as discursive activities, the two cultural practices are different in fundamental ways. For example, a machinima is built around existing graphics, narratives, and characters found in an established game world, while a digital story is built around a unique construction of personal experiences. A game-based

machinima is often created to share gaming tricks with fellow gamers, while a digital story is created to make sense of personal experiences. For my enterprise, I define cultural practices in terms of the particular types of meanings made through their performances and the particular social purposes individuals strive for when creating a digital story, making a YouTube video, or creating a fandom based machinima.

In what follows, I put this definitional frame into work and provide a practice-oriented, sociohistorical definition of digital storytelling as a unique cultural practice. In terms of its thematic, semiotic, compositional and rhetorical features, I describe a digital story as a short video consisted of a coherent collage of images (digitized personal photos of the individual, family, friends, and artifacts), audios, texts, video clips, and effects, choreographed based on an autobiographical narrative told from the first-person perspective and recorded in the storyteller's personal voice. An identifiable fusion of formal, thematic, and stylistic features can be observed to distinguish the digital story as a unique genre. First, a good digital story is carried out through a complete dramatic arc that is shaped around significant personal experiences. Like a good "thesis" or "focus," a dramatic arc is at the conceptual heart of a successful digital story, telling us what the story is about, guiding the planning, scripting, and production of the video, and keeping the audience engaged. Affectively, a successful digital story portrays and evokes strong emotions, which then creates a sense of significance in life events. Most digital stories deal with emotional experiences in a truthful manner and often deal with basic and universal human experiences, such as significant relationships with a person, an object, a place, and so on, working through hardships, combating violence and social injustice, overcoming challenges, healing from loss, or celebrating passions and joys in life. As such, digital stories emphasize on the warmth, strength, accessibility, and presence of the individual voice. Stylistically, digital

stories tend to be poignant, humorous, and emotional stories that are marked by sincerity, warmth, and humanity. From a compositional standpoint, the semiotic "details" of a digital story, such as images, soundtracks, and effects, are chosen for how they shed light on personal experiences and used in light of the semiotic and aesthetic whole of the story. A digital author attends to the complex interplay of modes, seeking coherence and cohesion across a range of semiotic modes resources. Also, semiotic resources are to be organized in such a way that economy is accomplished through a well-paced development of the dramatic arc.

In terms of looking at digital storytelling as a communicative practice, Salpeter' (2005) definition of digital storytelling as the "modern expression of the ancient art of storytelling" captures the inherent dynamism and complexity of the practice (P.18). As a cultural practice, digital storytelling demonstrates properties that are both familiar and novel. Digital storytelling inherits from oral storytelling its emphasis on the personal voice. It also shares with conventional genres of storytelling the need to learn from and grow through storytelling. At the same time, digital storytelling extends the scope, reach, and power of storytelling by drawing on various conventional as well as multimodal genres of communicative and cultural practices. The orchestration of family photos and artifacts involved in digital storytelling, for example, may draw on one's experiences with family scrapbook making. To better make use of audio tracks, an author might draw on experiences with popular cultural genres, such as music videos, commercial movie making, or radio broadcasting.

At the conceptual and ideological core of digital storytelling is its commitment to facilitating the telling of everyday life stories of ordinary individuals. Embracing the notion that everyone has meaningful stories to tell, digital storytelling takes a rather inclusive approach to authorship and encourages amateurs and novices to experiment with a mixture of existing (often

mainstream) cultural forms and everyday (seemingly mundane) experiences (Storytelling, 2010). This disruption of established boundaries between the mainstream and the everyday, the professional and the amateur, or the expert and the novice, is what marks digital storytelling as a venue to realize *cultural democracy* (Lambert & Mullen, 2002). Closely associated with the *cultural democracy* principle is the notion that digital storytelling affords new *expressive potential* by giving voice to historically silenced, marginalized, and ordinary individuals. In effect, digital storytelling disrupts established social hierarchies that silence the ordinary individual who might otherwise contribute to culture production (Burgess, 2006; Hug, 2007).

The advent of new technologies and digital tools also contributes to the cultural democratic and expressive potential of digital storytelling. As a discursive practice, digital storytelling does not strive for high-tech glitch. Rather, it makes use of a range of digital tools that have become increasingly low-cost, available, and accessible. The continuous dropping of costs for personal computers, scanners, digital cameras, and video cameras has allowed easy access to these tools to engage in tasks that involve recursive assemblage of digital media in dynamic and real-time compositional situations. The increasingly user-friendly interfaces of bundled nonlinear video editing software have made a once expensive and time-consuming process an achievable enterprise for people with minimal professional expertise. Working with accessible video-editing software, a digital author can recursively draw on and edit a range of multimedia resources to create a final product that can be saved in different formats and published through a diverse range of public and private venues. Additionally, the more recent advent of Web 2.0 media-sharing platforms, such as youtube.com, facebook.com, and myspace.com, has greatly motivated the online publication of amateur media content.

The conceptual precursor of digital storytelling is Dana Atchley's multimedia autobiographical production, in which he combined his voice and insights with old photos and home video montages, all synched with a narrative of anecdotes from his life (Atchley, 1992). Since its inception in 1994 by the *Center for Digital Storytelling (*CDS*)*, digital storytelling has acquired its own short history of development, evolution, and stabilization, which is partially marked and constituted by the work of several notable organizations. To a large extent, the conceptual and practical framework of digital storytelling was established through the formulation of a three-day workshop by the CDS, which has largely prevailed to inform ongoing digital storytelling programs.

From the beginning, the CDS' work has had a strong pedagogical focus. The three-day workshop is a functional pedagogical scaffold that operationalizes a complexity of tasks and activities involved in the labor-intensive process of turning personal stories into publishable media artifacts. In practice, a majority of CDS workshops have served to train educators to create stories and to think about using digital stories as a tool to engage student learning.

Since its association with University of California at Berkeley in 1998, the CDS has been drawn upon to facilitate the founding of the *Digital Underground Story Telling for Youth* (DUSTY) program, an afterschool program built through the joint efforts of research institutions and local community organizations (G. Hull & M. E. Nelson, 2005; Paull, 2002). Over the years, the DUSTY programs have helped K-12 students, university students, and adults with minimal technical expertise to learn to produce digital stories. One of the key contributions of the DUSTY programs has been the formulation of the *clubhouse model* of afterschool programs. At the core of the clubhouse model is a community-university partnership, which pulls together resources from university researcher and students, non-profit organizations, and local community

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organizations to create after-school learning environments that support multimedia literacy learning. Young people come on their own volition and work on multimedia projects with the help of trained adult facilitators and peers. Conceptually, the *clubhouse model* embraces digital storytelling as a means of promoting new ways of participating in new media culture and new ways of thinking about stories, everyday experiences, identities, and communities. As designers, implementers, and technological facilitators, university researchers often integrate research components into the design of DUSTY programs, which have become empirical research sites to generate theorized accounts of how digital storytelling mediates literacy learning, identity formation, teacher education, and pedagogical innovation with regards to multimedia learning (G. Hull & M. E. Nelson, 2005; Hull & Katz, 2006; A. S. Nixon, 2008; Paull, 2002; Roche-Smith, 2004b; Turner, 2008). Over time, the *clubhouse model* has not only served as a pedagogical model for teaching multimodal literacy, but has also functioned as a research model for studying multimodal literacy learning.

On the social front, the cultural democratic and expressive potential of digital storytelling have been fully capitalized by media projects of various scopes and scales. BBC's *Capture Wales* and *Telling Lives*, for example, have utilized digital storytelling as a tool for potential democratization of the individual voice and building of communities. Similar projects have emerged in different communities, including *Silence Speaks,* an international initiative that supports the telling of stories of surviving violence, discrimination, and injustice; *Digital Storytelling Asia,* which collects creative narrations in Singapore; the *Creative Narration* program and the *musariam* program, which host firsthand accounts of American stories. Central to these projects is an emphasis on personal voice and everyday experiences in service of

preserving memories, achieving personal growth, building communities, and exerting change through storytelling (Lambert & Mullen, 2002).

In previous sections, I have attended to the formal, conceptual, communicative, technological, pedagogical, and social dimensions of digital storytelling. As such discussions have suggested, digital storytelling has been conceptualized and used for different purposes in different social institutions. Also, in striving for social influence, various implementation projects have capitalized on certain epistemological and ideological functions of digital storytelling, be it the expressive potential as a venue for achieving identity and literacy development in the DUSTY programs, or the cultural democratic potential as a venue for achieving social justice and social change in various media enterprises. Through these projects, the cultural practice stays alive, not by adhering to a shared understanding of performing text *in-situ*, but rather by generating stabilized-for-now (Schryer, 1994) aggregates of discursive, material, practical, and social structures that enter into a historically accumulating stock of meaning potentials that come to revise and redefine what digital storytelling is and does.

For instance, the *clubhouse model* inscribes a certain way of pulling together resources and making material arrangements (e.g. making use of available but often outmoded technology and limited resources offered by community organizations; using after-school time; offering students basic tools, such as video cameras, that can be brought home), positioning persons in relation to each other (e.g. researchers serving as implementers, designers, and facilitators; students from under-privileged background coming on their own volition), using texts (e.g. drawing on everyday experiences to construct counter-narratives that challenge dominant social structures; approaching multimodality as a new way of making meaning; validating everyday and vernacular cultural genres), and orchestrating activities (making customized use of the CDS

workshop model of activities) to facilitate the learning of the crafts and arts of digital storytelling. For other interested parties, such as teachers who intend to introduce digital storytelling into their classrooms, similar conceptual, practical, and material concerns the DUSTY designers had faced often resurface. Therefore, the *clubhouse way* may provide a ready framework to orient one towards an effective way of organizing a digital storytelling program. When repeatedly drawn upon, the *clubhouse way* becomes the *clubhouse model*. In turn, the discursive, material, and practical structures of the *clubhouse model* sediment and stabilize, ultimately shaping how we think about digital storytelling and mediating ongoing digital storytelling experiences.

Why digital storytelling?

In the previous section, I have touched upon several issues central to my thinking about digital storytelling as an exemplary "case" of new cultural practices. We observe in digital storytelling certain formal as well as epistemological "properties" that are markedly new and common among the range of new cultural practices. Most notable among these properties are the use of multimodal resources and creative remix of multiple cultural genres, the use of new technological and digital tools, the manifestation of new "ethos stuff" of our post-industrial reality through a dynamic fusion of formal, epistemological, ideological, and practical features (Lankshear & Knobel, 2007), and the gradual evolution of the cultural practice into institutional forms with embedded discursive, material, and practical structures to inform and orient ongoing work across different social institutions and for different purposes. When considered as a whole, these dimensions constitute an adequate condition for distinguishing a cultural practice from others.

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These properties have given momentum to the fast and widespread popularization of digital storytelling in the last two decades, with thousands of digital stories having been created in educational, non-profit, corporate, and media settings and published on various online venues. Additionally, as digital storytelling enters into and rises in our cultural landscape, it has also begun to receive increasing scholarly attention from researchers, resulting in a small body of substantive research that are qualitative in nature. Among them, there are pieces written by practitioners for practitioners, aiming to inform teachers of the basics and power of digital storytelling and offering tips and encouragement (Bull & Kajder, 2004; Kajder, Bull, & Albaugh, 2005; Lambert & Mullen, 2000; Salpeter, 2005). These descriptive, anecdotal accounts have sought to create a "case" for integrating digital storytelling into existing institutional practices. More recently, substantive research and deeply theorized accounts of educational uses of digital storytelling have been growing, making various advancements in conceptualizing digital storytelling as a pedagogical device, an identity-building scaffold, and a literacy tool. Some of them examine digital storytelling as couched within established after-school programs of the *clubhouse model* (Paull 2002; Hull and Nelson 2005; Hull, Katz et al. 2006; Hug 2007; Nixon 2008; Turner 2008). Others examine the integration of digital storytelling within regular school classrooms and analyze ways in which digital storytelling can be used as a pedagogical tool to enrich literacy learning (Connolly, 2008; Davis, 2004; Hathorn, 2005; Hayes & Matusov, 2005; Kulla-Abbott, 2006; Kulla-Abbott & Polman, 2008; Nelson, 2006; Nelson, Hull, & Roche-Smith, 2008; Ranker, 2007). Lastly, there are several studies that examine the pragmatics of implementing digital storytelling in other institutional settings, such as community-based literacy and cultural organizations (Burgess, 2006; Dush, 2009; Marcuss, 2003). Ouside of research specifically targeting digital storytelling is an emerging research thrust as researchers attending

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to the actual processes of composing with multiple modes, yielding productive insights into the complexly layered, recursively structured, and variant contours towards multimodal meaning making (Dalton & Smith, 2012; Smith, 2013).

Four Analytical Stances

In what follows, I draw on extant literature to examine different frames within which digital storytelling has been captured and accounted for, with specific attention paid to the issue of how discrete instances of digital storytelling is considered in relation to the collective cultural practice. Building on the understanding of how digital storytelling has been conceived and treated as an object of scholarly investigation, I explore areas that warrant further studies. In that regard, I do not wish to provide detailed accounts of and comments on the strengths and limitations of each study in my review. Instead, I work to construct and distinguish among four analytical stances: *multimodal semioticians,* who study the new semiotics of digital, multimodal texts; the *cultural democrats,* who are interested in the democratic potential of digital storytelling in giving voice to the historically silenced social groups; the *expressivists,* who are interested in the discursive work as affording engaging, authentic, and productive opportunities for socially influential identity play; and the *connective pedagogues,* who work to integrate digital storytelling into a connective pedagogy, which capitalizes on the multiplicity of literacies youth experience in in- and after-school settings. In constructing these functional separations, I hope to provide detailed accounts of the different analytical stances and frames employed by researchers in studying the new digital phenomenon. However, I do not approach these stances/frames as mutually exclusive categories. In effect, most research studies draw on more than one stance and some approach digital storytelling from multiple frames.

The multimodal semioticians

For the *multimodal semioticians*, digital stories are compelling examples of multimodal meaning making, of which we have limited understandings. Building on multimodal semiotic theories that have begun to examine the different organizational principles and semiotic affordances of modes other than the linguistic mode (Kress, 2003; Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996), the *multimodal semioticians* seek to advance semiotic theories and develop new analytical tools to further unravel the complexities of multimodal meaning-making. Hull and Nelson (2005), for example, propose that "semiotic synaesthesia" is what is unique about the meaning made through digital storytelling. When multiple modes are combined in a digital story, a unique synergy is created to accomplish more than the collective of all the individual modes working in isolation. Therefore, the semiotic potential and power of multimodality reside in the semiotic relationships among co-present modes, not within individual modalities. To that end, digital stories are powerful not simply because images, animations, and sounds increase the meaning potential of words as additive or illustrative supplements, but because the synthetic co-presence of multiple modal resources affords "not just a new way of making meaning, but a different kind of meaning" (p.225).

Nelson (2006) further explores the amplifying and limiting effects of synaesthesia on the projection of authorial intention. Drawing on close analysis of six college students' digital stories, Nelson argues that the amplifying power of a digital story, in comparison to an essay, resides in its affordance for a deeper and fuller meaning accomplishable through the process of shifting expression across modal boundaries. Transduction of a message across different modes (e.g. representing an utterance through an image) is one way to do so. Synaesthesia can be amplifying when, for example, the same image acquires different meanings when it is repeatedly

used, each time with different words and symbols. Also, an image may accumulate a semiotic power of its own, which comes with the history of its use (e.g. from earlier use of the image as a concrete representation of a person to later use of the image as the symbolic representation of an abstract concept).

The arguments made by the multimodal semioticians have largely served to direct analytical gaze on the short-lived composing process. Because the potential for authorship "lies not so much in the words, images, sounds…but rather in between them, in the designing of relations of meaning that bind semiotic modes together" (Nelson, 2006, p.57), research has focused on the composing process as where to locate the dynamism of digital storytelling. In comparison, a completed digital story stands as a static semiotic artifact whose meaning remains stable and independent of the teller, which also makes it a good candidate for detailed examination of multimodality. Such is the condition in which much of the analytical tool building has taken place. In order to achieve sophisticated understanding of modalities (logics and organizing principles of different modes) and the dynamism and complexity of the synaesthetic production, a researcher often works to represent the modes in a visual layout that arranges modal resources in separate but parallel channels.

Through these conceptual and analytical efforts, we have begun to understand the power of multimedia composition and the challenges and rewards of doing digital storytelling. In his research, Nelson (2005) has suggested that for writers who struggle with traditional writing, digital storytelling can be especially powerful because it allows them to communicate and negotiate meanings by means other than the impoverished linguistic modal resources they have at disposal. On the other hand, digital storytelling presents challenges when different modal discourse genres come into dissonance. For example, familiar genres and discourse conventions

students are exposed to in formal learning environments (such as expectations for coherence, organization, clarity, and development in essays) may interfere with popular cultural genres and artifacts that also come to inform their making of digital stories (such as movies, documentaries, or music videos).

Given their orientations towards the minute details in multimodal texts, the multimodal semioticians settle comfortably within the contained text or the narrowly conceived composing process, when much of the semiotic synaesthesia comes into being through the individual's creative design of modal resources. In this type of scenario, digital stories are often scrutinized up close for ways in which different modes act and interact to afford new types of meaning making. In this vein, the semiotic meaning of each digital story is unique and complete in its own right.

Another important observation one can make here is that the individual is perceived to exert complete control over the textual meaning of the story. The "social" dimension of the discursive practice—ways in which digital storytelling is situated within institutional, social, cultural, and historical contexts, ways in which stories are told for particular rhetorical and social purposes, ways in which discrete instances of digital storytelling might be intertextually linked to other storytelling enterprises, or ways in which an ongoing work is informed by an individual's discursive past—remains shadowed, backgrounded, and largely untreated.

The expressivists

In comparison to the multimodal semioticians, the expressivists are less concerned about what a digital story is and more concerned about what digital storytelling does for the digital author. The expressivists embrace one of the core values of digital storytelling—the notion that the telling of personal stories helps one to reflect on experiences, modify behaviors, treat others

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with compassion, speak out about injustice, and become involved in civic and political life (Storytelling, 2010). Therefore, digital storytelling is a socially influential practice. Its power resides in its expressive potential, ways in which it engages disenfranchised young people in productive identity work. As amply documented by research, digital storytelling offers youth the opportunity to develop more "agentive" senses of self and to imagine positive change in the future (Paull 2002; Roche-Smith 2004; Hull, Katz et al. 2006; Nixon 2008).

The expressivists draw on social theories of narrative to consider digital storytelling as generically linked to the ancient art of storytelling, a genre that is culturally universal and emerges early in the literacy development of children (Ochs & Capps, 2001). At the conceptual core of the narrative theory is the notion that the act of narration shapes one's sense of self by creating a symbolic artifact for self-understanding, which can be reflected upon, serves as the foundation of new projections of the self, and can be used to mediate future activities (Bruner, 1986; Ochs & Capps, 2001). Therefore, storytelling involves the act of self-authoring that is simultaneously dialogic and unique (M. M. Bakhtin, 1986), and the narratives offer potential for the making, reworking, and reimagining of the self (Bruner, 1994). Because digital storytelling is conceptually linked to personal narrative, it lends itself well to reflective self-authoring that puts shape on an unfolding chronology of experiences and distills them into a symbolic form to be expressed, critiqued, and remembered. To that end, digital storytelling can be a developmental tool for declaring meaning to and reconstructing experiences, refashioning the self, realizing personal empowerment, and achieving social connection and social change. In this regard, the analytical focus has been placed on how an individual author is empowered through the expressive work that digital storytelling enables, with careful attention paid to the short-lived

process of one's making of a story, with the assumption that positive, empowering change occurs in the process.

Digital storytelling, when considered within the expressivist frames, offers people, especially underrepresented and historically disenfranchised people, opportunities to make sense of and validate their life experiences. The multimodal affordances of digital storytelling--the creative blending of images, sounds, and print in dynamic and real-time compositional situations—are perceived to motivate and facilitate youth to engage in meaningful identity play. Nixon (2008), for example, explores how digital storytelling adds to a traditional pool of semiotic resources to enrich and expand non-dominant youth's expressive and reflective construction of raced and gendered identities with more "richness and depth" (p.5). In the DUSTY[1] after-school program, youth use digital storytelling to engage in meaningful identity work that is not otherwise supported. Digital storytelling served as a venue through which youth learned to describe emotionally challenging events; develop intertextual understandings of race, gender, ethnicity, and power; re-author their social worlds and social identities; and send poignant messages for change. Similarly, in his close examination of two adult students' experiences with digital storytelling, Paull (2002) suggests that digital storytelling enables a new kind of authoring that brings multiple media to make sense of emotional personal experiences (problematic relationships with family members and immigration), to engage or (re)connect with a larger audience (estranged family members and concerned community members), and to bring meaningful changes upon audiences. Looking at children's digital storytelling at a Fifth Dimension after-school program, Davis (2004) discusses how the processes of creating digital

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[1] DUSTY: Digital Underground Storytelling for Youth is an after-school literacy program co-sponsored by University of California-Berkeley to provide instruction in digital storytelling.

stories guided children to arrive at a clearer conception of how events in their lives had consequences and how such events could lead to changes in future actions and feelings.

More importantly, digital storytelling provides a space where youth can experiment with and appropriate identities that are otherwise not afforded. Hug's (2007) study of middle school girls' digital storytelling in an after-school program, for example, demonstrates that digital storytelling offers girls opportunities to try on feminine identities as well as identities as competent and confident technology users. Davis (2004) discusses how digital storytelling allows one youth to think about conflicting messages he receives daily from participating in multiple "figured worlds" (Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, & Cain, 1998). By putting one version of himself (from versions of him as a popular cultural broker in hip-hop culture, a son who watches romantic movies with his mother, and a student who is pushed to succeed) into a digital story and presenting it as a finished object, he takes a step towards embracing one potential identity over another, freezing it in time, and externalizing it as the foundation for conceiving his future. As Hull and Katz argue (2006), youth are able to "assume agentive stances toward their present identities, circumstances, and futures" (p. 40) through articulating a true and convincing personal narrative in digital stories. In this vein, digital storytelling allows youth to experience themselves differently by trying on alternative identities.

From this perspective, the analytical work revolves around the individual author, who is positioned at the center of a discursive scene and observed for how one takes on digital storytelling to engage in the problematic and complex task of discovering, making sense of, and redesigning the self. Implicit in the expressivists' celebration of digital storytelling's expressive potential is the argument that multimodality and technology engages and motivates youth, for whom school-based literacy learning has often been discouraging, alienating, and disengaging.

Also, the media affords easy creation and publication of digital artifacts, which carry the voice and experiences of the ordinary and mundane to reach places and people that would otherwise remain unreachable. However, celebrations of such new "technical stuff" barely capture the dynamism and appeal of digital storytelling.

In their treatment of digital storytelling, the expressivists have often failed to create a compelling argument about digital storytelling, rather than storytelling in general, as affording the kind of productive identity play that is so enthusiastically celebrated. In other words, when the individual is conceived as the designer of identity and meaning, digital storytelling offers but one venue to arrive at a more stable and crystallized account of one's experiences. How, then, is digital storytelling different from a well-conceptualized writing assignment in facilitating one's creation of an (re)imagined life trajectory? For the purpose of my enterprise, I critique this narrow focus on the individual as the sole designer of meaning and suggest that we shift our focus away from the individual to attend to digital storytelling as a cultural practice. That way, we begin to recognize digital storytelling as bearing conceptual connections to its historical predecessors, cultural counterparts, and institutional contexts that not only afford, but also constrain the productive identity play achievable through digital storytelling. In this vein, digital storytelling does not exist in an isolated moment of production, which is constituted by an afterschool program that was established a month ago, a group of students who might leave the next month, and storyboards, scripts, and video clips that are being written and taken. Instead, we examine production as located in a cultural practice that has its own historical lineage and influence people's identity play with collective experiential and ideological knowledge. As such, the individual is not solely responsible for designing one's identity. Rather, he or she works within a historical framework.

The cultural democrats

The cultural democrats often work hand in hand with the expressivists in celebrating digital storytelling as a socially influential cultural practice. To the cultural democrats, digital storytelling is a powerful discursive tool for disrupting entrenched social structures that are oppressive, discriminatory, and divisive. Over the years, the Center for Digital Storytelling and the various digital storytelling programs inspired by it, have maintained a coherent humanist/activist identity because of their commitment to helping "people who believe they are mundane, uninteresting, or unmemorable" to uncover vivid, complex, and rich body of stories that everybody possesses (Storytelling, 2010). Accordingly, various digital storytelling programs have been organized to motivate and train people from historically silenced communities to discover and transform their personal stories into publishable digital artifacts. As a cultural practice, digital storytelling dissolves established boundaries that separate the vernacular from the mainstream, the novice from the expert, and the media consumer from the media producer.

As amply documented by research on digital storytelling, educators are often at the forefront of the cultural democratic mission as they seek to provide children and adults in underserved communities with access to literacy and technology (Hull & Katz, 2006; A. S. Nixon, 2008; Paull, 2002; Turner, 2008). For the cultural democrats, digital storytelling is a tool of empowerment, which can be used to support the construction of counter-narratives by youth from oppressed communities (A. S. Nixon, 2008; L. Vasudevan, 2006; L. Vasudevan, DeJaynes, & Schmier, 2010). Vasudevan and colleagues (L. Vasudevan, et al., 2010), for example, argue that digital storytelling provides African American boys with opportunities to explore and tell stories about their own urban life experiences, which otherwise remain unexplored and untold. Also, digital storytelling invites youth to transcend ascribed roles and to explore ways of

representing themselves that are otherwise not afforded in schools, where modes of participation are limited and predetermined. Vasudevan (2007), for example, discusses in details how digital storytelling allows a boy, who is usually perceived as reticent, slow, and unengaged, to represent himself as tech-savvy, enthusiastic, and knowledgeable. In this vein, digital storytelling is a venue for youth to challenge dominant social structures and static notions of identities that were imposed upon them. Similarly, Turner (2008) argues that youth's production of multimedia artifacts at DUSTY, such as digital storytelling, Public Service Announcements, hip-hop music video, and hip-hop songs, is a conduit to development of literacies and skills that are essential to youth's critical and meaningful engagement with social issues. Through digital storytelling, youth learn to critically examine and fuse popular cultural references with their lived experiences, allowing them to validate their experiences as both unique and telling. To non-dominant youth, digital storytelling becomes a means of articulating their frustrations and aspirations in ways that are real, meaningful, and transformative.

Despite scanty documentation and analysis, with the exception of Burgess' writing (2006), the cultural democratic potential of digital storytelling has been more amply realized through the work of community media enterprises of various scopes and reach. For non-dominant social groups who are at the wrong end of the digital divide and are otherwise unlikely to participate in the widely-celebrated new media cultures, digital storytelling as supported by media enterprises and initiatives, such as *Capture Wales* and *Silence Speaks,* provides a venue of remediating everyday experiences through a wide range of consumer commercial cultures (television genres, news broadcasting, investigative journalism), older popular culture traditions (oral storytelling), and everyday communicative cultures (family artifact collection and display, scrapbooking, family filmmaking, family photography). In this vein, digital storytelling is a form

of everyday cultural production, which allows people to transgress once solid boundaries that separate the everyday from the mainstream. Through digital storytelling, the everyday individuals become learned practitioners, who create unique and valid cultural forms through remixing and reconfiguring available cultural resources, including both 'material' resources-content, and immaterial resources-genre conventions, shared knowledge in novel ways (p. 206). To that end, digital storytelling is a creative remix of the mainstream and the vernacular.

Joining the expressivists, the cultural democrats tend to celebrate digital storytelling for holding unique potentials in helping individuals to uncover meanings that otherwise remain hidden. Dominating this line of thinking is the concern for the story, which seems to arrive naturally. In doing so, the cultural democrats foreground the product, which manifests many characteristics that are unique to our post-industrial reality, including the creative use of multimodal resources, the transformation of media consumers into media producers, or the new kind of democratic meaning unveiled through mundane stories. As such, each digital story is unique, new, and complete in its own right. However, the celebration of such "newness" and "uniqueness" is rather unfounded when we fail to account for the process of making a digital story. When we look into the dynamic complex of digital storytelling, we might find more similarities than differences across disparate instances of invoking the cultural practice. For example, when individuals strive for the kind of strong emotional content and dramatic arc as inscribed by the cultural practice, the stories often come down to a steady set of sub-genres, such as healing from loss, overcoming hardships, or growing from experiences.

Rather than offering infinite possibilities, digital storytelling carries its own values, expectations, and social relations that might powerfully influence what is achievable by an individual. In relation to this claim, Hull and Katz (2006) have provided an account of the

institutionally endorsed nature of digital storytelling. In this account, the CDS workshop orients a non-dominant youth towards the fairly predictable ways of representing and expressing the self, such as making sense of hardships and imagining change and new possibilities. Also, as Burgess' account has suggested, digital storytelling draws on an individual's experiences with and knowledge of various conventional, mainstream, and familiar communicative and cultural practices, which all come to inform as well as constrain an individual's meaning making. The cultural democrats, in their narrow focus on the individual, often fail to unravel the complexity involved in the creative enterprise, which is always informed and constrained by a range of sociohistorically-developed structures, with their embedded conventions, values, and expectations.

The connective pedagogues

The pedagogues, often motivated teachers inspired by the pedagogical potential of digital storytelling, are primarily concerned with the challenges and rewards involved in the construction of technology-enriched learning ecologies, with specific attention paid to the positive alignment of digital storytelling with long-standing practices and conventions of existing curricula (Roche-Smith 2004; Kulla-Abbott 2006; Kulla-Abbott and Polman 2008; Nixon 2008; Dush 2009). To the pedagogues, digital storytelling holds the potential as a connective and innovative pedagogical tool that affords the development of both traditional and non-traditional literacies. Although such prepositions echo recent calls for a more connective view of digital literacies as that approaches "flowing with streams of other literacy practices and interconnected to changes and movements in cultures, media, identities, and social constructions of technologies," (Leander, 2009), this body of research is largely descriptive and suggestive in nature, attesting to the lack of a connective methodology in literacy research. We have received

fairly detailed pedagogical advice from pedagogues whose work involves redesigning afterschool programs. We have learned that adult facilitators' pedagogical strategies should match students' after-school media practices to motivate meaningful participation, and in doing that, the collaborative partnerships between adult facilitators and students may entail various ways in which responsibilities for designing and planning decisions are shared. Also, a consistent nurturing approach and a pedagogy of apprenticeship are important in building a community of learners, which affords a multiplicity of pathways and activities that led to successful learning of the practice. At the practical core of a successful pedagogy are well-sequenced activities, which are critical for the successful mastery of the tools of digital storytelling.

On the other front, teachers who have worked on integrating digital storytelling into existing curriculum have unraveled the problematic relationship between print-based literacy practices and non-traditional multimodal practices drawn from out-of-school interests (Kulla-Abbott 2006; Ranker 2007; Connolly 2008; Kulla-Abbott and Polman 2008; Ranker 2008; Ranker 2008; Dush 2009). Found in such discussions are deeply theorized accounts of the various ways in which digital storytelling supports, expands, changes, or conflicts with established curriculum goals in literacy classrooms. For instance, in the eleventh grade and the seventh grade English classrooms Connolly (2008) and Kulla-Abott (2006) helped to design and studied respectively, digital storytelling was offered as a replacement of certain traditional writing activities. In both scenarios, the production process involved a mixture of traditional and digital literacy strategies (prompt reading and discussion of topics, researching and analyzing print-based and media sources, creating note-cards, constructing work-cited page). Coupled with traditional writing instructions, digital storytelling was closely aligned with existing curricular goals to prepare students for writing in content areas. In these contexts, digital storytelling is

conceptualized as a pedagogical tool with the potential to improve teaching and learning in areas such as inquiry, collaboration, curriculum, and metacognition. From these discussions, we observe cases in which digital storytelling merges smoothly with existing curriculum practices.

Several observations have been made with regards to the power of digital storytelling as a pedagogical tool. Firstly, the pedagogues celebrate digital storytelling as an empowering media that involves and motivates students as competent and capable literacy learners who make meaningful use of their multimodal knowledge, artistic and performing abilities, and technological skills in creating textual meaning. For example, multimodality not only allowed an under-achieved ESL student to go beyond his language deficits and the constraints of traditional English assignments, but also motivated a competent yet selective student by allowing her to capitalize on her passion and expertise in photography (Connolly, 2008). Digital storytelling is especially motivating and fulfilling because it gives youth opportunities to evoke complex emotions through creative use of images, for which many demonstrate great artistic sensibility. Secondly, the broad structure of digital storytelling loosens up the composing space by giving more control to the students, allowing them to take risks, go against conventions, and voice opinions in personally meaningful ways (Roche-Smith 2004). The flexibility and multiplicity built into the structure allows students to arrive at writer identities through various pathways. Thirdly, the collaborative processes of digital storytelling not only facilitate the development of social skills, but also make space for an apprenticeship model, which offers learning opportunities through modeling, coaching, articulating, reflection, and exploration (Kulla-Abbott, 2006). In this vein of thinking, designing a well-sequenced set of projects is essential in facilitating students' development of a complete set of skills necessary for successful digital storytelling.

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Among the pedagogues, most celebrate digital storytelling as a useful pedagogical tool that supports the fulfillment of existing literacy curriculum goals. An overarching argument echoes what Leander (2009) proposes-- that new literacy skills and traditional writing skills are mutually dependent and can cross-fertilize each other, leading to the development of both. Kulla-Abott and Polman (2008), for example, stress that strong writing skills can contribute to success in digital storytelling because traditional writing instructions equip an individual with skills proven to be useful for digital storytelling, such as a strong personal voice and the abilities to provide supporting evidence, to write good paragraphs, to move content across genres, and to take advantage of collaborative writing.

In comparison to celebratory reports on the positive alignment, discussions of clashes and conflicts between digital storytelling and traditional literacy instruction are scanty. Ranker (2007), for one, problematizes the tension between in- and after-school literacies as they play out in a digital storytelling program. Unlike previous studies, the digital storytelling program in Ranker's studies is ancillary to the core curriculum. Based on detailed examinations of two students' making of a documentary, Ranker discusses how established curriculum structures are often in conflict with the processes of digital storytelling. For example, traditional literacy practices often interferes by imposing its linear structure upon the inherently recursive structures of digital storytelling. In this case, the essay genre predominates the broad structure of the boy's production process, leading them to approach the project in linear, staged processes similar to essay writing: moving from books (researching the subject), to writings (taking notes and creating a draft), to images (finding corresponding images), and then videos (creating a coherent multimodal presentation). Kulla-Abott (Kulla-Abbott, 2006; Kulla-Abbott & Polman, 2008) also discusses how a curriculum aimed at persuasive writing about a scientific issue can suppress,

both in form and content, personal voice and emotional involvement. A digital story can easily become a digital reporting of research findings from others' voices. Digital storytelling, as many suggest, is not a panacea for challenging curriculum content. Even with digital storytelling the medium, students can do an assignment without mastering or appropriating the practice and the genre.

The pedagogue's conception of digital storytelling echoes various issues picked up by previous frames, such as the celebration of multimodality as engaging and motivating, or the celebration of the expressive potential in supporting students with limited linguistic resources. However, the pedagogues have advanced our understanding of digital storytelling in several significant ways. First, in contrast to the previous frames, which have primarily built their arguments around the static artifacts, the pedagogues are more concerned with the process of digital storytelling. In doing so, the pedagogues explore specific ways in which generic structures embedded in the cultural practice may support or constrain ongoing discursive activities. In looking at the extended processes of making digital stories, the pedagogues are also able to identify ways in which digital storytelling epistemologically endorses and encourages meaningful connections between different social and cultural worlds through language use and ways in which digital storytelling may clash or merge with other genres of writing to create opportunities for literacy learning. As such, the pedagogues have begun to observe individuals as working within the broad structures that inform and regulate one's discursive work in many powerful ways. Second, the pedagogues have begun to observe digital storytelling as existing in relation to a web of cultural practices and social worlds, such as schooling, genres of conventional writing, and students' experiences with other literacies in after-school environments. As such, the pedagogues have hinted on the possibility that the individual author

works within an expansive network of practices that may travel from other places and times to share with the digital author some control over textual meaning.

In relation to these claims, emerging discussions of *storyboarding* have touched upon the idea that discursive, material, and practical structures developed within other cultural practices can be integrated into the cultural practice of digital storytelling (Hug, 2007; Roche-Smith, 2004a). Roche-Smith (2004), for example, have discussed storyboarding as an important practical and discursive structure that organizes the complexity of tasks involved in planning, rehearsing, and envisioning the execution of a digital story. Implicit in her discussion is the idea that storyboarding embodies cultural practices conventionally associated with professional filmmaking. As a stabilized practical structure, storyboarding organizes the complex tasks involved in planning out the sequence of the story and making decisions about how multiple layers of semiotic resources interact with each other. In important ways, storyboarding brings with it a long social history of professional filmmaking and embodies a constellation of decisions, actions, feelings, beliefs, and processes associated with the work of filmmakers. When this typified way of doing the "work" is brought into confluence with digital storytelling, storyboarding takes on new meanings as a pedagogical scaffold, which functions to apprentice novice digital authors into a range professional practices performed by writers, directors, producers, cameramen, editors, and technical assistants. In the same vein, storyboarding, when carried out in a digital storytelling workshop, also organizes the collaborative work of responding to and analyzing a growing story.

Considered together, the work of the connective pedagogues echoes several concerns I take up in this dissertation, including their attention to how intersecting activity systems in a given environment shape and structure participants' experiences with digital storytelling (H.

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Nixon, 2003), and how literacies co-evolve and develop in complex ways during digital storytelling, and how cultural tools mediate situated activities (Hug, 2007). However, the preeminent emphasis of the pedagogues in "taming" a digital literacy in service of schooled learning has limited the potential cultural import of their work. In their attempt to work digital storytelling into an existing curriculum, important components of its ethos were often sacrificed. For one thing, it is often the form, not the genre that was taken up in the classrooms. In contexts reported by the pedagogues, digital storytelling was often imagined as venues through which digital adaptations of genres of schooled writing (e.g. narratives, persuasive essays, research reports) could be taught and studied, learning goals (e.g. writing strategies, metacognitive skills, affective learning) could be achieved, and models of teaching and learning can be tested and evaluated. In the same vein, the processes underlying these discursive activities, although often reported with extensive details, are qualitatively different from the processes of production, dissemination and consumption we would observe at the CDS or Capture Wales. In other words, these tamed programs of digital storytelling yield stories that never travel beyond the school walls and back into the broader cultural scenes. Considered from this perspective, the cultural democratic potential of the social practice was not desired or realized.

An methodological implication of this approach is that researchers often paid closer attention to the learning environment than the situated discursive activities of participants. In other words, we see more discussions of types of social relations afforded, sequence of activities, pedagogical moves made by the teacher, technological issues and so on than accounts of lived experiences of individual authors. When stories and storytelling do get discussed, they are often used as artifacts, against which evaluations of teaching and learning are made. Although it is often argued that digital stories are implicated with meanings from other social worlds and

cultural practices, it is not clear how these social worlds and practices are blended or how such meanings traverse in an out of the situated activities. In other words, by focusing the activity system of a given learning context and its pedagogical functions, the connective pedagogues have often backgrounded the individuals working in reaction and in relation to various cultural genres and how meaning unfolds in discursive activities.

The Social Historian

In reviewing extant literature on digital storytelling, I have begun to complicate several frames that largely predicate the orientations and focus of extant research. The first orientation I challenge is the unqualified celebration of digital storytelling as a new cultural practice with "unique" expressive and democratic potentials. In doing so, we tend to lose sight of the fact that any cultural practice has a history and is dialectically and intertextually connected to a continuum of practices. Also, when we are busy celebrating the newness and uniqueness of a cultural practice, we often fail to attend to its complexity and dynamism that are often marked by clashes between and convergences of old and new dimensions of an ongoing discursive activity. While I acknowledge that digital storytelling manifests characteristics of the new "ethos stuff" and "technical stuff" of our post-industrial reality, I argue that digital storytelling arises as the result of typified language use in response to recurrent social situations that are both familiar and strange. Also, digital storytelling makes reference to and embodies a dynamic yet coherent mix of a range of old and new cultural and communicative practices, which simultaneously inform and structure digital storytelling.

Second, extant research has largely centered on the individual, often glorifying the creative control individuals exert over textual meaning and identity construction. When a

researcher is solely concerned with the strategies, knowledge, and experiences that digital authors bring to the table, agency seems to reside in the process of redesigning, which "transforms knowledge by producing new constructions and representations of reality" and creates possibilities to re-imagine future or exert change (New London Group, 1996, p. 76). By highlighting and foregrounding the individual at the center of the discursive activity, we push other components and entities into the background. In this vein, digital storytelling is understood as an enabling tool/media that is at the disposal of a digital author. My complaint here lies against the conception of humans as the sole agentive participants in discursive activities. When we look at the discursive scene of digital storytelling, the individual rarely works alone and always works in concert with a dynamic configuration of people, texts, tools, and activities. I am more interested in observing digital storytelling as mediated by a range of discursive, practical, and material structures, which bring meaning, shape, and structure to the individual's discursive work. In important ways, extant research fails to account for agency as fundamentally distributed between the individual and other non-human agents.

Third, among the limited number of authors who examine how a digital story is made, they tend to focus on the "actual," ongoing discursive scene as the locus of meaning making. By focusing on the short-lived and unpredictable process of digital storytelling, they tend to celebrate each individual enterprise as unique and original. However, digital storytelling often involves a chain of generic compositional episodes, including brainstorming sessions, research and resource building activities, script writing, peer responses, storyboarding, and sharing the video with an audience. These generic compositional episodes inject digital storytelling with meanings that are familiar and mundane. As such, digital storytelling is an expansively distributed phenomenon, which is under the influence of multiple historically developed, familiar

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activities and structures. Also, I suggest that we attend to multiple historical trajectories that provide the reproductive basis and resources for the present discursive work. In this direction, an ongoing digital storytelling involves the unfolding and weaving together of a diversity of homely as well as sophisticated genres. These "other" cultural practices and meaning potentials residing in "other" places and times are what extant research fails to account for. When we take these historically accumulated meaning potential into consideration, we may come to observe each unique digital storytelling project as partially familiar.

In what follows, I further my interrogation of a celebratory stance by elaborating on these ideas from a sociohistorical perspective. In doing so, I draw on analytical frames found in genre theory to explore the production condition of digital storytelling as socio-historically situated, mediated by cultural tools, horizontally and vertically distributed, and injected with meanings residing in other times and places. Working from analytical frames that I have come to name as that of a *social historian*, I conceive digital storytelling as a loosely defined cultural model that has acquired historically developed and stabilized discursive, material, and practical structures, which constantly mediate ongoing discursive work in paradoxical ways. In this vein, what is achievable by an individual is always considered within the framework of a broad, collective cultural practice.

In fundamental ways, the social historian's view diverges from the celebratory stance in its effort to grapple with contingent, local, and individual discursive acts within the historically inherited, typified, and collective frameworks, experiences, and structures. In revising the model of discursive production, a social historian does not take value from the individual and his/her contingent activities. Rather, a social historian temporarily foregrounds the historical, collective, and typified to reveal a host of shaded forces, agents, practices, and institutions that work in

concert with the individual to move the discursive work along. Rather than celebrating the uniqueness and newness of digital storytelling as if such uniqueness and newness came from nowhere, a social historian traces various historical trajectories that give meaning and structure to a cultural practice. From this perspective, digital storytelling can be observed for how it draws on various trajectories of our cultural, social, and discursive past for its meaning.

CHAPTER II

A GENRE THEORY PERSPECTIVE

As I have suggested in the previous Chapter, extant research does not fully capture the complexity and dynamism of digital storytelling as dialectically connected to the collective, the historical, and the generic dimensions of the cultural practice. I have also argued that by studying cultural tools and structures that embody collective, historically developed experiential and ideological knowledge of a social practice, we can arrive at a more rounded understanding of literacies as situated and mediated. In what follows, I draw on analytical frames found in North American genre theory to complement theoretical advancements that have been made and to fill in certain conceptual gaps in extant literature. I introduce genre as a construct with useful analytical facility for exploring digital storytelling as situated, mediated, and distributed socio-historical phenomenon. From this perspective, we investigate digital storytelling as taking place within the framework of the typified, historical, and generic.

At the foreground of my discussion is no longer the individual, but the dialectical co-presence of the individual and the cultural practice, as mediated by a system of genres and genre practices, namely the typified coalescences of persons, activities, institutions, artifacts, and practices. Here, I use the term *genre* in a rather expansive way. By genre, I am not referring to an Aristotelian taxonomy for categorizing discourse solely in accordance to their formal, thematic, organizational, and stylistic features. In other words, by genre, I am not talking about novels versus sonnets, or tragedy versus comedy. Instead, I use genre to describe typified ways in which

discourses, persons, tools, activities, and practices are configured to achieve certain rhetorical and social goals that recur throughout human experiences of a similar nature. As a category of historically formulated and stabilized cultural tools, genres encode the meaning potentials of cultural practices, which get cycled, recycled, and remade through contingent discursive processes. As such, genre is a lens through which one also observes the most mundane and non-literary aspects of human experiences, such as a job interview, a hospital visit, or an airplane taking off (Bazerman, 1997a). Underpinning a social historian's orientation is the intention to locate short-lived, discrete, and local instances of human activity within the framework of the historically accumulated, collective, and broader range of enterprises and practices. Genre settles comfortably in between the historical and the ongoing because it provides concrete information about how historically accumulated epistemological and experiential knowledge is realized through contingent social cultural practices (Kamberelis, 1995).

Three Dimensions of Genre Theory

In what follows, I treat three dimensions of genre theory for how they bear upon the sociohistorical conception of digital storytelling. First, I draw on social and rhetorical theories of genre to reexamine digital storytelling as a secondary genre, which arises as the result of typified ways of organizing persons, texts, tools, activities, and practices in response to recurrent social situations that are both familiar and strange. At the core of this view is the social conception of language as an embedded dimension of human activities (M. M. Bakhtin, 1986; Miller, 1984). Second, I draw on the notion of systems of genres as discursive structuring devices (Bazerman, 1994, 1997a; Berkenkotter, 2001; Freedman & Smart, 1997) to suggest we observe how a well-orchestrated set of genres and generic activities function to coordinate, organize, regulate, and

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give meaning to digital storytelling. In this view, a system of genres joins in a dialectical partnership with the individual to work toward the production of a digital story that is socially expected and culturally appropriate. Third, I draw on the analytical frame provided in the sociohistorical theories of genre (M. M. Bakhtin, 1986; Kamberelis, 1995; Prior, 2009) to pursue the notion of genres as dynamic and durable meaning potentials, which provide the reproductive basis for discrete instances of digital storytelling and are often reconstituted and reconfigured in the process. Building on these ideas, I propose a distributed and expansive framework for examining discrete instances of digital storytelling as existing at the dynamic intersection between the individual and the collective, the local and the social, and the contingent and the historical.

A practice-oriented approach to genre

The collective theoretical and conceptual advancements made by North American genre theorists have contributed to my thinking about the social nature of discourse. What has come to be known as North American genre theory originated from critiques of the formalist approach to genre and discourse (Bazerman, 1997b; Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995; Devitt, 1993; Freedman & Medway, 1994; Miller, 1984, 1994). Prior to the turn to the social/rhetorical perspective, genre had been conventionally conceived as classes of texts distinguished according to mutually exclusive and exhaustive characteristics. Resorting to formal features of discourses as the defining principle of classification, the formalist projects are concerned with static products and have created a filing system for the indeterminate amount of texts that circulate in our social worlds. In this type of scenario, one foregrounds the reception of texts (reading and hearing) and backgrounds the production of texts (speaking and writing) (Kamberelis, 1995). When we approach genres as static categories that function to orient and regulate consumption of texts, we

also operate from a conception of social contexts as static realities beyond the influence of material and discursive practices. More importantly, when conceived as static categories, genres do not lend much analytical power to studying the complexity and dynamism of discursive practices.

The resurgence of interest in genre theory during the past four decades has been spawned by the notion of genres as typified rhetorical actions in recurrent social situations (Miller 1984). At the conceptual core of the rhetorical view is the notion that language and living of life share a close partnership. Because language is realized in concrete acts of individuals participating in various human activities, the nature and forms of language are as diverse as are the spheres of human activities whose performance requires language mediation. As Bakhtin (1986) argues:

> The wealth and diversity of speech genres are boundless because the various possibilities of human activity are inexhaustible, and because each sphere of activity contains an entire repertoire of speech genres that differentiate and grow as the particular sphere develops and becomes more complex. (p.60)

Bakhtin's conception of speech genres as the result of our dynamic patterning of human activities is closely aligned with the rhetorical view of genre as intimately tied with social practices. Genres emerge and develop because language-mediated social practices develop their own stable and recognizable ways of using language over time. Because social practices tend to remain relatively stable, genres also remain stable, offering formal, thematic, and compositional conventions. For example, we have acquired, through experiences, tacit knowledge about the culturally appropriate and socially expected ways of doing communicative work in scenarios such as "a mother reading a bedtime story to her child," "a military commander giving an order to soldiers," or "a patient seeing a doctor for the first time." Because people respond to numerous enactments of such comparable situations in similar ways, speech genres emerge to embody social practices in concrete ways. The next time a mother picks up a bedtime story book, the tacit

knowledge about bedtime storytelling is invoked to mediate and organize the ongoing

storytelling activity. As such, genre not only embodies a social practice, it also shapes discourse

into ordered, coherent, and comprehensible texts. For example, the use of a simple generic

framing device, "once upon a time," sets up expectations with regards to the linguistic, thematic,

organizational, compositional, stylistic features of the discourse. In connection to this point,

Bakhtin (1986) has this to say:

> We learn to cast our speech in generic forms and, when hearing others' speech, we guess
> its genre from the very first words; we predict a certain length (that is, the approximate
> length of the speech whole) and a certain compositional structure; we foresee the end;
> that is, from the very beginning, we have a sense of the speech whole, which is only later
> differentiated through the speech process. If speech genres did not exist and we had not
> mastered them, if we had to originate them during the speech process and construct each
> utterance at will for the first time, speech communication would be impossible. (p.78-79)

Such is the conservative utility of genre. Because genres represent typified ways of

responding to recurrent social situations, they are relatively lasting and stable resources against

which ongoing discursive work is constituted.

However, genre is not considered solely for its descriptive functionalities, ways in which

it entails different thematic, compositional, and stylistic features of texts, but is to be considered

as embedded in situated social practices in which discourse is generated. In this vein, language

use is intimately tied with activities, which necessarily involve people, tools, texts, activities, and

institutions (Miller, 1984; Prior, 1998). Genre theorists have used *social situation* to describe the

social practice that invites discourse production, which entails a particular constitution of

activities, persons, events, objects, traditions, attitudes, documents, images, and relationships

(Bitzer, 1968). Accordingly, the typified ways of using language is always intertwined with the

material and practical structures embedded in the social practice, such as the social relations

among participants, the purposes and goals of the participants, social expectations, conventional

ways of using tools, and typical ways of making material arrangements, which all have their effects on typified constructions of texts. Because certain social situations, such as a visit to the hospital or telling a personal story, present similar configurations of the above-mentioned constituents, people are able to recognize a social practice and produce comparable responses accordingly. As such, genres, or rather discursive structures, enter into partnership with material and practical structures to encode the functions, purposes, and goals of the social practice. Implicit in social theories of genre is the idea that the combined effects of these stabilized structures orient individuals toward recognizable ways of making meanings, solving problems, building relationships, and evoking emotions.

In terms of further theorizing digital storytelling as a genre, also valuable are Bakhtin's (1986) conception of secondary genres as complexly organized and developed ways of using language to serve sociopolitical, artistic, ideological, and epistemological ends (p.61). Underlying Bakhtin's distinction between more "homely" speech genres and more complex genres is the acknowledgement that all forms of discourse are valid and significant because they all result from meaningful acts of fulfilling social exigencies. In comparison to primary genres, those directly derived from and giving form to everyday communicative activities, such as short rejoinders of everyday dialogue or a family member telling a joke, secondary genres result from social institution's processing of a complexity of discourses. Also, the formation of a secondary genre always involves the integration and alteration of primary genres, which acquire different characters when they enter into a complex secondary genre.

The practice-oriented approach to genre provides useful frames for understanding digital storytelling as a unique cultural practice. First, the notion of social situation provides frames to map the messy conditions that give rise to digital storytelling, which is carried out not only

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within the framework of familiar structures, routines, models, and expectations, but is also conditioned by emerging social and material changes unique to our historical moment. In this vein, the social exigency of digital storytelling is simultaneously old and new. Second, genre is a lens through which we can observe digital storytelling as taking on familiar shapes and structures as the result of responding to recurrent social and rhetorical exigencies. Third, the distinction between secondary genres and primary genres provides an inroad to framing digital storytelling in relation to a network of genres of cultural and communicative practices.

The cultural practice of digital storytelling arises in response to social exigencies embedded in a social situation that is simultaneously old and new. On one hand, the same social exigencies that gave rise to the ancient art of storytelling have always been there. Digital storytelling addresses the commonality and continuity of the human need to make sense of and learn from personal experiences, to obtain voice and social status for one's experiences, to entertain and be creative, to seek empathy and bond with others emotionally and experientially, to re-invent and imagine new possibilities for the self, and to exert change through sharing experiences. In this vein, the conceptual and experiential content of digital stories cannot be wholly new, and they necessarily draw from, build upon, and transform existing genres of meaning making in different modes and media. For example, a quick survey of digital stories hosted by the major media enterprises reveals a rather limited set of sub-genres of personal stories. These sub-genres have naturally emerged for the very reason that digital storytelling involves discursive attempts made to address longstanding recurrent rhetorical exigencies. The thousands of personal narratives inevitably come down to addressing certain universal themes of human experiences, including life lesson and character stories (about how one overcame a life challenge and grew from such an experience), love stories (about relationships), recovery stories

(healing from disease and loss), discovery stories (recounting or interpreting a pivotal moment or event), memorial and memory stories (about places, adventures, and persons), or efforts for change stories (reflecting upon community issues and imagining possibilities for changes) (G. Hull & M. E. Nelson, 2005; Lambert & Mullen, 2002). From this perspective, digital storytelling is not a genre that affords limitless possibilities for self-expression. Rather, the social and practice-oriented nature of digital storytelling does place constraints upon what kind of stories are told through the performance of the practice.

On the other hand, the "post-industrial reality" of our historical moment presents new conditions for markedly different ways of enacting and sharing meaning. As new literacy scholars have argued, new literacy practices have arisen to possess a new set of "ethos stuff" and "technical stuff" (Lankshear & Knobel, 2007) as the result of responding to changes in the technological and epistemological spheres of our historical moment. Our historical moment is marked by a global media culture that is increasingly influenced by user-generated content and design, the rise of enabling technologies that facilitate grass-root production and management of content, the rise of new collaborative production models based on massive participation, bottom-up and interest-based construction and maintenance of virtual communities, and content production based on experimentation and hybridization rather than "ingenuous" creation (H. Jenkins, 2006; Lankshear & Knobel, 2006; Mizuko, et al., 2009). When digital storytelling is considered from this perspective, it can be observed for ways in which new ways of being and acting are enacted to realize the possibilities afforded by new technologies, modes, and media. For example, digital storytelling is essentially about involving amateurs in the creative remix of multimodal semiotic resources for large, authentic audiences that can be reached through diverse publishing venues. It is also a practice that disrupts the established boundaries and power

structures that exclude and silence the novice, ordinary, and amateur. In many ways, digital storytelling arises as a cultural practice in response to the new ways in which the ordinary, everyday individual seeks alignment and association with the mainstream, global, and massive.

Such is the sufficient condition from which I make my claims about digital storytelling as a distinct genre/cultural practice. In this vein, what defines digital storytelling from other forms of digital literacy practices is the typified ways in which an individual realizes certain rhetorical exigencies as defined by the social situation of digital storytelling, not the formal features a digital text manifests. My argument here is this, like familiar social practices, such as "a mother reading a bedtime story to her child," digital storytelling has acquired cultural meanings as a typified way of making a particular type of meaning.

From the genre perspective, the formal features of digital storytelling arise naturally as the result of individuals responding to the recurrent social exigency of working with digital tools and making use of multimodal resources to uncover and share personal stories for expressive and democratic purposes. As a genre of storytelling, the digital story partially shares the social exigency that gives rise to its historical predecessors, such as oral storytelling, personal narrative, and memoir, resulting in shared generic features, such as the emphasis on the personal voice, emotional content, and authentic experiences. In response to the call for personal stories as a venue to achieve cultural democracy, digital stories often orient towards inspirational thematic content, such as healing from loss, fighting against social injustice, or achieving personal growth. These material, conceptual, rhetorical, and ideological constituents of the social situation collectively shape the textual construction, giving rise to a genre of storytelling that is personal, affective, dramatic, multimodal, and democratic.

The important idea for my enterprise is that we attend to genres to observe how otherwise seemingly infinite and random forms of digital literacy practices are dynamically patterned and regulated. Existing at the intersection of the individual and the collective, genre provides concrete information about how historically accumulated and stabilized knowledge of digital storytelling is invoked and reconfigured through concrete social practices. In the discursive scene of digital storytelling, we observe for the recurrence of the typified ways of using multimodal resources (e.g., laying digital images of oneself and family on top of a running narrative, or the use of storyboards as an anchoring device) to achieve particular rhetorical/social goals— inviting the audience to emotionally relate, moving people toward social change, or achieving closure from a loss, etc..

From this perspective, fandom based media production, meme production, digital storytelling, and vlogs may take on a similar form as multimodal, creative enterprises that surface through the same digital venues of dissemination. But as distinct cultural practices, they are to be considered for unique ways they represent different, typified categories of meaning making for different purposes, which are associated with distinct, historically developed values, attitudes, relationships, and expectations. In other words, it is not the use of digital tools that signals that digital storytelling is taking place. Rather, it is the particular way of making meaning that defines the cultural practice. Genre, when conceived as social action, provides useful frames for describing the particular configuration of persons, tools, texts, activities, and epistemologies in pursuit of a shared objective.

As a complexly developed and organize secondary genre, the making of a digital story involves the integration and alteration of a multiplicity of primary genres, which codify various tangible aspects of everyday communicative activities. Pertinent primary genres might include

the oral storytelling or everyday conversations. However, the integration of rejoinders and oral narratives in digital storytelling is more of an artistic event than a realistic representation of everyday life. Additionally, digital storytelling is often built through the dynamic integration, alteration, and remix of a range of familiar/mundane genres of cultural and communicative practices. For example, a digital storyteller may make selective and adaptive use of genres of writing (essays, narrative, persuasive writing, poetry, autobiography), popular culture (commercial movies, radio programs, mainstream news broadcasting, and journalistic reports), conventional communicative practices (oral storytelling, communal stories, legends, and myths), and cultural practices of making family artifacts (scrap-books, home videos, family albums). As such, digital storytelling is a complexly organized and developed secondary genre that integrates and makes references to multiple genres to respond to the particular social exigencies built into the social practice—to entertain, to preserve memories, to communicate complex ideas, or to enact change of perspectives and attitudes. These primary genres converge through digital storytelling, each bringing a particular stream of activities, persons, relationships, attitudes, tools, and documents, each imbuing a digital story with historically accumulated expectations, values, and meanings.

So what does it mean to study digital storytelling from a genre perspective? From the genre perspective, we take a step back from celebrating the novelty and uniqueness of the digital phenomenon. Instead, we observe digital storytelling as situated within a continuum of cultural and literacy practices and examine digital storytelling as bearing upon the rather conventional, familiar, and mundane aspects of our literacy lives. Second, when we consider the individual enterprise in relation to genre, what is achievable during digital storytelling is informed and constrained by a stock of historically accumulated structures and is intertextually connected to

other instances of using language, engaging in multimodal production, doing communicative work, and performing digital storytelling. As such, we approach an individual's digital storytelling as dialectically connected to the collective of shared experiences.

System of genres

In the previous section, I have explored the analytical utility of genre theory in defining digital storytelling as a unique cultural practice. In doing so, I have emphasized on the need to consider digital storytelling in relation to the collective of comparable instances in response to comparable social situations, which has led to the typification and stabilization of particular ways of meaning making. In this regard, each instance of digital storytelling manifests certain properties that are familiar and stable. In the following section, I push this issue further to examine how a historically-formed system of material, practical, and discursive structures organize the discursive and practical space of digital storytelling by giving it a familiar and recognizable shape. In that direction, I focus more specifically on how an interweaving web of genres and generic activities mediate the distributed work of digital storytelling. In a discursive scene such as a digital storytelling after-school program, digital storytelling does not take place in a conceptual vacuum, but takes place within a generic configuration of persons, activities, texts, and tools and typified ways in which these agents interact and collaborate.

A key notion informing my view is drawn from theories of distributed cognition, the idea that cognition is horizontally distributed among co-participants and mediated by historically developed cultural tools, especially a range of semiotic, technological, and organizational structures (Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989; Cole & Engeström, 1993; Hutchins, 1995; Solomon, 1993). This horizontal distribution of cognitive work is especially true for increasingly complex and collaborative contemporary activities, the performance of which calls for structured

distribution of control over procedures, timing, and division of labor among participants. Such is the case with many discursive and practical aspects of our lives-- an airplane taking off, a court producing a verdict, a ship's crew trying to reach a geographic location (Hutchins, 1995), an inventor filing a patent application (Bazerman, 1997), or a bank determining the national interest rate (Freedman & Smart, 1997). From this perspective, digital storytelling is never an individual enterprise as previous research has portrayed, but is rather a distributed phenomenon that involves the complex interaction and collaboration among individuals, mediating artifacts, and other components of the social material environment. Along that line, the cognitive work performed in digital storytelling involves the coordinated and mediated work of a "functional system," a typified and dynamic configuration of people, artifacts, practices, institutions, communities, and ecologies around some array of objectives (Hutchins 1995). For my enterprise, understanding the dynamism of this complexity provides an inroad to framing an expansive view that moves beyond the individual author to encompass a range of other agents.

Central to this cultural historical approach to cognition is the argument that we attend to cultural artifacts (material and symbolic tools), which play equally agentive roles in cognitive work (Vygotsky, 1977; Wertsch, 1998; Prior, 1998; Russell, 1997). This view is conceptually rooted in Vygostky's (1978) social historical theory of psychology, in which he argues that the ability to make and use tools distinguishes the historical development of human behavior from that of other animals. In this vein, tools are broadly conceived as encompassing material artifacts fashioned by people (e.g., a hammer for pounding in nails) or taken up by people (e.g., a rock taken up as a weapon) as well as durable symbolic artifacts, like languages, mathematics, and specialized disciplinary discourses as inscribed in material objects. More importantly for my enterprise is the notion that symbolic artifacts preserve the content and processes of complex

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cognitive activities, which serve as the cognitive and practical basis of the successful performance of activities. Because symbolic artifacts co-evolve and develop with complex human activities, they have come to embody the typical ways of doing things and therefore become "vehicles of thought" (Salomon, 1993, p. xii). In important ways, learning of the functions, structures, and ways of symbolic artifacts is essential to one's learning of a complex contemporary activity. In terms of discursive work, a key assumption is that language is an integral part of human's cultural functions by enabling access to spatially and temporally dispersed, collective experiences that are otherwise inaccessible (Vygotsky 1978; Bazerman 1994; Prior 1998).

Tool-use is such an essential dimension of human activities in that tools not only facilitate the performance of activities, such as using a hammer for the purpose of pounding in nails, they also regulate one's interaction with and manipulation of the material world. For example, in Hutchin's discussion of the management of the navigation of a ship, the task of reaching a specific geographic location is achieved through the coordinated construction and interpretation of data through participants' proper use of different representational tools. In this scenario, historically formed cultural artifacts, such as maps, charts, and graphs, embody a certain way of acquiring, processing, and using data from the material world, such as winds, currents, and other passing ships, to proceed with a complex problem-solving process. It is only through the proper use of such cultural tools, and generic activities in which tool use is embedded, that a participant is able to perform the cognitive parcel assigned to him and positively contributes to reaching the collective goal. In this regard, these maps, graphs, and charts are equally powerful agents because they function to orient discrete instances toward the typified and recognizable way of problem solving. Understanding tool use as a critical dimension

of distributed discursive work is at the heart of my enterprise, in which I seek to understand how genre mediates discursive work and shares agency with the digital author.

To move this line of argument further toward the type of discursive phenomena I investigate, I explore how system of genres powerfully "influences the organization and nature of the activity and the social relations enacted in pursuit of that activity" (Bazerman, 1997a, p. 297). For example, the cognitive work involved in the Bank of Canada's determination of the national interest rate is more similar to that of a ship crew's navigational task than it may seem (Freedman and Smart 1997). As established social practices, both "functional systems" have historically acquired their own cognition through a system of coordinated and mediated work carried out by multiple participants. In both scenarios, the knowledge of dealing with external variables (wind, currents, and passing ships in the case of the ship, and turbulent financial markets, political uncertainties, and economic trends) and arriving at an object (reaching a geographic location and setting interest rate) is distributed in the sense that expertise is shared, communicated, and co-constructed through complex webs of generic practices that function to maintain shared interpretation and comprehension of incoming data.

Of particular interest to me is that much of the bank's cognitive work takes place through generic discursive practices in an interweaving system of genres. Individual and collective thinking is not only recorded and communicated through writing, but is also enacted in genres deemed appropriate according to one's role in the distributed complex. For example, junior analysts rely on established mathematical models, graphs, and statistical models to collect and process data from the turbulent world financial markets and political spheres, which are the basis of *analytical notes* that are shared with executives in weekly meetings. Middle-level executives reanalyze and package these market interpretations into *briefings* that are reported to senior

executives, who may resort to personal intuition and experiences to revise the initial interpretations. Such cognitive parcels then continue to travel further up and around in formally and elaborately produced internal documents, such as *White Books* and *Inter-Projection Information Package*, whose construction involves extensive, reiterative revisions by multiple players. Finally, the bank's cognitive work culminates in formal and public documents, in forms of *Annual Reports, Bank Speeches,* and *Monetary Policy Reports,* which function to inform the public and guide policy making in context of national and global economy (Freedman & Smart, 1997). Also, these genres are intermeshed with generic activities, such as meetings, presentations, and press conferences, each with embedded social structures of relations, positions, roles, and stances.

For my enterprise, the important idea is that such system of genres are historically developed cultural tools, which encode and conserve the content and process of cultural practices. Systems of genres are embedded with structures, routes, and networks that reify and institutionalize the modes of thinking, argumentation, and storytelling expected of the individual associated with generic performance. In the scenario of the bank, generic verbal discourses and activities embody the extended train of reasoning, the communal knowledge of identifying, negotiating, and resolving problems, tensions, and contradictions, and embedded structures of identities, relationships, and attitudes typical to the work of central bankers and contemporary economists. To that end, the system of genres is a powerful agent in aligning each individual with the carefully orchestrated and regulated practice of the bank, which ensures the long-term robustness of the bank's cognitive work. Such is the case with most contemporary institutions, where thinking largely takes place through writing.

Also, an intermeshing system of genres codifies and sustains the condition of successful performance of a social practice, which an individual must comes to term with and function within. For example, in the case of patent application, the production and institutionalization of genres fulfill compelling changing exigencies in larger social, economic, legal, and regulatory spheres, such as the emerging concern for protection of intellectual property, the practice of turning an idea into economic value, the vision to generate national economic growth through the invention and dissemination of individual ideas, and the increasing need to legalize and regulate the emerging socio-textual practice (Bazerman, 1997a, p. 81). A system of genres co-evolves with the increasingly complex and more regulated practice to meet the conditions for the success performance, emerging from early patent grant as a certificate containing almost no information about the invention to later what is now a thick packets of documents, forms, correspondences, and appeals all in well defined genres. From the perspective of the inventor, one needs to cope with multiple systems of genre to fully participate in the social practice of inventing, marketing, and materializing one's ideas. In important ways, genres support one to realize the intention of filling a patent application, to interpret and package his claims in ways that are deemed culturally appropriate and socially expected, to process other intertextual documents associated with the application, and to properly align with other participants, such as patent officers and potential customers. Through successful performance of genres, an inventor enacts the social practice of patent application and socially aligns other invocations of the practice.

A system of genres discursively embodies a social practice also because it indexes historical, social, ideological, aesthetic, and political-economic meanings associated with the social practice (Kamberelis, 1995; Miller, 1994). Such is the case in the community of *Anonymous Alcoholics*, where the historically developed genre of "personal story" orients

members to interpret their past experiences according to the particular perspective about alcoholism as sanctioned by the community (Holland, et.al, 1998). The "personal story" encodes the ideological and social values of the community, such as specific assumptions, beliefs, and interpretations about sobriety, member identities, and expected behaviors. Embedded in the social practice is a linguistic structure as inscribed by the "Twelve Step Calls," which explicitly defines the narrative form and general framework of the genre. The genre also includes a series of collaboratively developed scaffolding activities, such as instructional sessions, speaker meetings, and senior members' supply of parallel, revised, and expanded narratives. The generic model orients AA members toward *the* way to restructure experiences according to ideological values sanctioned by the community. In this vein, genre shapes identity as AA members learn to reject alternative interpretations and to ultimately arrive at a fixated notion of the self. Upon invocation, the "personal story" genre imbues local discourse with shared social, cultural, and ideological meanings, which maintains a sense of coherence across disparate cases of discourse production. In this vein, genres are indexical, signaling ideologies, norms, and values of the social context they typically function. When people appropriate genres, they also inherit these ideologies as familiar structures their discursive activity makes sense.

A key theoretical import from these discussions in this--the individual and the social are mutually impinged upon each other through the mediation of genres. On one hand, an individual's discursive activity gains its cultural meaning from appropriately performing genres associated with the cultural practice. On the other hand, the cultural practice stays alive through an individual's proper and innovative performance of genres.

With regards to digital storytelling, we might observe digital storytelling as a loosely defined cultural model that is organized around a stabilized-for-now fusion of a system of

discursive, material, and practical structures, which embody the content and process of digital storytelling. As a secondary genre, digital storytelling is embodied through a typified and dynamic configuration of discursive structures (a system of genres), such as oral and formal responses and critiques of digital stories, script, memoir, oral narrative, research notes, storyboarding, peer responses, instructor responses, videotaped performances, voiceovers, and premieres. Because digital storytelling is a multimodal enterprise, the system of genres involves a range of multimodal and multimedia genres. The multimodal system of genres is carried out through a well-orchestrated sequence of activities and tasks that draw on a range of resources, tools, artifacts, and texts. The typified ways in which these activities are organized are what I call practical structures. The typified ways in which resources, tools, artifacts, and texts are used are what I have come to call material structures. Combined, the functional aggregates maintain a sense of durability and coherence across discrete and dispersed instances of the social invocation of the genre.

From the genre perspective, recurrent attempts to grapple with such complexities have led to the development of a well-orchestrated sequence of stabilized discursive, material and practical structures that most effectively organize the complex of persons, technologies, activities, tasks, texts, and institutions involved in the process. As of now, most digital storytelling typically begins with prompting and scripting activities, which educate the individual about the genre and practice of digital storytelling and initiate research and thinking about potential story ideas. Digital authors are also invited to engage in recursive resource-building activities, in which the individual uses pertinent digital tools to collect, digitize, and manage multimodal resources in accordance with a growing story. The production stage involves scripting, storyboarding, editing, and responding activities, which often involves the

collaborative work of partners. Finally, digital storytellers share their stories in a public premiere, when storytellers, family members, and community members gather together to provide digital authors with acknowledgement and feedbacks. The important idea here is that these activities are not carried out randomly. Rather, the persons, texts, tasks, and activities are organized in rather routinized ways, as inscribed largely by the CDS model, the clubhouse model, and other locally developed routines. From the genre perspective, these discursive, material, and practical structures embody the conceptual and practical conditions of realizing the core values and meanings specific to digital storytelling.

These generic structures represent typified ways of coordinating persons, texts, tools, activities, and institutions to realize the functions, meanings, and purposes of digital storytelling. For example, digital storytelling often involves certain activities during which the digital author is invited to create multimodal resources about the self and family. To do so, one needs to either collect old photos from family albums, retrieve old family videos, or to use digital cameras or digital video camera to create something on the spot. One then needs to learn to use various digital tools (the basics of digital camera and digital video camera, scanner, Photoshop, video-editing software, and etc.) to process, convert, edit, and manage multimodal resources. In this rather generic activity, individuals, tools, multimodal texts, and tasks are configured according to certain norms to partially fulfill the epistemological and ideological values associated with digital storytelling—the emphasis on the individual voice and personal experiences. In this scenario, the individual is not creating something that is completely original, but is rather working within a framework that informs as well as constrains what one accomplishes.

These ideas are particularly important to my enterprise because they provide the background for a distributed form of analysis that pushes against the narrow, celebratory stance

towards individual creativity and agency. Rather than focusing on the individual as the sole agent contributing to and gaining from the digital storytelling experience, we observe how the digital author is but one agent in a typified yet dynamic configuration of persons (instructors, researchers, digital storytellers), artifacts (software interface, technological tools, model texts, genre descriptions), institutions (CDS, DUSTY, other international media initiatives), whose collaborative effort is realized through the performance of a well-orchestrated system of genres and generic activities. The present project argues that digital storytelling occurs in a discursive environment that is structured through a repertoire of historically developed genres and practices. Through the lens of genre, we observe an individual's digital storytelling as involving the appropriation of these discursive and material structures. As such, the cultural practice is enacted through its typified configuration of persons, practices, cultural artifacts, and norms.

A distributed frame of inquiry also helps us to see an individual's storytelling as richer and more complex than previous scholarship has suggested. When we begin to conceive of digital storytelling from the lens of genre, generic structures and their utilities stand out. This distributed frame of inquiry positions the individual in concert with other human and non-human agents, sometimes coherently and other times creating tensions. As we revise our vision of digital storytelling as a distributed and mediated phenomenon, we then begin to observe the discursive phenomenon as the result of the enactment of many highly structured and regulated activities that give familiar, recognizable, and formative shape to the social practice they embody. In this vein, what is achievable by an individual is dependent upon how effectively one comes to terms with the discursive environment of digital storytelling and how well one socially and discursively aligns with other agents at play.

Genre as meaning potential

In the previous section, I have put forward a genre-informed framework to examine digital storytelling as horizontally distributed across human agents and cultural tools. In that direction, I am mostly concerned with the performance of complex discursive work as organized around a system of inter-connected, generic discursive, material, and practical structures. In the section that follows, I take the issue to another direction to explore genre as historically developed meaning potentials that may unfold in expected or unpredictable ways (Kamberelis, 1995). Genres are resources and structures that offer both stability/durability and instability/dynamism. In relation to the sociohistorical claim of genre, I argue that should we examine the discursive scene as vertically distributed phenomena, whose meaning is built through a chain of dispersed compositional and experiential episodes and involves multiple historical trajectories, each involving a generic configuration of persons, tools, and activities. At the core of this expansive view is that we consider genre and discursive work in relation to the historical trajectories that partially constitute and are constituted through discursive works.

The durability of genre

What does it mean to conceive discursive work as historically distributed phenomenon? My thinking about this question is informed by social historical theories of writing, which attends to streams of cultural events, rather than the material text, the linguistic resources, and the lived moments of reading and writing, as the locus of meaning making (Kamberelis, 1995; Prior, 1998, 2009; Prior, Hengst, Roozen, & Shipka, 2006). Sociohistorical theories of writing settle comfortably with my enterprise in that writing is conceived as sociohistorically situated in lived times and particular places, mediated through the use of cultural tools, and dispersed through streams of cultural events (Prior, 1998). From this perspective, discursive work is

inherently heterogeneous, particular, and complex because it brings into confluence multiple historical trajectories, such as the sociohistorical landscape of the practice, the historical trajectories of tools, and the situated reappropriation of these tools in present interactions (Russell, 1997; Russell & Bazerman, 1997). As multiple historical trajectories converge in the discursive scene, the streams of people, artifacts, activities, and institutions also influence text construction in powerful ways. As such, discursive work is about language use as much as it is about the people, artifacts, activities, and institutions.

In this line of analysis, digital storytelling is recognized as a literate activity, whose meaning is not located in acts of reading (viewing) and writing (multimodal composition) of a story, but rather in the process of realizing a cultural form of life through a chain of compositional episodes (Prior, 1998). In the discursive scene of digital storytelling, the making of a story typically spans over multiple days and involves an individual working through a series of cultural events, such as group discussions that highlight certain features of digital storytelling, planning talks about and presentations on story ideas, scripting and storyboarding, collecting and digitizing family artifacts, collaborative writing and peer response, public premier and conversations, and so on. In important ways, these cultural events bring their particular historical trajectories through discursive, practical, and material structures.

Also, the discursive past travels into the present. In this vein, what goes on the discursive scene of digital storytelling is also shaped and informed by multiple historical trajectories. In the sociohistorical lexicon that I prefer, behind the concrete acts and experiences of each individual digital story is a far-flung, sociohistorically dispersed network of chronotopes (M.M. Bakhtin, 1981; Prior, 1998, 2009). Bakhtin (1981) first used chronotopes (literally means time-space) to describe the interdependent fusion of temporal-spatial relationship as represented in language. It

is Bakhtin's view that a particular configuration of temporal-spatial relationships is a critical dimension of language and therefore is important in the study of genres. This notion of is of particular resonance for my project because the genre of personal narrative, as well as its literary derivatives, necessarily involves the representation of events, perspectives, and ideas that are organized around intricately connected temporal-spatial relationships. That is, time-space relationships encoded in thematic units, such as reflections or retrospection, are dynamically fused with those encoded by thematic units, such as memories or oral rejoinders, into a carefully thought-out, concrete wholen (cite). As such, particular ways of configuring chronotopic moves is indexed with the meaning potential of genre. Prior, however, extends the notion of chronotope to describe a chain of productive moments and a range of historical trajectories that led to the culminating moment production.

Regarding digital storytelling, the chronotopic network behind a digital storytelling project includes not only the embodied acts of creating the story, it also expands beyond the present to encompass the history of one's writing and reading in various genres, the authors' histories of viewing and responding to digital stories, the embodied and imaginary worlds that serve as the raw material of the story, and the histories of the social practice and other digital storytellers working within the framework of the social practice. Digital storytelling, in this case, is situated weaving-together of histories in streams of activities that are simultaneously durable and fleeting, open and structured. These historical components constitute a ramifying web of discursive relations against which a digital story is imagined, produced, and consumed. In this vein, the discursive scene of digital storytelling is complexly dispersed, filled with heterogeneous voices and histories of multiple streams of activities.

In this line of thinking, discursive work is conceived as historically distributed phenomenon, which is dynamically situated at the intersection of multiple historical trajectories. This shift of analytical focus marks a sharp contrast between my enterprise and prior research. In contrast to prior research, which largely bases their analytical work--be it issues with regards to learning, identity, literacy, or multimodality--around the static products or the narrowly defined, "actual" making of a digital story, my enterprise views the "actual" making of a digital story as but one compositional episode that culminates from a chain of production and experiential episodes. More importantly, a sociohistorical form of analysis attends to the ways in disparate instances draw on a common stock of historically accumulated experiential and epistemological knowledge about digital storytelling.

Genre finds an easy fit in this type of scenario. When aligned with the distributed framework, genre is a useful construct that allows us to move beyond the final discursive product, a mashing-together of activities, to observe digital storytelling as transfused with historically accumulated meaning potentials through a chain of compositional episodes that are generically structured. Underlying the conception of genre as meaning potential are theorizations of the paradoxical nature of genre as both durable and dynamic constructions (Bazerman, 1988; Bakhtin, 1986; Kamberelis, 1995; Yates, 1992). On one hand, genres are relatively durable because they are fundamentally constituted in and materialized through the varied activities in histories of social practices. The important idea is that genre embodies the history of participants pursuing certain communicative goals, employing certain resources, and working within particular forms of social relationships. In Bakhtin's (1986) words, a genre "always remembers its past" (p. 106). Because social practices tend to remain stable, genres tend to remain stable and reproduce cultural practices. As such, genre embodies vast repositories of historically

accumulated experiential and ideological knowledge of mediated activities, which constitute the "meaning potential" of genre (Kemberelis, 1995). Upon use, genre invokes such tacit knowledge and provides ready and dependable stocks of discourse frames, adding to the reproductive basis of an ongoing discursive work.

In this frame of analysis, we observe mediated activities as historically distributed phenomena, which acquire much of their meanings from the social histories of the cultural practice. For example, if we examine storyboarding as a task performed *in-situ* by an individual, the meaning of the activity is solely dependent upon how well the individual comprehends and fulfills the cognitive task of drafting an executive plan. However, much of the "meaning potential" of the activity remains shadowed. What are the content and processes of storyboarding? Who perform such tasks? How is the success of task performance judged? What are the processes and strategies involved in successful performance? These questions remain unanswered when histories of the social practice are backgrounded. When we approach storyboarding from the lens of genre, however, the activities, persons, artifacts, chronotopes, and institutions begin to surface. The storyboard, for example, was developed at the Walt Disney studio during the early 1930s and has acquired its status as a cultural tool through years of practice by professional filmmakers in their attempts to organize the tedious and intricate process of visualizing the scenes and identifying potential problems and challenges (WIkipedia, 2010). As a cultural artifact, a storyboard crystallizes the production condition of the social practice, visually demanding the fulfillment of a series of well-orchestrated activities, such as re-arranging a script according to frames, creating a visual layout of sequenced events, coordinating multimodal resources, and identifying potential problems and challenges. From this perspective, storyboarding is a concrete, historical phenomenon. When the historically accumulated meaning

potential of the genre is contingently realized, the embedded goals, relationships, routines, values, and identities are also reproduced.

To push this expansive view further beyond the here-and-now of the discursive scene, I argue that we trace the history of digital storytelling, albeit a short one, for moments of genre stabilization, each constituted by a particular configuration of persons, institutions, activities, and processes, which travel as far-reaching agents to imbue present discursive activity with meaning potentials. When we conceive of digital storytelling as dialogically connected to such moments of genre emergence, stabilization, and implementation, we begin to see how persons involved, documents created, activities and processes initiated/popularized, and norms and rules formulated, may travel afar to settle into a comfortable/uneasy relationship with the ongoing discursive activity. A close examination of moments of genre emergence, stabilization, and implementation, such as the founding of CDS or implementation of digital storytelling into a DUSTY program, also allows a researcher to observe what elements of the cultural practice have stabilized into the core of a genre over time. As an orienting framework that standardizes and stabilizes a social practice, a genre consists of a range of processes, activities, models, tools, texts, structures, and resources, which collaborate to organize one's knowledge and experiences in socially recognizable and appropriate ways.

Such has been the theoretical background for much of my thinking so far. When we examine single digital storytelling projects as instances of genre use, they are no longer isolated, disparate enterprises, but are rather dynamically located within the history of the cultural practice. In this vein, digital storytelling is never an isolated and autonomous act, but is rather a dialogical and intertextual practice that involves taking the worlds/structures/ideas of others and making them one's own. We also come to observe how digital storytelling is a site of stability,

with genres functioning to maintain an enduring and familiar shape across multiple, dispersed activities. As such, short-lived actions are always positioned in relation to social practices that are collective and relatively enduring.

Genre as dynamic meaning potential

In the previous section, I have elaborated on the idea that genres are durable, historical constructions that serve as the reproductive basis of ongoing discursive work. This view of genre as meaning potentials provides useful frames for examining discursive activities as historically distributed phenomenon that is transfused with epistemological, practical, and experiential knowledge accumulated along the historical trajectories of social practices. In that direction, I argue that we observe the discursive scene of digital storytelling as partially constituted by historically accumulated generic structures. In this vein, the unique and creative meaning of each digital story is always subject to interpretation against historically conditioned "meaning potentials." However, the discursive scene is only partially durable because generic structures stay alive only through situated attempts of individuals, who always recycle, reconfigure, and reconstitute genre and generic practice in response to of partially novel problems and changing, contingent social, cultural, institutional, and individual circumstances. For the purpose of my enterprise, the important idea is not to treat digital storytelling as clones of one another. Rather, I wish to capture the dynamism and transformative potential of a loosely defined cultural model we have come to know as digital storytelling and observe how people engage in and transform the social practice as they link the discursive past, present, and future of the social practice in uniquely creative ways. In the next section, I explore ways in which contingent genre use always unfolds in innovative ways, often results in reconstitution of genre, and serves individual authors' creative intentions.

Because genres embody social practices, which take on varied forms in accordance to changing social cultural realities and in relation to the particularities of the local, genres are also flexible, plastic, generative, and transformative structures. Implicit in Bakhtin's work was also the idea that genres are not cultural fossils but cultural resources whose meanings can unfold in unpredictable and novel ways. To Bakhtin (1986), although a genre "always remembers its past," it is only a metaphoric starting point for communicative actions that are always partially novel. It is the historical realization of genres in concrete social and cultural practices that activate genre's potential for new ways of seeing and acting. While discursive production involves witting or unwitting alignment with the "repeatable elements" of discourse, the process also involves weaving together such repeatable elements into new generic wholes that are temporarily under the governance of the self. From this perspective, discursive activities create a dialogue between inherited potentials of the collective and contingent experiences of the individual, a problematic process filled with asymmetries, uncertainties, and contestations. As such, genres are unfinalized resources that are reconstituted and reconfigured in improvisational ways in situated activities. In the same vein, the meaning of a text is always reevaluated or re-accented in the discursive process.

In what follows, I explore such asymmetries, uncertainties, and contestations as naturally arising from clashes between the typified/inherited/collective and the novelty/contingent/individual factors embedded in discursive activities. I argue that it is through working out such asymmetries and uncertainties that a genre's meaning potential is realized. Also, an individual's agency is realized not through creating something purely original, but through creative reconfiguration, reconstitution, and remix of genres in ways that are uniquely individual. Conceptually, this view differs from the celebratory stance in that the author is seen

as one of many active agents of the discursive phenomenon, who works within a familiar framework that carries with it a historical configuration of persons, institutions, texts, activities, and practices. The key is that improvisations and innovations are always carried out within the framework of the familiar, the historical, and the generic.

One way to account for such asymmetry is by examining the social, cultural, and historical contexts in which discursive activities are located. A significant body of empirical work by genre theorists has documented how genres in professional and disciplinary communities evolve in response to changing social realities, which create new needs and place new constraints on how individuals use language and participate in social practices (Bazerman, 1997b; Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995; Berkenkotter & Ravotas, 1997; Nystrand, 1994; Pare & Smart, 1994). For example, in an age of information explosion and increasing competition among scientists, working scientists are forced to skim the content of journal articles the way newspaper readers skim for information (Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995). This transformed reading practice ultimately generates changes in writing practices, as working scientist's foreground newsworthy, novel information in titles, abstracts, introductions, and section headings to attract readers' attention. In this case, the typified, as represented by the traditional genre of scientific report and socially expected ways of certifying one's knowledge claims, clashes into the novel, a changing reality marked by information explosion and increasing competitions. The dialectic partnership between a working scientist and the scientific report genre creates an "irreducible tension" (Wertsch, 1998), involving a scientist working within the countervailing force of the traditional genre and making small and discreet changes to the genre so that the discursive product, a scientific report, not only promotes personal credibility and epistemological validity in acceptable ways, but also catches the attention of intended readers. In

this vein, the scientific report genre is renewed and reconfigured through each discursive activity. Also, a working scientist and his writing are also redefined within the familiar framework of the genre. Over time, such small changes, done within the conventional frameworks, ultimately lead to qualitative changes to the disciplinary practice of certifying scientific claims through scientific reports. Genres stay alive through innovative, contingent use.

Similarly, the introduction of new technologies can trigger changes in the typified ways of doing communicative work in corporate settings (Yates & Orlikowski 1992). The increasing amount of correspondence within and across business corporations and the advent of typewriter brought asymmetries and uncertainties to conventional ways of doing business communication. As a result, corporate practices of producing, storing, and consuming business correspondence changed to catch up with the volume and changing nature of business correspondences. New conventions were invented, such as the increasing use of underlining, subheading, and all capital letters to facilitate reading. Vertical files were introduced for categorizing and storing massive documents. As the result of the typified clashing with the novel, the business letter and memo emerged and gradually stabilized into institutional genres, which then come to redirect the course of local activities, mostly through creating a new set of professional skills, generating demands for a new occupation, and standardizing and regulating practices within and across business firms. In this dynamic scene, the typists were but one type of agents who participated in the creation and maintenance of a new typified way of doing business communication.

Another way to account for the dynamism of genre use is through the lens of social practices as historical and dynamic aggregates that are inherently discontinuous, heterogeneous, fluid, and filled with tensions and crisis. A social practice consists of a multitude of disparate but inter-connected elements, such as practices, activities, persons, texts, and communities that are

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overlapping and mobile. Because genres stay alive through continual invocations by real actors in situated activities, the unfolding of the meaning potential involves constant social negotiation and interpretation among such disparate constituents. For example, situated activities always present partially new problems, the meaning of the social practice or genre may vary significantly across participants, and any discursive scene often involves multiple systems of genres. As such, genres are constantly reconfigured and reconstituted, albeit slowly and incrementally in most cases, simultaneously contributing to the reconfiguration of activities. In this vein, individual discourse it not only judged by how well it conforms the dominant through genre invocation, it is also judged by how effectively an individual manages the dynamics of the local, which is often carried out through constant reconfiguration of genres.

In school classrooms (Russell, 1997), for example, short-lived classroom literacy activities are in effect transfused with multiple disciplinary, professional, and institutional practices and structures because school is a place to expand students' involvement with disciplinary practices and to prepare students for future participation in disciplinary work. As such, classroom genres exist at the intersection of genres of the school, which indexes appropriate ways of doing school, and genre systems of professional communities, which index social practices involved in doing biology, chemistry, art, writing, etc.. However, the intersecting co-existence of multiple genre systems is not a peaceful one, often creating contradictions and tensions. For instance, genres associated with "doing school," such as homework and grade reports, effectively maintain social structures and reproduce social identities that center around teacher authority. On the other hand, "doing biology" is constituted by many related and partially overlapping genres of its own, such a lab reports, research reports, lab procedures, and research articles. When the social practice of "doing science" merges with social practices associated with

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"doing school," certain genres are reconstituted and customized to meet the contingent needs of the individual, such as creating a good scientific report for a good grade. Also, a student simultaneously belongs to multiple, overlapping, and sometime contradictory communities, often moving in and out of them seamlessly. For instance, in writing, indigenous genres embedded in legitimate experiences with family, neighborhood, and peers might not lead toward the object as defined by school genres of writing. The overlapping of social practices often creates contradictions in an individual's needs to negotiate.

Lastly, genres are fragile and plastic constructions because they are always subject to individual "play." To a large extent, an individual's textual control is realized not just through the capacity to recognize, interpret, and use genres, but also through personalizing the social practice. The stability of genre is often disrupted in quotidian ways. First, authors bring individual experiences, goals, perceptions, and knowledge to present discursive practices. An author's use of available discursive forms always involves the negotiation to find a fit between the self and the social practice. Individuals exert agency through discursive works to advance a range of rhetorical and social interests, including finding a position for individual meaning-making in relation to the larger social practice, seeking approval and recognition for one's discourse, and forming relationships with other texts and participants. Additionally, individuals constantly select from a repertoire of genres as the basis of their creative reconfiguration, reconstitution, and remixing attempts. As Kamberelis (2001) found in his study of elementary school children's science learning, children draw on readily available elements and aspects in their discursive repertoires, such as popular culture genres, teacher discourse, peer culture, and professional ways of doing science, to construct hybrid discourse. These hybrid texts offer children new and creative ways of conceiving topics, which arise not from an original discovery,

but from creative integration of a variety of text fragments, conventions from a variety of genres, and thematic content that do not typically co-exist. Such creative remix is the norm rather than anomalies. Authors may violate the norms and rules of a genre; they may mix genres not conventionally associated with each other; they may use genres at their face value through parody or exaggeration. Creative play is a main venue through which an individual assumes agency partly because genres do not dictate singular ways of invocation but provides potential freedom with regard to the range, scope, and potential of creativity. Also, the creative use of genres is often not an option, but a "must" for full participation in a social practice. For example, for one to become a legitimate member of the scientific community, one is pushed to be at the cutting edge, constantly striving for novelty and originality (Berkenkotter & Huckin 1995).

Digital storytelling, when conceived in this fashion, is a historical and dynamic aggregates that arises in response to changing social and cultural conditions. Such changes, especially the advent of the personal computer, the Internet, and digital tools, have generated changes to participation models of cultural production and epistemologies and ontologies, which work in concert to prompt changes in the ancient art of oral storytelling as carried out through conventional genres. In important ways, digital storytelling builds on existing systems of genres embedded in social cultural practices, which simultaneously provide resources for and are reconstituted through situated digital storytelling activities. The stabilization of digital storytelling, as a social practice, is realized through the reconstitution, reconfiguration, and reorganization of old genres into a generic new entity, which embody and organize the new rhetorical exigencies typical of a strain of recurrent communicative activities. As such, the social practice has also acquired its unique historical trajectory, with embedded goals, structures, relationships, artifacts, institutions, and tools, broadly construing what digital storytelling is.

However, the system of genres stays alive through each instance of situated invocation, in which an author, or often a collaborative team of authors, works through a multitude of disparate but inter-connected elements that always present novel problems. In a scenario of digital storytelling workshop, for example, we can observe heterogeneity as constituted by a range of factors: authors are expected to tell personal stories that are uniquely individual; new technologies and new genres need to be learned and used; the meaning of digital storytelling is not wholly shared by instructors, facilitators, and authors; a digital storyteller draws on a range of social worlds and cultural practices that may overlap or clash; the discursive complex of digital storytelling involves multiple, interconnected practices, experiences, and activities that might need to be reorganized and adapted; the institutional histories and personal histories of participants may impart certain constraints. Therefore, situated digital storytelling is never a wholly coherent construct, and the practice often unfolds in novel and unpredictable ways as the result of individual improvisation, adaptation, and personalization. The system of genres of digital storytelling, when performed by different agents situated in different social contexts, is continually reconfigured and may instigate changes in the collective interests and activities of others.

From the vantage point of an individual, digital storytelling is a site of plasticity and creativity. An individual draws upon and mixes a diversity of genres, which encode different social worlds, such as popular culture, family life, fandom-based media culture, literature, everyday peer discourse, teacher discourse, and community experiences, to scaffold their building of a digital story. The creative use of such genres, therefore, brings into confluence multiple historical trajectories. In managing the complexities and multiplicities of the co-existence of genres and social worlds, the author travels in and out of different trajectories,

temporarily foregrounds and backgrounds certain social worlds as called upon by the storytelling, and pushes the boundaries of genres. As such, genres are often used in innovative ways to afford new forms of meaning making. As amply documented by research, digital stories are often told through hybrid genres, such as illustrated scientific report, multimodal autobiographical narratives, digital poetry and music videos, social critiques and PSAs, and personalized reenactments or extensions of stories, cartoons, movies, reports, interviews, or biographies.

From these discussions, I suggest that we study digital storytelling as a historically distributed phenomenon. As we so easily forget, in discursive activities, we bring together multiple practices and activities across institutional settings and with histories. As amply documented by previous research, the blending and mixing of these elements through storytelling not only alter the shape of each compositional event, but also bring change to the individual and their social worlds (Burgess, 2006; Hull & Katz, 2006; Hull & Schultz, 2001; Roche-Smith, 2004a). Because digital authors do no simply inhabit social worlds, they also actively participate in selective use, restructuring, and transformation of the material and social worlds they choose to make sense of through digital storytelling. Digital storytelling, in conception and practice, is a social practice through which peoples, artifacts practices, and institutions are not only invoked, but are remade (Prior, 1998).

A Genre-informed Framework

In extant research, it is fairly common to treat digital storytelling as an individual enterprise. In doing so, we learn less about the network of persons, artifacts, and structures that provide for and place constraints upon meaning making. Also, by focusing our analytical gaze on the present, we learn less about ongoing discursive activities as historical phenomena that bring into confluence multiple historical trajectories, each bearing upon the production conditions with a particular configuration of persons, tools, and texts through somewhat generic processes, activities, and structures.

In this chapter, I have explored several theoretical thrusts of genre theory in hopes of illuminating the production condition that is situated, mediated, and distributed. First, I have argued that a generic configuration of persons, tools, texts, organizations, and processes is an important dimension of discursive work even in cases when a social practice is celebrated for its inherent affordance and push for individual creativity. Such generic aspects of discursive activities have received less rigorous interrogation because a.) genres are so prevalent and so embedded in our discursive lives that we are often not aware of their existence in theory; b.) authors work around a digital story without thinking vigorously about structures, conventions, routines, and models as a part of their discursive repertoire; c.) genres have been observed for their normative and classificatory facilities, which go against our celebratory impulse toward individuality and creativity, which are ironically the products of prevalent ideological and experiential preferences that have co-evolved with the changing social, cultural, and political circumstances leading to the historical moment we live in.

In connection to my observations, Bakhtin (1986) has emphasized that:

We speak only in definite speech genres, that is, all our utterances have definite and relatively stable forms of constructions of the whole. Our repertoire of oral (and written) speech genres is rich. We use them confidently and skillfully in practice, and it is quite possible for us not even to suspect their existence in theory… Even in the most free, the most unconstrained conversation, we cast our speech in definite generic forms, sometimes rigid and trite ones, sometimes more flexible, plastic, and creative ones (Everyday communication also has creative genres at its disposal). (p.78-79).

Second, I have also argued that genres are historically distributed phenomena, which take on meaning potentials through embodying the goals, epistemologies, relationships, and attitudes of rather typified ways of making meaning in response to recurrent social and rhetorical exigencies. With regards to digital storytelling, rare is the case that the productive process is not structured and informed in important ways by historically accumulated knowledge and experiences about reading stories, doing writing, watching television, creating family artifacts, and so on. It is my argument that digital storytelling involves the coordinated efforts of a range of human and non-human agents, which is organized around and mediated through well-orchestrated and regulated genres and generic activities. As such, the here and now of digital storytelling is a dynamic site of confluence, where multiple historical trajectories travel with the persons, activities, texts, and genres to clash into novel problems, creating tensions, struggles, and opportunities for innovation and creativity.

I have pressed these notions into a distributed and expansive framework in service of examining digital storytelling as located at the intersection of the individual/novel/particular and the collective/typified/historical. An important extension of this line of thinking is to reconsider creativity as arising from unique and novel ways of invoking and performing familiar and

recognizable structures, processes, texts, and practices. Understanding creativity as mediated and distributed enterprise is important work, especially in light of the fast and widespread uptake of new digital tools, which continuously expands the range, reach, and interconnectedness of texts. In the contemporary mediascape, remix has become the cultural norm even in channels where individual originality is celebrated. Such is the case with the *Star Wars Kid* meme that has widely circulated on youtube.com. Of the thousands of remixes of the original video, a simple recording of a clumsy kid emulating a lightsabre fight, each remix re-accents the original video (or previous re-accented version of the original video), adding layers of individual and novel meanings. The meaning and power of each remix, however, is very much dependent upon what has been made of the video previously. For example, most remixes make use of existing commercial movie previews for thematic and organizational resources and structures that they build upon. Short clips of the *Star Wars Kid* were then inserted in the place of the original antagonist. From a genre perspective, the use of ready previews and the insertion of the *Star Wars kid* are stabilized ways of creating a type of meaning that is culturally appropriate (people find it funny) and socially recognizable (people recognize it as a meme). As a genre of cultural production, remix has acquired its own discursive structures that inform and orient future remixes. Also, the historical trajectory of remix, albeit a short one, brings a unique configuration of people (remix authors), texts (a growing body of remixes, responses on existing remixes, news reports on the digital phenomenon), tools (discursive structures, video and image editing software), and activities (making, sharing, and responding to remixes), which work in concert toward the objective—creating a remix that has the most technological edge, delivers the best creative design, or enacts a particular sense of humor. In this vein, an individual's innovative work is carried against the cultural practice, which constitutes and is reconstituted by each remix.

To do a genre-formed analysis of digital storytelling, one might take the work beyond the individual and the present to trace how historically accumulated knowledge and experiences travel in an out of an ongoing discursive scene. Through the lens of genre system, we come to observe how historical trajectories converge into the present and collectively frame the dispersed compositional scene of digital storytelling. In another track, identifying a system of genres might help us to locate the reproductive basis on which creative work takes place. In that sense, the making of the digital story is carried out within the familiar structure of the digital storytelling practice, with its embedded processes, activities, and practices that are adapted and personalized according to the particularity of the individual located in a social situation. In essence, the making of each digital story is a discursive phenomenon that is simultaneously old and new, historical and contingent, familiar and novel.

Significance of the Study

As my discussion has noted, a socio-historical perspective on digital literacies allows research to attend to products, processes, and social formations as mutually informative dimensions of the social practice. Specifically, a genre perspective allows me to understand meaning making as mediated by historically developed cultural tools. In important ways, this theoretical perspective contributes to the field by addressing the existing gap in current research. Further, this study has important implications for pedagogy, as the findings begin to reveal ways in which the development of literacy skills do not follow distinct trajectories in print-based and digital environments but rather emerge through in support of and in relation to each other. Finally, this study contributes to the field methodologically through the exploration of a multimodal analytic method that draws on both socio-historical and discourse analytical methods

in the investigation of discursive work as situated at the dynamic intersection of the individual and social. Specifically, I develop a new multimodal analytical approach for the investigation of the semiotic, formal, and rhetorical features of a given digital story as informed by meanings found in social, collective, and ideological formations.

Organization of the Dissertation

In this dissertation, I examine digital storytelling as a cultural genre and observe how this given social practice has been invoked across four distinct but intricately connected programs. To that end, I explore the theoretical and analytical facility of genre theory in guiding a socio-historical form of analysis of a given digital phenomenon. To do so, I draw on data collected through ethnographic methods to attend to these four programs as socially influential nodes in the network of digital storytelling programs with a shared history but distinct trajectories of development. In Chapter 3, I lay out the methodology for this dissertation, including an introduction to the genre-informed multimodal analytical framework I am developing.

In Chapter 4, 5, and 6, I provide parallel cases to illustrate the convergent and divergent ways in which the social practice unfolds across distinct social and institutional settings. In so doing, I organize each of the three chapters in ways that allow me to attend to genre at the intersection of the social and individual. First, I trace the social and ideological claims each program makes about digital storytelling. Second, I discuss the particular ways in which the classic workshop model is reconfigured to encode the particular ideological as well as institutional visions of each program. Lastly, I draw on one particular digital story to illustrate how an individual discursive activity is mediated by the generic model and therefore takes on ideological and social values specific to the program it is affiliated with. In chapter 7, I discuss

the implications of this research for pedagogy and research and suggest ways of rethinking the complex relationship between in- and out-of class literacy learning, digital and print literacies, and informal and formal environments of learning.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This ethnographic and discourse inquiry was designed to explore social practice, genre, and discursive activities as inter-connected aspects of a given social phenomena. Therefore, the research was designed to explore the dynamic invocations of a social practice that were simultaneously informed by the durable, conservative forces crystallized by genre and the dynamic forces embodied in institutional, local, and individual needs, pressures, and innovations. Specifically, I seek to highlight the productive conditions that are simultaneously familiar and strange. To do so, I draw on the conceptual and analytical frames outlined in Chapter 2 to shed light on the typified and recurrent ways in which discursive activities unfold to fulfill collective and contingent social and rhetorical goals (Kamberelis, 1999; Miller, 1994). This perspective sheds new light on discursive activities as constantly mediated by cultural tools and observes how situated discursive activities may take on meanings that travel to the present from distanced spatial and temporal moments. As such, I conceptualized this study as a genre-theory informed ethnographic and discourse study framed by the methodological implications found in all three traditions to guide my research.

I begin this chapter by describing the research design of this study as guided by my research questions, followed by a discussion of procedures taken to select the focal sites and participants. Following discussions of data collection methods, I draw on an example from my

data to illustrate the analytical methods I employed. This chapter concludes with a discussion of the trustworthiness and limitations of the study.

Research Design

I designed this multi-sited, comparative research to explore digital storytelling as a durable and dynamic cultural genre. A multi-sited study lends unique analytic power to the study of genre because a comparative juxtaposition of multiple programs allows me to explore how the meaning potential and the genre practices that "belong to" digital storytelling can be sustained across programs and reworked in light of distinctive cultural and institutional contingencies. On the one hand, I observe how the socially acceptable and culturally appropriate meaning potential of the social practice can be sustained across a corpus of digital stories through the mediation of historically developed generic structures. On the other hand, a heterogeneous combination of projects present ample opportunities to observe ways in which the meaning potential can be bent, stretched, reconfigured, and remixed in reaction to local and contingent ideological claims, institutional pressures, novel problems, and lived experiences. Seeking to further this understanding of discursive activities as situated, mediated, and distributed, I drew on ethnographic and discourse analytical methods to explore the dynamic invocations of a cultural genre across sites. Guided by these methodological frameworks, I collected data in the form of semi-structured interviews with insiders, a corpus of archived digital stories, and other texts and artifacts, allowing for the complex meanings and understandings of the cultural genre to slowly emerge over time.

Research Questions

Guided by such theoretical concerns and methodological tools, my project seeks to

answer the following research questions:

- What does it mean to consider digital storytelling as a cultural genre?

    o What are typified genre features of digital storytelling (thematic, compositional, semiotic, rhetorical)?
    o What genre practices (practical, discursive, and material) have historically developed with digital storytelling?
    o In what ways do generic features and practices encode the broader social and ideological conditions of the social practice?

- What does it mean to consider digital storytelling as a durable cultural genre?

    o How are practical, discursive, and material structures invoked in local productive activities? To what extent are disparate instances of invocation aligned with the typified model?
    o What social and ideological meanings are systematically indexed by ratified genre practices?

- What does it mean to consider digital storytelling as a dynamic cultural genre?

    o In what ways has the meaning potential of digital storytelling changed over time?
    o In what ways has digital storytelling unfolded differently across social contexts and projects?
    o In what ways are individual creativity and innovation accomplished?

In addressing the first question, I examine the broad social formations of digital

storytelling to describe it in global, collective and historical terms. In so doing, I press the social,

rhetorical conception of genre into practice and move towards an explicit treatment of the

meaning potential of digital storytelling as the consequence of typified responses to recurrent

social exigencies. I am also concerned with the ways a system of generic structures encodes the

social, ideological meanings, historical trajectories, and production conditions of digital

storytelling. In addressing the second and third research questions, I examine the paradoxical

ways in which the meaning potential of digital storytelling constitutes and is constituted through situated productive activities.

Selection of sites

In order to identify the focal sites, the study began with the task of charting the terrain of digital storytelling as a digital, global phenomenon. To do this, I pursued the following search venues and consulted the following resources to identify a network of digital storytelling programs, which are dispersed across an expansive range of geographical and virtual locales. I began by mining the *Center for Digital Storytelling* website for pointers to potential programs, with particular attention paid to the "clients" page and resources page. In the mean time, I consulted McWilliam's (2009) research on the global diffusion of digital storytelling. This survey-based study provided me with detailed information about 300 digital storytelling programs operating around the world. Adding to these resources, I proceeded with mining the *2ed* (2006)[2] *and 4th* (2011)[3] *International Conference on Digital Storytelling* websites,[4] with particular attention paid to attendees, contributors, and projects for potential digital storytelling programs. In mining these resources, I paid specific attention to projects, persons, and institutions that had the potential to lead me to digital storytelling programs that did not register with or stand out in previous searches. I used Google.com and Wikipedia.com to explore and verify any potential leads.

An assumption underlying this procedure is that successful digital storytelling programs are important nodes in a network of persons, programs, projects, institutions, organizations,

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[2] The Second International Conference on Digital Storytelling was held in Melbourne, Australia from Feb, 5-6 2006.
[3] The Fourth International Conference on Digital Storytelling was held in Lilliehammer, Norway from Feb, 5-7, 2011.
[4] I am not able to locate the websites for the first and third conference. I do know that the first conference was a small gathering of staff members of CDS with interested parties in Cardiff University, UK. It is very possible that a website was never set up for that meeting. A website for the third conference was once hosted on the CDS websites but has already been taken down.

conferences, and scholarly works committed to promoting digital storytelling as a cultural genre. Taking the center stage within this network is the *Center for Digital Storytelling,* whose representation of digital storytelling has a significant influence upon how the media practice is learned, integrated, and defined in local contexts. This assumption resonates with Hartley and McWilliam's (2009) observation that most digital storytelling programs were connected to the CDS's work in one way or another. Indeed, for the focal programs selected for this study, their efforts to integrate digital storytelling within local contexts were all informed by the work of CDS. More importantly, the implementation of the most notable programs often involved the coordinated efforts of the CDS and the hosting organizations. When considered from a social historical view, the shared historical lineage allowed me to trace the historical trajectory of genre formulation, stabilization and innovation. It also provided inroads for considering how the meaning potential and genre practices were partially "inherited" and partially reconstituted in light of varying chronotopic, institutional and individual circumstances.

In locating the online presence of potential programs, I did not rely on more popular search engines, such as Google.com, because it is often the "how-to manuals" and "ten-things-you-should-know" sites that registered the most with popular search engines. Rather, Google.com was used primarily to maximize the coverage of likely conduits of digital storytelling. That is, I used Google.com to survey a snowballing aggregate of sites and pages on digital storytelling and to locate potential digital storytelling programs based on the clues (persons, projects, and institutions) foraged through other venues. For example, I googled the names, institutions, and projects found on the *2ed to 4th International Conference on Digital Storytelling* websites, some of which led to the discovery of focal programs.

For the purpose of this study, I did not engage in an extensive mapping of digital storytelling programs. Rather, I worked to identify and locate the online locations of a smaller number of socially influential programs that have generated dense and sustained activities around the training, production, distribution, and exhibition of digital stories. In finalizing the focal programs, I addressed two overarching concerns implicit in the genre form of analysis I pursued. First, I was concerned with selecting programs that were the socially influential "sponsors" of digital storytelling, which not only defined the literacy materials of the practice, but also played an important role in enabling, supporting, and structuring the types of literacy experiences digital storytelling made available (Brandt, 2005). Second, I looked for programs that potentially exemplified the converging as well as the diverging ways in which digital storytelling was pulled off. By attending to socially influential nodes, which were intricately connected and yet distinct entities, I was able to develop categories and themes that were suggestive of larger patterns of how the cultural phenomenon was mapped onto an expansive dispersion of programs. Given these concerns, the focal sites were selected based on these criteria: a) an extended history of sponsoring a diversity of subsidiary projects; b) sustained commitment to the values and practice of digital storytelling; c) public availability of information about the program as well as a sampling of digital stories; d) English as the primary language of production. In what follows, I describe how the selected programs and their online locations satisfy these criteria.

Center for Digital Storytelling (1995-present) has been responsible for inventing, refining, and popularizing the model of digital storytelling, which has enabled the wide spread of the social practice during the past 17 years. The CDS has partnered with a multiplicity of community, organizational, and educational programs to develop a wide range of initiatives of digital storytelling and has been the initial inspiration that spawned the work of the other three

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focal programs identified for this study. At the time of writing, the CDS offers regular

workshops in the US, Canada, and selected cities in Europe. With a heavy focus on the

therapeutic effects of storytelling, the CDS workshops focus on the benefit to participants in

what it considers a creative group process. In interesting ways, the CDS values the process rather

than the products of digital storytelling. That is, the goal of a CDS workshop is not to create a

collection of stories that are shared for public or social purposes, but to create a safe environment

in which individuals can go through a healthy, group-facilitated process, which potentially

results in the psychological "unstuffing" of burdening fixations and enables personal growth.

Also at the core of a CDS workshop is the focus on the democratic potential of digital

storytelling in de-centering the long tradition of the "powerful" co-opting the stories of

"powerless." In that direction, the CDS sees its value in giving ownership and voices to everyday

individuals in telling their own stories. This focus on digital storytelling as essentially a personal

achievement has an important methodological implication for this study, the CDS had not

published a single story in the first 12 years of its operation, when participants left with their

stories on a DVD. Since 2007, the CDS has begun to feature a small number of exemplary of

stories on its website. A few of such stories were created in languages other than English, but the

majority of the stories were English one. In light of thousands of stories the center has helped

people create, the online portal features a shockingly small representation of the center's work.

At the time of my writing, CDS has just created its own youtube channel[5], featuring 77 stories in

total.

  Capture Wales (2001-2008) was created by the BBC in 2001 as a community

engagement initiative, with the purpose of experimenting with new ways of creating content and

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[5] See http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCKLPPDaG0bCj1Yqy6PlcouQ

connecting with its audience. During the eight years of its operation, Capture Wales offered monthly workshops in different areas and communities of Wales through the coordinated efforts of a team of facilitators. This team, consisted of a producer, a creative director, several facilitators and activity leaders, and a musician travelled across the Wales region and offered free workshops to engage people in the community in the telling of vernacular experiences. During its tenure, Capture Wales stayed true to the democratic potential of digital storytelling, in that it worked to destabilize the mainstream representation of lived experiences by focusing on the otherwise silenced, marginalized, and underprivileged. Although initially inspired by the CDS model, Capture Wales adapted the CDS model to focus on the collection of tangible stories that could be broadcasted in both traditional television environment and online environment. In a time prior to the advancement of social media and participatory content production, Capture Wales made advancements in the negotiation of various issues with regard to rights to content. With the intention of creating a "patch quilt" of stories about Wales and by the Wales, Capture Wales helped the production and dissemination of a collection of more than 500 digital stories, which is owned by the BBC and made publicly available on the program's website and through regular TV broadcasting channels. Only a small fraction of the large collection consists of bilingual (Welsh and English) stories, for which English subtitles were added or an English version was created.

Patient VoiceS (2003-present) is a program based in the UK. Created by Pilgrims Projects, a small company (an social enterprise) owned by Pip Hardy and Tony Sumner, Patient Voices began with the intention to developing e-learning materials in the field of healthcare education and has grown into a business that offer workshops to healthcare professionals. Pip first envisioned that they could use digital storytelling to create compelling and interesting cases

that could be embedded in to learning modules to engage healthcare professionals in the productive and reflective discussions around issues that are hard for professionals to emotionally and intellectually connect with. At the time of writing, Patient Voices' workshops are often contracted by healthcare organizations, government agencies, nursing schools and hospitals to help patients, medical staff, and doctors develop and share stories. At the core of the Patient Voices' mission is to create a publicly accessible platform where multiple voices are present to converse on critical issues of healthcare quality and improvement. Geared towards the production and distribution of stories, Patient Voices sees the value of digital storytelling in improving health care through the sharing of difficult and sometimes painful experiences. As such, the program's website exhibits an expanding collection of more than 500 digital stories, its stories growing in number, that can anybody can access. As the designers' knowledge of and experiences with digital storytelling grow over time, the team is also beginning to imagine the possibility of using digital storytelling as a tool to document, evaluate, and track the development of early career healthcare professionals.

The last site selected for this study, *Creative Narrations* (2004-present), began in a metropolitan area on the east coast of the US. Although the design of this program was not directly facilitated by the CDS, Tanna, the founder of Creative Narrations, admitted that her vision and design was inspired by a workshop she took with the CDS. Tanna intended to use digital storytelling as a tool for community expression and organization. In more practical terms, digital storytelling has been used to help community organizations to promote their work in engaging and socially influential ways. Since its creation in 2004, Creative Narrations has worked with community organizations in the US and other countries to engage people in critical conversations around issues of social injustice. The program capitalizes on the idea of

storytelling as an act of civic engagement and democracy. That is, digital storytelling gives individuals the tools and strategies to gain access to their own voices, and in sharing the stories, the programs helps to create a condition for positive social change. Given this frame, the participants do not stop at the sharing of personal stories, but are encouraged to use stories to engage in civic acts. Another dimension of the social injustice commitment of Creative Narrations is framed in light of the broader discourse built around the critiques of media consolidation. As such, the act of digital storytelling is considered a concrete effort of combating consolidated media control and taking back the ownership to our stories. In using the technological tools that enable the accurate representation and sharing of community experiences, participants are encouraged to consider themselves as powerful agents of social change. Also stressed in the program's work is the effort to help organizations to integrate digital storytelling into their work as a sustainable practice—to push limited organizational resources to do the work that is needed. Found on the program's website and other online portals the program helped to build is a small collection of more than 50 stories (all produced in English), which largely embrace the theme of social injustice.

In important ways, the focal programs are socially influential "sponsors" of digital storytelling (Brandt, 2008). That is, these programs largely define and develop the "materials" of digital storytelling, including the particular orientation toward personal stories, conceptions of social identities and social relations achievable through digital storytelling, discursive practices of production and distribution, and ideological values, which all turn up at a situated discursive scene (Brandt, 2008 p. 20). These projects are also the main venues through which the locally remediated social and ideological meaning of digital storytelling is made accessible and promoted to interested social groups. Their websites, considered from this perspective, are

important semiotic artifacts that function to disseminate the remediated meaning potential of digital storytelling. For example, a selective sampling of digital stories featured on a program's website not only serves the promotional function (in other words, to showcase the program's work), but are effective means of modeling and demonstrating the particular ways of discovering and constructing personal experiences as inscribed by the particular, institutional rendition of the social practice. By making available certain pedagogical materials, resources and links, each program finds its position in alignment with the network of persons, programs, texts, and institutions of digital storytelling. Also, the consistent offering of workshops is a means of enabling and promoting a particular kind of literacy experiences and learning opportunities. Therefore, these websites are an important source of data to get at the divergent and convergent ways in which the social practice has been invoked across different institutional contexts.

Exclusion of sites

In making my selections based on these criteria, certain successful programs that are smaller in scale, with a short period of operation (less than five years), or are more focused in single local communities were excluded, such as the *Kelvin Grove Village Sharing Stories* project[6] (2007), the *Telling Lives*[7] project (2003-2006), the *Bristol Stories*[8] (2007-2009), or the *Stories of Service* project (2005)[9]. Also, certain large-scale programs located in contexts where English is not the first language were also excluded, such as Brazil's *One Million Life Stories of*

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[6] *Kelvin Grove Village Sharing Stories* is a community project coordinated by Jean Burgess for the Kelvin Grove urban village in Australia, which offered two workshops to helps local individuals to share their stories. The larger goal of the project is to preserve and share the history of the community.
[7] *Telling Lives* is the English equivalent of *Capture Wales*. During its three years of operation, the program offered workshops in different regions of England and has created more than 200 digital stories.
[8] *Bristol Stories* is a more recent program located in the Bristol Museums, Galleries and Archives Service of UK, which has involved locals in the telling of stories to gain more insights into regional history. Since, 2007, the program has offered multiple workshops to in association with local schools and community organizations. The most recent stories were created in May, 2009, adding to an existing body of more than 200 digital stories.
[9] *Stories of Service* is a subsidiary project of the *Digital Clubhouse network* program in California, which has adopted an intergenerational learning *approach* to digital storytelling, pairing local students with veterans to tell stories about their service.

Youth[10] movement, the *Finding A Voice* project [11] located in south Asia (2005-2007), or the

Norwegian program *Digitale Fortellinger* (2005-present). A particular regrettable elimination

had to be made with regard to the work of *The Australia Center for the Moving Images,* which

had a robust digital storytelling program I had initially identified as a potential focal program.

After multiple failed attempts to reach the facilitators and designers inside the program, however,

I was not able to collect data at this site. The *types* of stories that are told through these programs

and their *ways* of engaging individuals, community organizations, and organizations are,

however, amply represented by the selected programs. For example, the approach taken by

Finding a Voice in empowering the marginalized and silenced echoes the cultural democratic

commitment of Capture Wales and Creative Narrations. The history preservation motivation

professed at *Kelvin Grove Village Sharing Stories, Bristol Stories, Stories of Service,* and

Australian Center for the Moving Images very much resembles the themes found in a large

category of community stories at Capture Wales' and what one CDS facilitator describes as

genealogy stories that she often sees from CDS participants. Hence, the exclusion of these

programs does not compromise the study.

Participants

Participants selected for this study are the "powerful participants" of the social practice,

who control and constrain the contributions of non-powerful participants by activating

conventions and genres deemed appropriate for the social situation and therefore making

available particular ways of thinking and behaving (Faurclough, 1989). For this study, I have

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[10] *One Million Life Stories of Youth*[10] movement is founded by the Museum of the Person and NGO Aracati, aiming at mobilizing one million Brazilian young people between the ages of 15 to 29 for the purposes of democratic participation and activism through digital storytelling (Clarke, 2009).

[11] *Finding A Voice* is multi-sited research network consisted of 15 local media and ICT initiatives in India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Indonesia to engage and empower poor people in marginalized communities (Tacchi, 2009). From 2005-2007, the project offered multiple training-the-trainer workshops for local sites and coordinated local workshops on different sites.

interviewed two facilitators/designers from each focal program and one additional individual, Joe Lambert. Joe, who described himself as a "proud daddy of a whole bunch of babies," has worked with more than 6000 individuals and 150 programs and is often identified as the "founding father" of digital storytelling by other facilitators I interviewed. My focus on facilitators, not participants of digital storytelling workshops was grounded in the concern for seeing things from the perspectives of people who were largely responsible for "re-mediating" the ideological and experiential knowledge of the social practice, as they know it, into generically and yet dynamically configured texts, discourses, tasks, tools, and activities, which all so powerfully structured and informed the lived experiences of storytellers. Considered together, accounts from the powerful participants with regard to how they wittingly or unwittingly drew on and reworked generic structures, has furthered my understanding of what is perceived as important and valuable literacy experiences and how such values and expectations are realized through genre practices and structures. In what follows, I will provide a brief sketch of the nine participants who bring a wealth of experiences, expertise, and skills into their work and this research.

Joe Lambert, the founder and director of the *Center for Digital Storytelling*, describes himself as an "independent artist with a strong political bent about the way people suffer in the world" (J. Lambert, personal communication, February 7, 2012). Deeply inspired by Dana Atchley's autobiographicl narrative project *Next Exit,* Joe had worked to create and refine a model that embodies a successful productive condition that is conducive to the making of short, authentic, and transformative personal stories. To Joe, digital storytelling, from its origin, is meant to be a civic act that gives ownership of storytelling back to the everyday individuals and therefore de-centers authority. Committed to open source learning, Joe has allows the model to travel across various barriers and be owned in different ways by people he has worked with.

According to Joe, the inherent simplicity and altruism of the idea has attracted people of the same tenor—those who are extremely sentimental and very intelligent—to his line of work.

Dan, who is the regional director for a CDS office located in a major metropolitan area in a rocky mountain region, studied and taught creative writing for his undergraduate and graduate studies. Prior to joining the CDS, Dan worked as a copywriter for a local web consulting company, which sponsored him to attend one of the very first digital storytelling workshops offered in Berkeley, California. Dan found an immediate connection with digital storytelling, which professes two things he is passionate about—the telling of good stories and helping others to come at compelling stories. After one more job, months of money saving, and much obsessing over digital storytelling, Dan finally quit his job and started working at CDS as an un-paid intern. After having accumulated much knowledge and experiences of the CDS model after three month's observing and occasionally helping in Joe's workshops (and sleeping on a friend's couch), Dan returned to the rocky mountain region and started his own "franchise" of the CDS. As the sole director/facilitator/marketer/editor/support, Dan dedicated three years of his life to build his work and has since continued to offer digital storytelling workshops in the area. Another facilitator with whom Dan worked closely with is Kay, a recently retired English professor who has worked at a public university in the aforementioned metropolitan area. Kay discovered digital storytelling when she was planning a new course on life writing and researching on new forms of life writing. After participating in a workshop Dan offered, Kay saw the appeal of digital storytelling in her work and began to integrate digital storytelling into courses she taught at the university as well as service projects she developed in collaboration with the local public library's literacy program. In 2007, Dan invited Kay to join as a co-

facilitator and since then, Kay's lovely, historical farm was recruited to host facilitator-in-training workshops that they continue to offer.

Cathy and Gary, who have moved onto different projects since the termination of Capture Wales in 2008, fondly remembered their work during that period of time. As members of a large and constantly shifting team of facilitators, they had assumed different responsibilities in the Capture Wales workshops at different times of their careers. Cathy, who had extensive experiences as an English teacher, in community development, and as a producer of education programs at the BBC, was the producer for the program for the first five years of its running. She worked in close collaboration with Daniel Meadows, a lecturer at the journalism program at the University of Cardiff, who introduced digital storytelling to the BBC, to develop Capture Wales into a robust program. Prior to the official launch of the program, the team brought Joe Lambert and Nina Mullen to the UK to run two digital storytelling workshops. These workshops were taped, carefully studied, and adapted into the Capture Wales model. Cathy, in the process, was also responsible for managing and coordinating the offering of workshops as well as offering support around script writing and story discovery during the workshops. Gary, who was initially the web-developer for the Capture Wales website, joined the team on his own volition, was trained into a leader of workshops offered in Welsh, and later became the producer in a later stage of the program. Both shared with me fond memories and admirations for colleagues they worked with for Capture Wales.

Pip Hardy and Tony Sumner, who are also life partners, constitute the facilitating team at Patient Voices. Pip, who studied and taught English in her twenties, has devoted much of her professional life to developing distance-learning materials, particularly in health care quality improvement in the UK. Having discovered digital storytelling and used it to help activist

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patients create stories that were used in their distance-learning materials, Pip took her first workshop with the CDS in 2005 and then a facilitator-in-training workshop in 2006. Since then, Pip has also done a doctoral research to explore the use of digital storytelling in health care education. For Pip, digital storytelling has an additional layer of personal connection in that it enables her to pursue a line of work that was very similar to her father's work, which involved collecting stories in the aviation field, presenting them in accessible formats, and allowing for important lessons to be learned from storytelling. Tony, contrary to the other participants selected for this study, received his academic training mainly in the sciences and had years of experiences in the home computer industry in the UK, which has allowed to build extensive experiences in programming, quality assurance, and development of training materials. As a self-proclaimed "life-long techy," Tony is largely responsible for setting up a friendly technological environment and assuring that the workshops run smoothly. At the protest of their family, who blamed digital storytelling for consuming Pip and Tony's time, the couple has recently tried to do less work and make more time for their family.

Tanna and Jane, the two directors of Creative Narrations, have a shared background in adult education, which gave them extensive teaching experiences and pedagogical tools that they often draw upon to direct their work with digital storytellers. Tanna, who studied community engagement at MIT, discovered digital storytelling through an internship at a community television station, which sponsored a digital storytelling workshop that she participated in. Immediately drawn into the expressive and democratic potentials of the social practice in her line of work, Tanna started offering workshops in the Boston area with a group of associates she trained with or helped to train. Jane, while working at the same adult education institution Tanna once worked at, discovered digital storytelling from Tanna when she was exploring the

possibilities of an alternative, more compelling report for a civic engagement project her students were working on. Since then, Jane had integrated digital storytelling into her teaching. It was not until having taught multiple workshops that she participated in a digital storytelling workshop in San Francisco, which she claims to have completely changed how she approached her teaching of digital storytelling. Having discovered their true commitments to digital storytelling after working with various social groups in the US and other countries, Tanna and Jane now devote their time, aside from being busy mothers of young children, to digital storytelling work that largely takes place on the west coast of US.

Data Collection

At the core of genre analysis is a social conception of text, genre and social practice as dialectically connected dimensions of a given socio-cultural phenomenon. To arrive at a holistic account of digital storytelling, I attend to digital storytelling at the global level, the genre level, and the local level. That is, I work to capture the dialectical ways in which generic structures embody collective and institutionally specific ideological and experiential knowledge on the one hand and examine how genre mediates situated productive activities on the other hand. To satisfy this purpose, three forms of data were collected. I conducted semi-structured interviews with nine facilitators/designers from the four focal programs to get insider accounts of the mission, values, and processes of a given program's work. Additionally, I collected a small corpus of digital stories, which was generated through semi-structured nominations by focal participants, to examine how the shared ethos and ideologies of the social practice were fused with institutionally specific goals and expectations to shape the thematic, organizational, semiotic, rhetorical and ideological meanings and features of individual stories. I also collected texts,

pedagogical materials and publications, which were either made publicly available on these programs' websites, or shared with me by the facilitators, to arrive at situated accounts of the workshop processes. Data were collected in an eight-month duration from April of 2011 to December of 2011.

Digital story corpus

The first source of data is comprised of a corpus of digital stories. Given the size of the four existing archives of digital stories and the wide range of multimodal work represented, I faced the complex task of setting on a manageable corpus. To generate this pool, I asked each of my nine facilitators to nominate 7-10 digital stories that were exemplary of their work. I asked prompting questions to orient nominations towards stories that potentially articulated the ideological and commitments and aesthetic values privileged by each program. These questions are:

- Can you share with me several stories that are the most memorable to you?
- Can you share with me several stories that you often use in your workshop as good examples?
- Can you share with me several stories that you often use to talk to people about what digital storytelling is and why people should tell digital stories?
- Can you briefly comment on why you often use this story? Which qualities or values does this story show?

I used the "memorable story" as an anchor to get at accounts of desirable stories and creative processes promoted by facilitators. In asking for "exemplary stories" that are often used, I was interested in learning how insiders perceive formal, and rhetorical characteristics of stories. In asking for comments on the institutional representation of digital storytelling, targeting

outsiders, I was looking for insights on the ideological claims these programs make, hopefully in association with the aforementioned exemplary and memorable stories and experiences. I used the "how do you use digital stories" questions to get at the type of genre analysis I pursue from the unprompted insider perspective. That is, when attending to a social practice as a dialectic construction that brings together products, processes, and ideological claims, which genre features and practices do facilitators tease out? Additionally, how are such ideological expectations and genre features articulated and demonstrated to authors they work with?

My assumption was that successful stories, especially stories that facilitators used in their workshops and presentations, were particularly telling of the aesthetic, rhetorical and ideological values that were promoted in their work and therefore spoke directly to the collective experiential and ideological knowledge that might traverse a multiplicity of workshops. To ensure a robust set of stories, I did not ask for additional nominations in cases when less than the suggested number of stories was nominated. The initial data pool was examined for repeated nominations by multiple facilitators. As a result, the final pool does not represent an even split in terms of the number of stories associated with each program. The number of stories nominated ranges from 12 to 20 per program. I do, however, argue that the final pool is amply representative of broader themes, trends, and values observed through a broader survey of stories within and across the four focal programs. In Table 1, I have included a list of stories identified for this study, organized first in accordance to program association and then alphabetically according to titles. See Appendix D for a list with stories with URL addresses.

Table 1. *Digital Story Corpus*

	Story	Nominator	Program
1	A dog's life	Cathy	Capture Wales
2	A little misunderstanding	Gary	Capture Wales
3	A night at the dog and duck	Cathy	Capture Wales
4	A quest for understanding	Cathy	Capture Wales
5	Castle on a cloud	Cathy, Gary	Capture Wales
6	Elvis Died in my bedroom	Cathy	Capture Wales
7	Just In time	Cathy	Capture Wales
8	Memories written on my face	Cathy	Capture Wales
9	Most honorable thing	Gary	Capture Wales
10	My picture	Gary	Capture Wales
11	My streets	Gary	Capture Wales
12	Pink Laydee	Cathy	Capture Wales
13	Pinky, baby, and me	Cathy	Capture Wales
14	Something on my heart	Cathy	Capture Wales
15	The lost valleys	Gary	Capture Wales
16	There is nothing more frightening than active ignorance	Gary	Capture Wales
17	Two Families	Cathy, Gary	Capture Wales
18	Two stubborn girls	Gary	Capture Wales
19	Walking with Maurice	Gary	Capture Wales
20	Winter green	Gary	Capture Wales
21	A note to self	Kay	CDS
22	A seed of never seen hope	Kay	CDS
23	Beauty	Dan	CDS
24	Dear Grandma	Dan, Joe	CDS
25	Deep Water	Dan	CDS
26	Falsies	Dan, Pip	CDS
27	Grand Canyons	Dan, Joe	CDS
28	Home Movies	Joe	CDS
29	Ironing	Dan	CDS
30	Letters	Joe	CDS
31	New Orleans	Joe	CDS
32	Nowhere anyhow	Kay, Joe	CDS
33	Pralines	Dan, Kay, Joe	CDS
34	Rituals	Joe	CDS
35	Sacrificios	Dan	CDS
36	Tanya	Dan, Joe	CDS
37	The gift of non-voilence	Kay	CDS
38	Bridge to Health	Jane	Creative Narrations
39	Engineering education for the 21st century	Jane	Creative Narrations
40	Imagining community	Tanna	Creative Narrations

41	In their own time	Tanna, Jane	Creative Narrations
42	It's my story everyday	Tanna	Creative Narrations
43	Lean on me	Tanna	Creative Narrations
44	One size does not fit all	Jane	Creative Narrations
45	Our babies' health	Tanna, Jane	Creative Narrations
46	Search Garden project	Tanna	Creative Narrations
47	The dump is doing this to us	Jane	Creative Narrations
48	Treat everyone as if they are your mother	Tanna	Creative Narrations
49	What the water gave me	Tanna, Jane	Creative Narrations
50	A bright world waiting	Pip	Patient Voices
59	A world of difference	Tony	Patient Voices
51	For the love of Lee	Pip	Patient Voices
52	Getting to the bottom of things	Pip	Patient Voices
53	Go around	Pip, Tony	Patient Voices
54	Jimmy's Story	Pip	Patient Voices
55	Knitting	Tony	Patient Voices
56	Only connect-a life told in stories	Pip	Patient Voices
57	See me now	Pip	Patient Voices
58	Yeah, I'll go	Pip	Patient Voices

Autobiographical accounts as well as facilitator accounts of the "back story" to a story, when they were available, were also collected and considered to help me arrive at a more detailed and balanced analysis of a given story. Autobiographical accounts refer to the author's reflective comment on the making of a story. Most stories featured on the CDS and Capture Wales websites are accompanied by a short piece of reflective writing, in which the author responds to prompt questions and shares ideas about who one is, reasons for choosing a certain story, and impact of storytelling on the author. On Capture Wale's site, a transcript is also made available. Facilitators often shared with me the "back story" of a story, in which the facilitator explained the author's motivation and processes for choosing a story, shared anecdotes about accidental discoveries and challenges the author encountered in making the story, and articulated how a given story showed key qualities and characteristics they were interested in promoting in their workshops.

Selection of focal stories

A genre-informed analysis requires that I attend to the social-historical collective, the mediating genre system, and situated discursive meaning at the same time. Therefore, the analytical work necessarily involves a;) constant comparative analysis of stories within and cross programs in order to generate and verify genre characteristics (thematic, semiotic, compositional, and ideological features), and b.) fine-grained analysis of focal stories in order to examine how genre- and institution-specific features unfold in durable and dynamic ways in individual stories. Therefore, settling on focal stories for a fine-grained analysis has been a recursive, complex task. My choice of the focal stories, *Grand Canyon* from CDS, *A Night at Ducks and Dogs* from Capture Wales, and *Getting to the Bottom of Things* from Patient Voices were guided by the following criterion. First, I examined the extent to which a story manifested the genre- and institutional-specific features of the program it "belonged to" (e.g. treatment of mundane thematic content, sense of humor, a linear progression of narratives, etc.). This line of filtering was guided by comparative analysis of the larger corpus and the analytical constructs such analysis yielded. Second, I drew on facilitators' descriptions, commentary, and notations of particular stories to guide my selection of focal stories. That is, I tried to triangulate my selection with the insider perspective. For example, both Tony and Pip commented that *Getting to the Bottom of Things* was one story that they always showed at conferences and workshops because of the compelling ways in which it illustrated desirable ideological and thematic qualities they wanted to communicate to their audience. When such insider commentaries were given, I took them into account in making my selections. The last factor that influenced my choice of focal texts was the overall conceptual, semiotic, and aesthetic quality of a story. I did so because I recognized that the facilitators' nominations had often been shaped by my prompting questions,

which pushed them to attend to different aspects of the stories rather than treating them as semiotic wholes. That is, some facilitators gave me examples that irrespectively illustrated "memorable stories," "exemplary stories," "stories to talk about," and "stories to use." Guided by their own theories of how these stories are different from and/or similar to each other, certain choices might have leaned towards one's own aesthetic preferences or personal relationships with a participants. For example, Gary admitted that his preference for a rowdy sense of humor played an important role in his nomination of *A Little Misunderstanding*. Even though a sense of humor is an important genre-specific quality to Capture Wales stories, this story, I infer, might not be one that others would discuss, show or consider as exemplary. In other words, I had chosen the focal stories not as exemplars of a smaller number or individualized preferences. Instead, I have chosen pieces that manifested a relatively comprehensive set of genre- and institutional-specific characteristics.

Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted for two purposes. First, I used these interviews to get at meta-level accounts of collective experiential and ideological meaning of the social practice from the myriad perspectives of facilitators. In particular, I aimed to observe the meaning potential of digital storytelling as it was indexed by the practice and visions of the four programs. Second, the interviews gave me accounts of institutional contexts, in which digital storytelling unfolded in unpredictable ways partially because it needed to fulfill institutionally specific goals and expectations, novel problems, individual facilitator's beliefs and approaches, as well as participants' needs and expertise. In important ways, the interviews also gave me valuable insights about the social history of digital storytelling as facilitators commented on key moments of in the development of their programs. In Table 2, I provide a sampling of my

facilitator interview protocol to give the reader a sense of my data collection. See Appendix C

for a full version of the interview protocol.

Table 2. *Sampling of Facilitator Interview Protocol*

General Background	Describe your background in relation to digital storytelling (experiences and training that shape your work).
	What is your history with the program?
	What are your beliefs about teaching and how are they applied in your work?
Meaning Potential	Give me your description of digital storytelling.
	In what ways does digital storytelling affect individuals, communities, and society at large?
	What makes a digital story good? What makes a digital story bad?
	In what ways is digital storytelling different from or similar to other forms of storytelling, writing, and so on?
	What is the role of technology in the distinctive characteristics of digital storytelling?
Genre Practices	Walk me through a typical workshop (activities, events and so on). What are the routines you adhere to?
	What technology and tools are made available to participants? Are expertise of any kind expected of participants?
	Are there texts, digital stories, and examples you often use? How are they used and for what purpose? Why these texts?
	Are there artifacts (e.g. storyboards, froms, worksheets) you often use? How are they used and for what purposes? Why these artifacts?
	Who are the participants? Their motivations?
	What is the nature of the relationship between facilitators and participants?
Genre Features	What are the most common types of stories that people often tell? Why do you think that is?
	How do you characterize digital storytelling? What properties do you attend to when determining types?

To identify and initiate contact with focal participants, I relied on a Digital Storytelling

working group Joe had created on facebook.com. Upon my first inquiry for a possibility of

conducting research, Joe enabled my participation in the working group, which had since served

as my main venue of participant recruitment. After having built up rapport with some

participants through public postings and informal exchanges, I received friendly "nudges" from

Dan to participate in a workshop, which, according to him, was the only way to get an understanding of the process. In the summer of 2011, I attended a three-day standard CDS workshop that Dan offered. Although my experiences with the workshop were not treated as data, they served as an important anchor for my research. First, I was able to build some experiential knowledge and to acquire the perspective of a participant, which allowed me to compare perceptions, verify assumptions, and raise questions. Second, making my own story, along with other participants in my cohort, allowed me to experience and observe an ideological framework operating through the concrete pedagogical and productive moves facilitators and participants made. I have become more cognizant of the value of such an experiential knowledge through subsequent interviews with facilitators from other programs, for which situated experiences was not available. Although I was able to obtain a fairly thorough description and account of the process, the depth and the "thickness" of such accounts often fell short of the one I developed with CDS. However, an in-depth understanding of the CDS' workshop did give me useful anchors to frame my conversations with facilitators in productive ways. Lastly, the intimate group process allowed me to build a strong rapport with the facilitators, who were more than willing to share with me their insights. Through these contacts, I was able to expand my reach to key persons in other focal programs.

Subsequent to my own workshop, I began to arrange interviews with both Dan and Kay to further explore into their pedagogy, beliefs, and practices. I also drew on focal participants' feedback to proceed with recruitment of participants. For example, it iwas through Dan's reference that I was able to schedule phone conversations with Pip and Tony, who spoke with me on two separate occasions about their individual perspectives. In similarly ways, I approached both Gary and Cathy through the private message function on the facbook group page and was

able to schedule a Skype session with Cathy and a phone conversation with Gary. I was able to reach Jane and Tanna, who were not in the facebook working group, through email addresses listed on Creative Narration's webpage. Interviews were scheduled through email exchanges and were conducted over the phone. Phone conversations and Skype sessions were recorded and later transcribed.

Text collection

An additional source of data is consisted of several types of texts, documents, and publications made available by each program. These textual artifacts are consulted for discussions of the ideological and social meanings of digital storytelling, typical ways of organizing activities and tasks, and tutorials and resources. The following texts will be collected and analyzed:

- *About Us/ Principles and Values:* descriptions of the goals and nature of the program, sometimes including a historical account of the program;

- *Pedagogical materials*: curriculum materials; PowerPoint presentations, handouts.

- *Publications:* books and other published writings.

In Table 3, I display the alignment between theoretical propositions of genre, my research questions, and data sources.

Table 3. *Alignment between Theory, Question and Data*

Research Question	Theoretical Proposition	Data Source
Q1. What does it mean to consider DS as a genre?		
a. What sub-genres of digital stories have emerged?	Genre as dynamic fusion of textual, thematic, and discursive conventions	• Documents • DS corpus
b. What are the social and ideological meanings of DS?	Genre index social, ideological meanings of social practice	• Interview • Documents • DS corpus
Q2. What constitutes the genre system of DS?		
a. What practical, discursive, and material structures have developed?	Genre as productive synthesis of discursive, material, and practical processes	• Interview • Documents
b. How do generic structures encode social practice?	Genre system embodies social and productive conditions	• Interview
Q3. What does it mean to consider digital storytelling as a durable cultural genre?	Genre as durable embodiment of socio-historical experiences and knowledge	
a. How are such generic structures invoked in disparate instances?	Genre organize and structure productive activities	• Interview
b. What social and ideological meanings are systematically indexed in and across sub-genres?	Genre imbues productive activities with social historical meaning	• DS corpus • Interview
Q4. What does it mean to consider digital storytelling as a dynamic cultural genre?	Genre as dynamic site of innovation	
a. How has the DS changed over time?	Historical context as mechanism of genre change	• DS corpus
b. How has DS unfolded differently across contexts?	Institutional context as mechanism of genre change	• DS corpus
c. How are individual creativity accomplished?	Individual play as mechanism of genre change	• DS corpus

Data Analysis

Analysis of the data required several different layers of coding and interpretation that were simultaneously informed by genre theory, discourse analytic techniques, and multimodal analytic techniques. Analysis of data took place in three discrete and yet recursively structured and inter-connected phases.

Interview and artifact analysis

Initially, through multiple and comparative readings of interview data, the texts were coded in an inductive fashion to allow themes to naturally emerge. Such themes included categories like these—the transformative experience, multimodal relationships, creativity, the group process versus products, facilitator background and beliefs, facilitator pedagogy, workshop structure, problems and challenges, formal attributes of digital story and so on. Following inductive coding, I then turned to genre theory for broad, theory-based frames to group inductively formed themes into top-level categories, such as meaning potential (including transformative potential, democratic potential, expressive potential, and creative potential), genre practices (typified sequence of activities, artifacts, technological tools, and social relations), historical trajectory, and genre features (thematic, compositional, and semiotic) of digital stories.

Conceptual Mapping of Genre Features

My first pass at analyzing digital stories was simply to categorize them in accordance to sub-genres, which took into consideration the thematic content, organizational structures, semiotic features, and rhetorical purposes of each story. By watching the digital stories in the corpus repeatedly, I was able to create a typology of digital stories according to sub-genres that often prevailed across program boundaries. This rough typology of genres of digital stories is shown in Appendix D. As dictated by my theoretical framework, each digital story fulfills a

multitude of purposes entailed by the social practice, the institutional context, and the individual. Therefore, I do not make any claims about these categories that can be clearly defined and cleanly bounded. Instead, I simply offer this rough cut as a starting description and a base that point to directions for more fine-grained analysis.

A genre theorist's task was then to consider the digital stories, genre, and the social practice as intimately connected dimensions of the same social phenomenon. In light of this theoretical framework, I used five general axes of analysis, as listed in Table 4, to code the 59 stories, each of which I transcribed by using the discourse-based multimodal transcription methods I developed. In examining these stories as instances of genre invocation, I considered each story for its thematic content, compositional structure, semiotic features, the socially ratified processes of production and consumption, and the ideological orientation that gave socially recognizable and culturally appropriate meaning to it. This analysis was facilitated by prompt questions as summarized in Table 4.

Table 4. *Prompt Questions for Genre-informed Analysis*

Thematic Content	The focus was on the meaning of a story: • What is the thematic content of the digital story? • What themes, orientations, and ideas were conveyed by the digital story (such as social change, personal growth, cultural democracy, and etc.)?
Compositional Structure	The focus was on how the story progresses: • How is a given story conveyed? • What are the major constitutive parts of the story (such as a moment, a point and an anecdote, a dragon and the passing of a dragon)? • How are the parts logically connected to each other?
Semiotic Features	The focus was on the form of a story: • What images are used and to what effect? • Which audio effects are used and to what effect? • What is the typified inter-modal relationship across modes?
Socially Ratified Practice	The focus was on the processes of producing, distributing, and receiving a given digital story • What is the rhetorical situation that gives rise to the storytelling (intersection of social practice and institutional context)? • What is the configuration (of persons, activities, tools, texts, and events configured) that typifies the production condition? • What is the purpose of storytelling? Who is the intended audience? • What is the intended use of the digital story? What is the intended effect of the story on individuals, communities, or society?
Ideology	The focus was on the ideological meaning of a story: • In what ways does the story index and embody ideology, norms, and values of the social practice and/or a particular program? • What is considered as socially acceptable and culturally appropriate way of telling a story in light of the recurrent rhetorical situation?

To formulate analytical categories indicative of genre features, I employed the constant comparative method (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) to code each story in relation to producer's notes, facilitator interviews, institutional and pedagogical artifacts, and other stories in the corpus. I constantly shifted between digital stories and other sources of data, especially facilitator interviews, to verify and solidify emerging categories. In the similar fashion, I read institutional and pedagogical artifacts, such as PowerPoint presentations used at workshops, curriculum materials, and workshop handouts, for specific values and expectations attached to digital storytelling and digital stories. This process allowed me to identify genre and institutionally

specific features such as these: a.) thematic features, such as stories of transformation, survival, or social injustice; b.) compositional features, such as a rich moment, a point-anecdote scheme, or a passing-the-dragon scheme; c.) temporal features, such as a linear narrative structure, mirror moments, or temporal shifts; d.) semiotic features, such as iconic use of image, scanty use of music, or the use of amateur artwork; e.) productive and consumptive processes, such as the inwardly or outwardly directed intentions for stories; and f.) ideological features, such as cultural democracy, social change, art therapy, creative expression, and so on. In attending to these genre features individually and comparatively, I was able to work towards stabilized-for-now fusions of these features that could be observed across stories, verified through the triangulation of data, and therefore constituted an adequate condition for genre identification.

In the forthcoming section, I organize my discussion of methodology through the lens of a concrete example. By attending to *Ironing*[12], a CDS story, I discuss how I drew on different strands of data to arrive at the conception of a rich moment as an important analytical construct. In tracing this data analysis process, I also demonstrate the utilities of two analytical techniques (discourse-based multimodal transcript and a visual model) in helping me to track and highlight emerging analytical constructs.

One telling compositional feature *Ironing* professes is the vivid construction of a rich moment. My identification of a rich moment was first and foremost informed by comparative analysis of multiple stories, which systematically manifested this particular compositional feature. My theorization of the rich moment, however, was also shaped by themes found in the CDS facilitators' accounts, the CDS cook book, and my experiential knowledge of the workshop process itself. Drawing on these data, I have come to define a rich moment as a small temporal

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[12] Ironing can be accessed at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mqfmkjbMAmU

window through which the author shows, rather than tells, a state of affairs that is emblematic of a broader analytical theme of the story. A rich moment, according to Dan, Kay and the CDS cookbook, is a key quality that they promote in their workshop through the showing and focused discussion of stories like *Ironing*. My experiential knowledge of a CDS workshop also allowed me to verify facilitator accounts about how they make certain pedagogical moves to enforce this idea. It is through such insights, which spoke directly to the ideological and aesthetic values of digital storytelling from the CDS perspective, that I was then able to identify a "rich moment" as an analytical construct that could inform my analysis of the overall macrostructure of this and other CDS stories.

Once an analytical construct had been identified, I relied on inductive, comparative analysis of stories to verify and define it meaning. In this case, I allowed themes emerging from genre-informed analysis and discourse based multimodal transcripts to guide my description of a rich moment as having the following characteristics: a.) it is a moment from the author's past that is multimodally constructed through sensory details and vivid reenactments of scenes and/or dialogues; b.) this moment is emblematic of and/or illustrates a broader theme of change that the story addresses; and c.) the thematic content embedded in a rich moment is often revisited, referenced, and commented upon in other thematic units in the story. When a given category was observed to recur and prevail in a good number of CDS stories, I then turned it into an analytical frame that was used for coding. In the sections that follow, I provide a detailed account of how I used my transcription methods and visual modeling techniques to systematically track and highlight such genre features. In designing these analytical tools, I drew on both discourse analytic and multimodal analytic techniques. The combination of these analytical moves allowed

me to construct visual transcriptions of the stories and to proceed with a genre informed multimodal analysis.

Discourse-informed Multimodal Analysis

Multimodal Transcript

On the multimodal analytical front, I adapted Hull and Nelson's model (2005) to allow a visual representation of the multiple channels of meaning-making in ways that both the individual and combinatory semiotic contributions made to the synesthetic whole could be analyzed (p. 11). When identifying the modes that I visually represented for analytical purposes, I attended primarily to the narrative, texts, images, and music, while providing brief notation for animation effects. In visually representing the selected, simultaneously apprehended modes, I replicated Hull and Nelson's multi-track representation to graphically depict the co-presence of words, pictures, and music.

Discourse-based Multimodal Transcript

On the discourse analysis front, I turned to Gee's (2005) notion of "idea units" to break the story down into semiotic clauses with the assumption that each semiotic clause was defined by the fact that it bought new information to move the story along. The multimodal idea units were then grouped into topical segments, or what Gee calls "stanzas," which was a group of semiotic idea units about one important event happening, or state of affairs at one time and place, or a specific character, theme, image, topic, or perspective (p. 128). Particularly useful for the purpose of my analysis is Gee's notion of "macrostructure," or what I call the chapters of the story, which are constituted by "idea units" and "stanzas." In the example he uses, Gee resorts to a more conventional schemata used in literary theory to guide his analysis of a young child's

story. Namely, he breaks down a story in accordance to a classic order of progression that moves through an initial setting, a catalyst and a crisis, the author's evaluation, resolution to the problem, and a coda. In my analysis, I tried to stay away from any established schemata. Instead, I relied on inductively formulated analytical constructs to guide this strand of analysis.

In this section, I will demonstrate the utility of a discourse-informed multimodal transcript in breaking down each digital story into idea units, stanzas and chapters. I also attend to how my decisions of bounding chapters were guided by analytical constructs emerging from a triangulated treatment of data. First, I use the opening sequence of *Ironing* to illustrate how I adapted Gee's analytical tools to approach multimodally orchestrated idea units, stanzas, and chapters. I then draw on a later sequence to explain the theoretical construction of the rich moment as a genre feature. For the convenience of display, I present the opening sequence and the rich moment separately in figure 4 and 5.
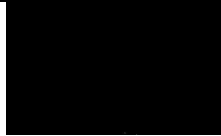
Visual					
Title		I love the rhythm of ironing/ the heat, the swoosh, the smell of the steam, collar, cuffs,	sleeves, back, front, and then the hanger. /and then again.	Over, and over.	Until the pile of clothes becomes neat racks of buttoned-down shirts.
Audio	Rhythmic, monotonous guitar music				
Idea Unit					
Stanza		Sensory details that describe the act of ironing.		Repeated acts of ironing and its outcomes	
Chapter	Title Page	Set up			
		Sensory details that describe the act of ironing.		Repeated acts of ironing and its outcomes	

Figure 1. Ironing Transcript-Opening Sequence

In the opening sequence of *Ironing,* a succession of five images occupies the visual space. The fist semiotic unit (idea unit) of this sequence is consisted of the image of an iron as

the background on which the title of the story and its author's name appears half way into the duration of the image's stay on the visual screen. Coupling with a rhythmic and monotonous guitar music that continues throughout the piece, this image-music coupling creates the first idea unit that performs multiple narrative, rhetorical, and aesthetic purposes. First, this idea unit contains basic information about the title and author. Second, the idea unit foreshadows a conceptual dissonance between the essentially monotonous and tedious nature of the activity and the author's professed passion for it. Lastly, the sense of monotony conveyed through the soundtrack is further enacted and fleshed out in the remainder of the story through the use of rich sensory details. In that regard, the first idea unit contributes to a unique aesthetic and emotional theme that fully materializes as the story continues to unfold. In itself, the first idea unit is meaningful part of the macro-structure of the story—a title page that encapsulates the theme of the story.

I consider the next two image-narrative couplings as the constituents of a "stanza." If we separate the two main channels of meaning making—the narrative and the visual, we can see that the linguistic mode contains three different idea units of its own, including a general statement of his professed love for ironing, details that vividly re-enact the scene of the author engaged in concrete acts of ironing, and a statement latching on to the second idea unit but pointing to a different area of ironing. In the visual mode, two images that are semantically parallel to each other show the author at a much younger age, with his mother and father respectively. Considered together, the visual-narrative couplings do not assume any obvious logical inter-modal relationship, but within each mode, meaning develops independently of the other channel. The narrative progresses in a logical fashion; the images are semantically related; there is a lack of semantic coherence between the linguistic and the pictorial. As such, the meaning of the two

couplings can only emerge when they are considered as a unitary, semiotic whole, in which the author explores ironing as connected to childhood experiences.

In what follows, we encounter what I call a visual silence. As the narrative continues into the next stanza, the visual plane intentionally left blank for a moment. This visual silence may seem rather incoherent with the idea unit that precedes and follows it, but when we analyze the story as a whole, the use of visual silence turns out to be a quite effective strategy the author repeatedly uses to punctuate major transition points in his story. In the next stanza, the meanings conveyed through the visual and the narrative map onto each other to collectively portray a "neat rack of buttoned-down shirts," which completes the thought introduced in the previous stanza. Considered together, the last two image-narrative couplings in this sequence constitute the second stanza, which provides a slightly more analytical perspective on the act of ironing.

This type of descriptive analysis allowed me to do different kinds of analytical work. The analytical bounding of idea units, stanzas, and chapters allowed me to track the thematic movement of the story. Attention to semiotic details allowed me to observe typified or innovative semiotic designs. As this example may suggest, CDS stories tend to manifest more a wider and more diverse range of semiotic designs. Although I did not employ this fine-grained descriptive analysis to treat every story in the corpus, constructing a discourse-based multimodal transcript for every story in the corpus had allowed me to perform the analytical tasks entailed here.
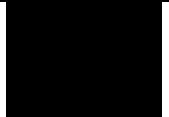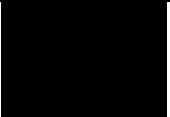
Visual						
Title	Later,/ in that same basement/ my mother would sometimes ask me and my brother to sit on the couch and talk with her,/ as she stood there in front of us with her pink, terry cloth house coat/ ironing.	I remember / the smell of bleached tube socks and fruit a loom underwear/ and how easily	the garments shifted under her hands/ It must have given her body some distraction from all that pain/ so she could talk with us kids	She asked a lot of questions/	and avoided others/ I wonder sometimes/ about the questions she must have asked herself.	Why my husband? Why now? why so young? 25 years later, that house is gone, and so is she.
Audio	Rhythmic, monotonous guitar music throughout					
Idea Unit						
Stanza	Sight	Smell	Analysis	Questions		Wondering
Chapter	Rich Moment			Analysis of Rich Moment		

Figure 2. Ironing Transcript-Rich Moment

The next excerpt from *Ironing* is the third chapter in the story. A brief mentioning of the recent purchase of a new house, where he was doing some ironing, leads to connection between the new house and his childhood home. In doing so, the author reveals a traumatic discovery of his father's death. Building on this chronotopic link between the present and the past, the author introduces a focal chapter of his story: memories of his mother ironing in the basement after his father's death and his reflective analysis of that event. Drawing on themes emerging from comparative analysis of CDS stories, I have come to identify this chapter as a rich moment. That is, it is a finite moment that is furnished with vivid, descriptive details, including his mother's appearance, smells in the basement, activities, and feelings, all offered to reenact this moment in the past. Additionally, this rich moment is immediately used as grounds for analysis and contemplation—the author attempts to fathom the depth of his mother's pain after his father's death. This rich moment, constituted by six distinct and yet intimately connected stanzas, some delivering sensory details, others providing analysis, plays a central role in the story as it delivers

a theme—a new understanding of himself, his mother, and their relationship from the lens of the simple act of ironing. This theme is encapsulated by the rich moment, which is constantly referenced and revisited to bring forth the theme of change. In doing so, it also functions to bring other chapters of the story into coherence.

Through this example, I want to illustrate how I have allowed an analytical construct developed through the triangulated treatment of data to guide my bounding of a thematic chapter. In doing so, however, I do not suggest that I followed a one-way route in developing and applying analytical constructs. I constantly moved in and out of stories and other types of data to allow the verification, refinement, and revision of analytical constructs. More importantly, I relied on stories to supply concrete evidence of the durable and innovative ways of realizing broadly defined genre features.

A Temporality Visual Model

As I have shown above, I adapted discourse analytic frames to help me identify the basic units of analysis, which, in this case, was each multimodally orchestrated "stanza." The above example also showed the analytical facility of a multi-tracked, horizontal visual transcription method in tracking the semiotic features a story professes. However, this treatment of "stanzas" and "chapters" as distinct and discrete analytical units did not allow me to capture the thematic flow of a story. To address my concern for a simultaneous attention to the micro-level semiotic groupings as well as macro-level thematic movements, I added two more analytical tracks to the visual representation in order to document and track the progression of ideas mainly through the lens of stanzas and chapters. In addition to these analytical moves, I devised a visual model to help me restore and represent the unfolding of events in stories and in life.

In designing this visual model, I paid particular attention to the co-presence of two temporalities in a given story—the temporality of natural events and the temporality of the narrative. The temporality of natural events tracks the order in which memories, events, and experiences take place in real time. The temporality of the narrative documents the unfolding of the narrative through a sequence of thematic chapters and junctures. My thinking here was informed by broader considerations of digital storytelling as a genre of personal storytelling. Partially invoking a conventional genre that focuses on the creative and reflective recount of personal stories, digital stories necessarily involve the reconstruction of events that take place in real time. As Bakhtin argues and as my analysis reveals, "chronotopic" relationships index important genre features of literature (Bakhtin, 1981). In the case of digital storytelling, the making of narratives always involves the juggling of time and therefore professes certain temporal features. For this project, I argue that typified temporal features are as important as thematic, compositional, and semiotic features in indexing and embodying the social system of ideology and practice.

By attending to the temporality of natural events, I am primarily concerned with a critical productive decision authors make: which moments, memories, and events were selected and processed for the purpose of digital storytelling? Am I using the story to provide a beginning-to-end account of one Sunday fishing trip? Or am I using a story to bring into confluence temporally dispersed memories and experiences around a theme (a story about how I got my first, second, third, and fourth wrinkle over the span of 15 years)? Or am I selectively drawing on the most pertinent, past experience just to illustrate a point I am currently making?

On the other hand, the temporality of the narrative sheds light on the creative intention of an author. That is, how are these selected experiences, memories, and ongoing thinking

recontextualized and reappropriated in an unfolding story? How are they arranged in a temporal order? Does an author open the story with a poignant piece of memory and move on to a series of expositions situated in the present? Does the narrative structure simply replicate the natural order of events? Does the author completely ignore time as an organizing principle and play with memories and experiences in such a way we can never really keep track of time? From a genre perspective, ways of seeing and doing with time might embody a shared understanding of how the "raw materials" should be rendered and how such renderings play into culturally appropriate and socially expected forms.

This heuristic tool helps me to examine how life events are reappropriated to serve broader thematic goals. In this visual model, I use axis-x to restore the temporality of the narrative and to visually represent the unfolding of semantic "stanzas" from the beginning to the end of a story. I use axis-y to track the temporality of natural events, namely the unfolding of events and activities in real time. The point of origin represents the starting points on both temporal planes, be it the beginning of a story (x-axis) or the beginning of a sequence of natural events (y-axis). To identify temporal frames that can help me track chronotopes, I have largely relied on temporal adverbs and adverbial phrases in a given story (e.g. recently, a few months ago, when I was four) that directly situates an event in a time frame as well as implicit references to time frames (e.g. I remember the smell of the basement, I wonder what she must be thinking).

While acknowledging the analytical facility of this tool, I note there are several limitations embedded in the design of the model, which stops one from arriving at a truly accurate and holistic account of how the two temporalities intersect. First, I have largely ignored the scale of time in constructing this model, largely out of concern for the convenience of display. That is, this model doesn't truly represent the elapse of time, in either real and narrative

trajectories. I did not build into the model a scaling system (using day/week/year as units of real time or using seconds/minutes as units of narrative time), which as created in accuracies in its visual representation. Second, a researcher could not truly discover the temporality of natural events unless one was able to collect retrospective account from the author with regard to when certain life events took place and in what order. Therefore, the representation of the natural temporality is rough and sketchy. In what follows, I move to describe the visual model through two narrative examples, one taken from my daughter and one from a CDS story. By juxtaposing these two narratives, I hope to illustrate how this exploratory, heuristic model can help to reveal temporal patterns of storytelling.

At this stage of the type of analytical work I pursue, I suggest that we do not treat this model as a sophisticated formal structure that can be used for coding purposes. Instead, I offer this model as a preliminary, heuristic tool that is useful in revealing and describing certain genre features that a triangulated analysis of data suggests. It allows me to explore into one dimension of personal storytelling that has so far been largely overlooked. That is, this visual model allows me to attend to how an individual author's juggling of life events, as situated within particular time frames, is partially informed by broader institutional and ideological orientations. While I suggest that the model reveals productive patterns that can be observed across a corpus of stories, fine-grained modeling of individual stories might reveal more differences than similarities as the result of individual creativity and innovation.

An example: Temporal visual model of Brooke's story

Here I want to use a short stretch of narrative that my five-year old daughter produced to illustrate the analytical facility of the heuristic visual tool I developed. In this narrative, Brooke gave an account of her fifth birthday party:

> "Mommy put eggs, flour, sugar, and cream in a bowl. Mommy mixed them well. Mommy put it into our oven. "Ding ding ding!" That thing made big noise. A cake came out! Stanley and his dad came first. They parked their car. Stanley gave me a present and we opened it. Mommy said 'no, no, no, you wait.' We put it back. Nathan came. Nathan brought me a present. Nathan brought a shark (a watermelon shark)! Nathan blew my candle. I cried. He said, "Sorry Brooke". We played with balloons and ran around. Everybody left. I went to bed."

In the discourse analysis lexicon that Gee (2006) prefers, the first task of a discourse analyst is to reorganize the text according to "idea units," "stanzas" and "macrostructure." In Table 5, I reprint Brooke's story as a whole, while following Gee's analytical techniques by marking larger chapters (or what Gee calls macrostructual unit) with a Roman numeral and bold capital labels, stanzas in Italics, and lines by numbers. In the right column, I provide notations on the temporality of events as I recall.

Table 5. *A Discourse Analysis Transcript of Brooke's Story*

I: CAKE	
Stanza 1 1. Mommy put eggs, flour, sugar, and cream in a bowl 2. Mommy mixed them well 3. Mommy put it into our oven	The morning of her birthday party, 10-10:30 am.
Stanza 2 4. "Ding ding ding!" 5. That thing made big noise. 6. A cake came out!	11:15 am.
II: FIRST ARRIVAL	
Stanza 3 7. Stanley and his dad came first. 8. They parked their car.	Around 5:30 pm. Our guests were fashionable late, while Brooke had been anxiously waiting for their arrival.
III: PRESENTS	
Stanza 4 9. Stanley gave me a present 10. and we opened it. 11. Mommy said 'no, no, no, you wait.' 12. We put it back.	Around 5:45-5:55 Brooke was a little upset that they could not open the presents until after cutting the cake.
Stanza 5 13. Nathan came. 14. Nathan brought me a present. 15. Nathan brought a shark (a watermelon shark)!	Around 5:30 pm. There was an overlap between Nathan's arrival and the present-opening incident.
IV: A PROBLEM	
Stanza 6 16. Nathan blew my candle. 17. I cried. 18. He said, "Sorry Brooke."	Around 7:30-8 pm, after dinner.
V: PLAYING ALL NIGHT	
Stanza 7 19. We played with balloons 20. and ran around.	From 8 pm to 11 pm.
VI: ENDING	
Stanza 8 21. Everybody left 22. I went to bed	Brooke went to bed at around 11:30.

In re-organizing Brooke's story according to stanzas and chapters, I work to discover and reveal meaningful patterns in my five-year-old daughter's narrative. This macro-level analysis

allows me to get at the basic themes in Brooke's recount of an exciting day. As we can see, chapters in her story carried thematic focuses that varied in scope and perceived significance. For example, her lasting obsession with a strawberry chiffon cake, an artifact that is emblematic of the occasion, probably led to the descriptive weight going into the chapter about making the cake. Similarly, she selected the incident of Nathan blowing the candle because of the emotionally "devastating" and therefore memorable nature of that event. As any storytelling enterprise, Brooke's story made selective use of events that took place during that day. With selection, however, comes exclusion. What she decisively left out, for example, were details of the meal that took us a whole day to prepare and a face-painting session that everybody loved. An important idea here is events that were reappropriated not only had thematic qualities, but also distinct temporal qualities, as my notations revealed. They took place in real time and were therefore temporally related to each other.

Another task discourse analysis assays is to understand how such thematic chapters are organized in the story. For the type of narrative analysis I perform, a temporality-informed representation helps me to explore the intersection of two temporalities—the order in which actual events took place on Brooke's birthday and the order in which Brooke's story represented such events. I argue, for the broader project, that the intersection of these two temporalities often reveals areas of correspondence and disruption that are often informed by genres and genre practices. I present the temporality-informed visual model in Figure 1.
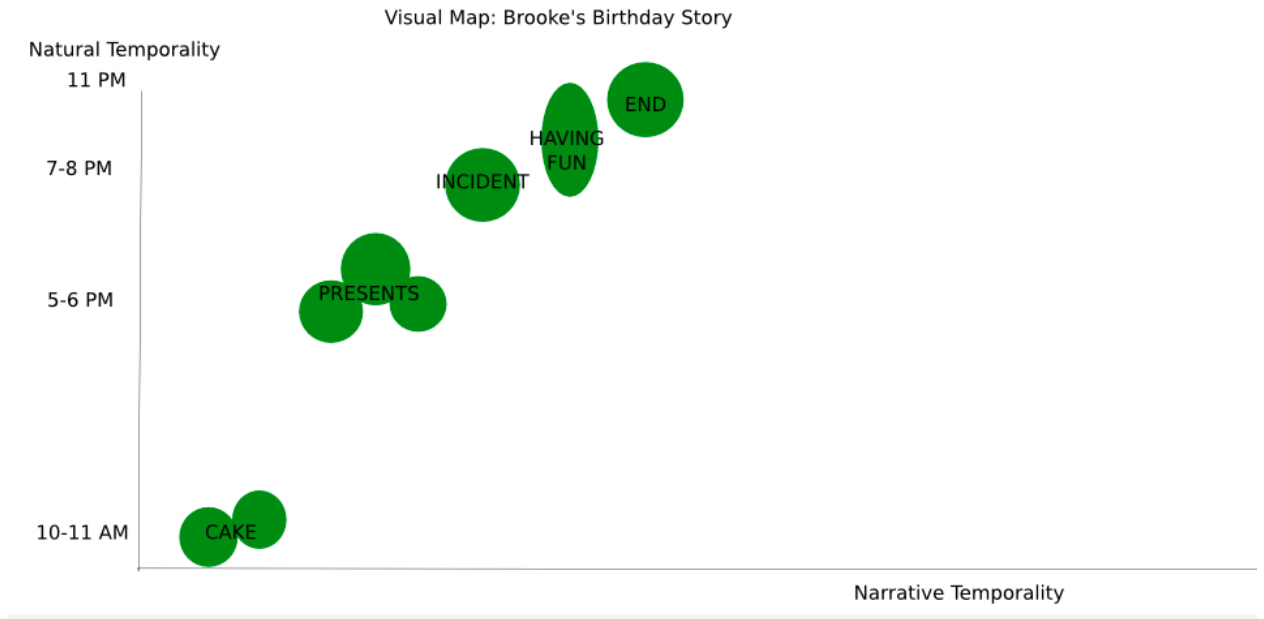
Figure 3. Brooke's Birthday Story, A Visual Model

As I have previously discussed, the visual tool was designed to represent the intersection of two temporalities, with the x-axis representing the progression of ideas in the narrative over time, and the y-axis representing the temporal order in which natural events take place. Thus, on the x-axis, we see the story unfolding in a sequence of chapters from the beginning to an end. On the y-axis, we see the rearrangement of natural events, with a particular attention to how they exist in temporal relation to each other. In stories I analyzed for this dissertation, most of which created by adults, however, markers for temporal frames were often present and useful. What is worth noting here is that I did not follow an exact scale of time distribution (e.g. using singe unit to represent the elapse of every hour) when mapping the trajectories of either temporalities in this visual model. Instead, my goal was to model the rough temporal trajectory of the progression of ideas and events. A practical, methodological concern underlined my decision here. That is, more sophisticatedly executed personal stories often treat time as a highly plastic construction. An author may brush off a 20-year elapse by one adverbial phrase, while investing extensive

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amount of details developing the moment-by-moment movement of events in a half-hour time frame. Therefore, I designed the visual model to accommodate such plasticity of temporality. To refine this model, however, I suggest that a researcher attends to the scale issue by first deciding on functional temporal units, such as minute, hour, day, month, year, decade, and so on and then by developing formal features with which the distribution of time can be reflected according to units.

In this visual model, Brooke's story roughly resembles a y=x plot because it is a story told according to chronological order. Despite the fact there was an extensive lapse of time in between the first and second chapter of the story (from making the cake in the morning to the arrival of the first guests in the afternoon), the unfolding of events in the story largely followed the same temporal order as actual events unfolded in real time. The only exception was when Brooke created two parallel accounts of Stanley and Nathan bringing presents, which happened in an overlapping period of time but unfolded in her story in the order of Stanley and then Nathan. See Figure 2 and 3 for how events were organized differently in the two temporalities.

| Stanley Arrived (parked car, brought a present) | Tried to open Stanley's present and was stopped | Nathan Arriveed (with a watermellon shark) |

Figure 4. Narrative Temporality-How are events represented in the story?

| Stanley arrived (parked car, brought a present) | Nathan arrived (with watermellon shark) | Stanley, Brooke, Nathan tried to open present but was stopped |

Figure 5. Natural Temporality--How did things actually happen?

In making this thematic move, Brooke allowed thematic order to temporarily override temporal order. She let the theme of each friend bringing a present (and illustrative details that highlight such events) to guide her construction of the two parallel accounts (Nathan came, we tried to open his present in vain, Stanley came, he brought a watermelon shark), while these events followed a different temporal order in real time (Stanley arrived, Nathan arrived, they all gathered to open a present and were stopped). This type of thematic move may seem the most mundane in storytelling, but in the visual representation, it created a disruption in the temporal flow of the story, thus creating a slight visual dip in time. That is, account of Nathan's present took us back in time while the story itself progresses forward, leading to a slight deviation of that stanza from the overall y=x plot and creating a visual dip.

An example: Temporal visual model for Ironing

For the broader project, this attention to corresponding temporal matches as well as disruptive temporal dips (rises) are important to the analysis of more sophisticated stories that often demonstrate strategic and creative manipulation and remix of memories, events, and accounts in and out of a wide range of temporal frames. In this section, I apply this model to *Ironing* and work to reveal the qualitatively different temporal features Brooke's story and *Ironing* each manifest.

To perform this kind of visual analysis, I have built in visual conventions to arrive at a more accurate visual representation of the temporal arrangement of a narrative. First, the basic unit of visual representation is a stanza, s stretch of multimodal constructions that deliver one chunk of information around one theme. Depending on the thematic nature of a stanza, a stanza is represented either by a green circle or a square, which, when considered together, constitute the thematic flow of the story. A circle represents a stanza that is descriptive in nature; a square

represents a stanza that is analytical in nature. This methodological distinction between the descriptive and analytical was very much informed by comparative analysis of stories across institutions—some digital stories are purely descriptive in nature while others tend to have a stronger analytical bend. I try to map the distribution of semiotic resources as well as the varying thematic weights of stanzas and chapters by manipulating the size of stanza circles/squares. Written in the center of each stanza circle is the keyword that reminds the reader of the highlight the theme of the stanza. For example, in *Ironing,* we observe the presence of a rich moment, represented by a string of circles and squares that are similar in size, as they represent extensive vivid sensory details (positioning of mother and sons, what she wears, the smell in the room) as well as the author's retrospective analysis of unrecognized significance and meaning behind this ritual. In the visual model, the rich moment is therefore represented by an extensive string of stanzas that are intricately connected to each other. In comparison to the previous chapter, in which the author covers many grounds and briefly touches upon the discovery of father's death, the rich moment is not only "longer," but is "heavier" with conceptual and emotional weight.

Second, I use floating texts, which are relatively larger in size and not attached to any visual thematic unit, to mark chapters, or rather typified, recurrent compositional features. These typified patterns, I argue, arose in response to institutionally specific ideological, aesthetic, and pedagogical orientations and emphasis. For example, the CDS' pedagogical emphasis on creative narrative structures, as opposed to a more conventional, linear structure of narrative, has led to stories that feature rich moments at their center. As my analysis will show in Chapter 4,5, and 6, the rhetorical exigency specific to each institutional setting directs and frames the individual's performance of the genre in powerful ways.

Thirdly, I use different color schemes to make clear the presence of a dominant thematic thread and its relationship to emergent, recurrent analytical themes. In the case of *Ironing,* I use green circles/squares to show the dominant thematic thread. Parallel, lightly-colored stanza circles/squares represent what I call "mirror" moments, which are stanzas found in dominant thematic threads and are re-invoked, referenced and remediated elsewhere, often for analytical purposes. For example, the author's discussion of a recent experience, ironing in his basement, involves a direct reference to a parallel moment in the past, of watching his mother ironing. The two moments, temporally distanced from each other, was brought together by the author to impregnate each other with meaning and emotional relevance. In making "mirror" units visually present, I hope to reveal the broader theme of "change," which the dominant and the mirror moments work in concert to realize. Change, in the context of CDS, refers to new insights and refreshed understandings developed through a reflective analysis of past experiences. In *Ironing*, the two thrusts of analysis derived from the author's retrospective examination of the rich moment (the pain mother must have felt and the questions she must have asked), when invoked again, give one additional layer of insight to the story. Its emergent meaning was applied to help the author make sense of his own loss and to enable a powerful and meaningful connection between his mother and himself.

In Table 5, I provide a list of multimodal and discourse analytical constructs that were focal to the transcription and modeling method I developed. As the reader can see, formulation of these notions were informed by previous scholarship (Gee, 2005) and my own effort in developing such analytical methods.

Table 6. *A List of Multimodal and Discourse Analytical Constructs*

| Analytical Construct	Definition	Description	Visual Symbol
Semiotic Idea Unit	Small chunks of information that contain one piece of salient information.	Idea units are not visually represented in the model.	
Descriptive Stanza	A unitary larger block of semiotic information devoted to describing a single topic, event, and image.	A circle that is small in size. Often connected with stanzas in the same chapter to portray unity.	
Analytical Stanza	A unitary larger block of semiotic information devoted to presenting an analytical insight, perspective, and theme.	A square that is small in size.	
"Mirror" Stanza	A unitary larger block of semiotic information, whose meaning is dependent upon a stanza presented elsewhere in the story. A mirror stanza typically revisits, references, and builds upon an original stanza.	A unit that is of the same shape and size as the main thematic chapter it mirrors, but is portrayed	
Chapter	Typified, higher-level organizational chunks of information that constitute a story. A chapter has its own smaller parts, largely constituted by stanzas.	Flowing text that is not visually attached to visual representations of chapters.	
Temporality of Natural Events	Temporal order in which natural events unfold.	Axis x	
Temporality of Narrative Events	Temporal order according to which natural events are arranged in a story.	Axis y, often marked with temporal adverbs or phrases indicated in the story.	

Figure 6 shows a visual mapping of *Ironing*.
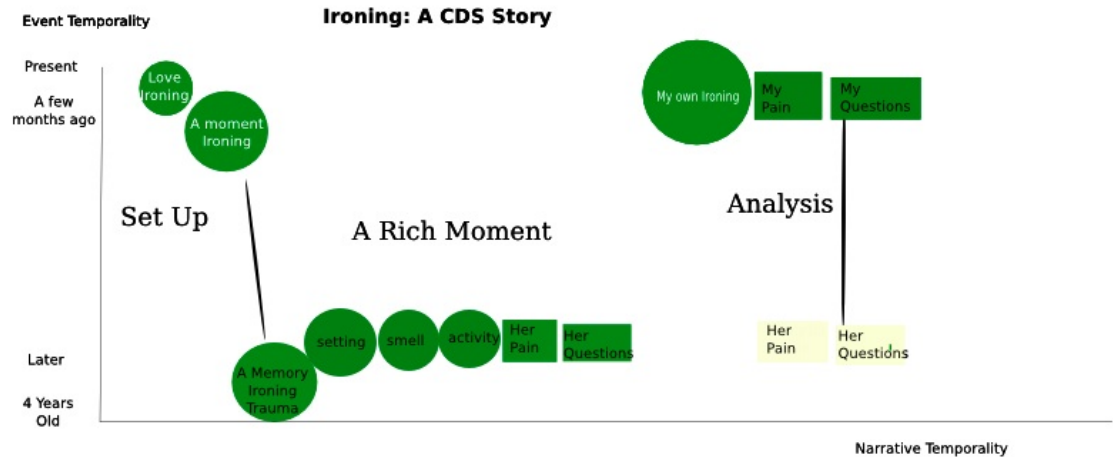
Figure 6. Ironing, Visual Model

Genre Analysis

As this visual mapping of *Ironing* shows, the author's recounting of a series of memories and his ongoing reflection are intimately interwoven together and center around a single theme—the seemingly mundane act of ironing. This is most tellingly shown through the shifting of time frames. That is, ongoing reflections of life circumstances, which typically take place in the present, often draw upon and are inflected with meanings from past experiences and memories. For example, the author's brief account of a moment in his recent memory—ironing clothes in the basement of a house is immediately bridged with a moment in the distant past—the accidental discovery of father's death in the family's house. The author then follows the natural temporality of events and brings the audience a rich moment in the young author's life. In comparison to the linear narrative Brooke told, the thematic movement of *Ironing* involves uneven shifts and bridging of the present and the past, which the visual model adeptly captures.

That is, the sudden visual "rises" and "dips" the model projects revealed an important dimension of the author's creative intention—strategic interruption of the linear narrative structure.

Another significant feature we observe in this story is the strategic construction of a rich moment--the use of vivid sensory details, lively characterization, and detailed descriptions of activities and thinking to recreate a finite moment and the use of this moment to anchor the development of an overarching theme of change. This rich moment, of a young mother ironing clothes with her two young sons, is pregnant with meanings, emotions, and themes that the following chapters build upon. This constant thematic movement between the past and present, in a 25-year range, unfolds often in reference of the rich moment, including the author's analysis of recent experiences, his reminiscence of losing his father, and his own grief of losing his mother. The culminating act even relies on a strategic repetition of both the linguistic structures and thematic focus of the rich moment—the questions and pains suffered by both mother and son—to bring together preceding memories and analysis and to drive home a focal point. Through creative arrangement of reflection and reconstruction of memories, the author brings to the forefront the focal insight of the story-- a therapeutic revisit of a childhood trauma and a refreshed understanding of a seemingly mundane everyday act as a meditational tool, a ritual that helped a widow and a son to cope with the loss of loved ones. In doing so, *Ironing* fulfills a critical ideological commitment of the CDS—the use of personal stories for therapeutic purposes.

By treating genre as existing at the dynamic intersection of the collective social practice and the discursive work of the individual, I do not stop at a close observation of digital stories for systematic manifestations of patterns of thematic contents, formal features, and meanings, which constitute the core of the genre. Rather, I attend to the typified processes of production,

dissemination and reception of digital stories, whose functions, purposes, and ideologies inform and are encoded by genre to furnish any given individual's accomplishment of specific social and discursive goals. Surely, this intentional move away from textual meaning towards larger social systems draws a researcher's attention to the institutional configurations of persons, activities, tools, and texts that constantly mediate situated discursive activities. Central to my thinking here is again the notion that a cultural genre is a dynamic fusion of thematic content, form, rhetorical practices, and ideology. In this light, what we observe in the product (thematic content, semiotic features, and compositional structures) indexes ideological claims, rhetorical exigencies, and typified processes of producing, distributing, and receiving digital stories, which are simultaneously durable and dynamic.

As I have begun to discuss in the previous section, the visual model allows me to consider temporal features as indexing and encoding the ratified processes and ideological claims. To that end, I examine the flexible and generative forces that manifest themselves through the innovative and novel ways in which digital storytelling unfolds to meet the needs of partially novel rhetorical problems. In that direction, I examine stories for how they systematically profess thematic, compositional, and semiotic features that are consistent with the distinctive institutional pressures under which they are produced. I observe and analyze how ratified processes articulate institutional pressures, present partially novel problems, and therefore unfold in unpredictable and novel ways, which leads to the unique reconfigurations of the genre and stories told. In this light, I construct an account that describes digital stories as individually and collectively "belonging to" and constituting the various social and resource configurations specific to the four programs.

In making these arguments about genre exerting significant influence upon the structures and shapes of storytelling, however, I do not suggest that the analytical and modeling attempt I have made so far will yield fully stabilized genre features. Indeed, if we read through the corpus of the stories I studied for this dissertation, every story manifests something that is out of the range of the normal and typified, which the analysis is able to tentatively define and describe. The inferences I make here are productive only insofar as they demonstrate a socio-historical point of view that connects locally manifested features to broader ideological and institutional claims. I do not make claims that a researcher can safely predict the trajectory of a CDS participant's storytelling or make arguments about these genre features as an abiding criterion that every CDS story has to meet in order to be considered as socially recognizable and culturally appropriate.

My Role as a Researcher

To arrive at a multi-perspectived understanding of digital storytelling, I have merged my personal plan for conducting research with multiple routes of immersion, which have continued to yield new insights and themes that shape my perspective as a researcher. In what follows, I provide a brief account of these strategies of immersion, which necessarily mapped the contours of my development as a digital storyteller, a facilitator, and a researcher. In the same process, I will comment on how such activities, sometimes casual conversations and other times intensive training, have necessarily shaped my attitudes and beliefs that inevitably influenced my work.

Site analysis and online working group

Since the inception of this research project in early 2009, I have spent countless hours watching a bulk of stories that were made publicly available by the focal programs. These

sessions are sometimes concentrated days spent on watching hundreds of stories and allowing themes and categories to inductively emerge. At other times, sessions can be sporadic, interest-driven viewing experiences in which I spent time jotting down notes on my ideas, thoughts, and emotions in reaction to a given story. In addition to viewing the stories, I also tried to tap into the social histories, self-professed missions and values, accounts of the workshop process, as well as published participants testimonials and autobiographical accounts by perusing information that were made publicly available on the programs' websites. To arrive at fuller accounts of the programs' work, I have resorted to extant writings and books published by the focal programs (Hartley & McWilliam, 2009a; Lambert, 2010). Given the genre-informed analytical perspective, I have paid particular attention to the various categorization mechanisms built into these websites' navigational system. That is, I was interested in the particular ways in which a collection of stories is categorized. Insights garnered through such focused explorations have greatly informed the construction of my own analytical tools by generating insights and themes that have enriched my identification and definition of categories to describe the thematic, ideological, and ratified process dimensions of digital storytelling.

Since the spring of 2010, I have also participated in a digital-storytelling working group Joe created on face book. As an online space for interested professionals to have productive conversations, this space has given me the opportunity to converse with facilitators from programs at various degrees of maturity and to network with individuals that could provide valuable insights for my research. Participation in the working group has also allowed me to observe the nodes of digital storytelling and the intricate links that connect such nodes from around the world. Considered together, these initial, exploratory activities have given me macro-level view of the cultural landscape of digital storytelling, which allows me to attend to broader

trends, themes, and values that can be used to facilitate a systematic description of the collective experiential and ideological knowledge of digital storytelling. An outlook on the geographically dispersed nodes as networked centers of activities also allows me to arrive at an initial understanding of the converging and diverging ways in which the social practice has been invoked and reconfigured across sites.

Participating in a workshop

In the summer of 2011, I attended a three-day, standard CDS workshop offered by Dan and Kay in the metropolitan area in which their office was located. During the three days, I found myself bonding with a group of 18 strangers whom I had never met and would probably not meet again. In Kay's lovely pig-sty-converted kitchen, which was quaintly decorated by recycled bottle corks and industrial packaging materials, I cried and laughed at the nine unique stories the group brought to the table. In an emotionally charged and yet relaxing group process (a process decorated by hiking trips to the back of the hill, swims in a winding ditch, visits to a compost toilet that brought back so many childhood memories, and the best egg salad sandwiches of Kay's making), I listened and was listened to in ways that I had not experienced. In telling a story that I have never thought about sharing—a story about finding an answer to question that had long plagued me with fears, uncertainties and doubts, I came to witness first hand the transformative power of deeply personal stories on me and my peers. As so many of my interviewees had later shared with me, participation in a workshop can transform an individual in so many ways. For Jane and Kay, being in the process of discovering and making their own stories greatly shape and change how they approach their own teaching of digital storytelling. Like Pip and Dan, I also felt the effect of the telling of an important story reverberating into my ongoing attempt to make sense of who I am in light of the truth found in the histories of my

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family. As a researcher, the deep immersion into the emotional group process has enabled me to feel, understand, and analyze the stories (both of these programs and of individuals) with the eye of an insider.

Teaching digital storytelling

As my research continued to grow, I also left my graduate program to reunited with my family in another state. In taking up a teaching position as a writing instructor in a public state university, I have tried to integrate digital storytelling into my writing courses. My understanding of the creative, aesthetic, multimodal aspect of digital storytelling really started to deepen as I learned with my students about the challenges and rewards involved in the difficult task of shifting perspectives and shaking off baggage that come with our entrenched notions of what it means to be good writers. As I work to engage my students in extended conversations in and impromptu experimentations with different modalities, compositional structures, and voices, I find myself constantly drawing upon and yet sometimes pushing back on my literacies and voice. This voice, which is defined in fundamental ways by my prolonged attempt to learn to write in the Western academic discourse, while giving coherence and accuracy to my composition, also limits my imagination for alternative routes and contours of coming at a story. This very ability, ironically, is at the core of truly creative digital storytelling. It is through these pedagogical and personal struggles with the creative abilities of myself and my students that I have begun to "see" and understand the truth and value behind the work of facilitators who are constantly trying to break through boundaries and break free of authorities, conventions, and routines in their making of a new genre of composition and cultural production.

At the heart of the ethnographic approach I take is the acknowledgement that my research is very much shaped by my own experiences, attitudes, interests, and beliefs. That is, I am drawn

to the unique expressive, democratic, and pedagogical potentials of this genre of multimodal production in how it shapes identities, communities, and society at large. However, in allowing this perspective to grow with my conversations and encounters with the stories and individuals that are shaped by and shape the contours of the social practice, I have allowed myself to be a part of a dynamic community that is constantly changing and changing with the social practice.

Limitations and Trustworthiness

Limitations to this research stem from the research design, which relies on archived online data and interviews as the primary sources for getting at a social phenomenon that is constituted by situated, lived discursive activities of agents. A risk associated with a genre-informed discourse analysis is that the dynamic phenomena can be inadvertently reduced to static texts. Ideally, elongated participant observation of multiple workshops offered by the distinct institutions will yield much desired thick description of the ratified process and insight into how simultaneous stabilized and dynamic configuration of persons, activities, tools, and texts mediates the intersection between the individual and social. However, the geographical and temporal dispersion of these institutions makes it impossible to arrive at a situated understanding of disparate instances of genre invocation. To address this problem, I have tried to use multiple methods of data collection to arrive at adequate accounts of how these workshops are structured. Triangulation of multiple sources of data, including insider accounts, pedagogical materials, my own experiences of a process, and published accounts, allows me to re-construct the processes through multiple perspectives. However, I do recognize that triangulation itself does not render the findings of this study credible and therefore offer detailed descriptions of the methods and

theories that I draw upon in this research in order that its trustworthiness may be judged by the reader (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003).

A second limitation to this research pertains to the lack of criteria against which the trustworthiness of data analysis can be evaluated. This limitation largely results from my attempt at rendering into meaning a consortium of analytical frames and techniques, which has yet to fully emerge as a sound framework to guide a genre-informed analysis, the soundness of whose frames and techniques can be verified. Although I have built into the design of this study opportunities for emerging understandings of the analysis to be brought back to participants during interviews, I remain cognizant of the limitation of such member checks, which stay on more macro, ideological planes and will not shed significant light on more critical issues of how micro semiotic structures achieve specific function or if such achievements are by design and informed by articulated knowledge of the grammar of the multimodality. Ideally, I would like to conduct focus group interviews with what Gee (2005) refers as the "native speakers" and "members" of the Discourse, whose social languages are implicated in the data (113). That is, one thing that an be done to significantly improve the validity of the study is semi-structured focus group interviews with facilitators and other insiders in the community of digital storytelling in order for them to comment on whether or not certain thematic, compositional, and semiotic moves do function to articulate the ideological, rhetorical, and aesthetic meanings of a particular rendition of the social practice. With this in mind, however, I have built into my research design the elements of *convergence, coverage*, and *semiotic details*, which Gee considers to be critical measures (along with *agreement* from cultural insiders) to ensure the soundness of an openly ideological research. In what follows, I discuss how I have built each of these elements in order to frame the trustworthiness of this research.

Convergence. The genre-informed framework of analysis I developed allows me to examine the complex issues of content, identities, purposes, and sign systems, with a specific emphasis on the ideologies and semiotic inter-connections across stories. In the next three chapters, I will offer discussions of how various aspects of a given story converge in compatible and convincing ways within itself and in connection with its counterparts to portray concrete cases of how institutional contexts and the ethos of the social practice constantly mediate the local acts of discursive meaning making.

Coverage. Themes and categories I allow to emerge naturally are constantly verified when they are applied to related stories. For instance, a full description of the frame that I come to call a rich moment only emerged after comparative analysis of multiple CDS digital stories. I am constantly cognizant of new insights that emerge in ongoing analysis to reaffirm, revise, and challenge the formulation of a tentative theme.

Semiotic details. As my analysis will show, I have grounded my analysis deeply in details of semiotic structure, that are systematically organized according to idea units and macrostructure parts. In important ways, I use this work to add to emerging understandings of how semiotic units draw on multiple modes to serve an array of communicative, aesthetic, affective, and rhetorical purposes. Given that the research community is just beginning to understand the "grammar" of multimodal semiotic orchestrations, I am hesitant to make claims that link semiotic structures I observe to presumed functions any definitive ways. Instead, I am offering a starting place, which points to productive areas of further investigation.

CHAPTER IV

LISTEN DEEPLY BEFORE YOU TELL A STORY

In this chapter, I present the story of CDS as one of genre invention and stabilization. In so doing, I answer my first and second research questions: What does it mean to consider digital storytelling as a cultural genre? What does it mean to examine digital storytelling as a durable cultural genre? By attending to the ideological, practical, and discursive features of digital storytelling at CDS, I explicate the different ways in which that genre features and practices have co-evolved and stabilized with the social practice over time.

In constructing a broader narrative for my research, I take a socio-historical approach to attend to three focal programs, CDS, Capture Wales, and Patient Voices, not only as disparate instances of genre invocation, but as occupying chronotopic positions on a shared social historical trajectory of genre invention, stabilization, and evolution. My decision to not include Creative Narrations has been motivated by the need to construct a compelling research narrative of how genre evolves to both give resources to and transform as the result of genre invocations. Although I have studied Creative Narrations with the same amount of vigor and intensity during data collection and data analysis, I find the narrative it brings to the table to be one that departs from the overarching story that I tell here. Creative Narrations, as a program that is conceptually and practically disassociated from the network of persons and programs that constitute what Tony calls the "small world of digital storytelling," has reinvented digital storytelling into forms

that are at times incongruous with the genre practices and features I am interested in systematically accounting for and theorizing.

My intention to construct CDS as a metaphorical and literal starting place for digital storytelling was partly motivated by a recurrent theme surfacing through my conversations with facilitators across the four programs. In their efforts to articulate their intentions and practices, every facilitator used the CDS as a point of reference. A story of "what we are about" is often a story of "what we are not" in relation to "what CDS is about." This focus is also informed by an observation that surprised me. Although I had learned that most digital storytelling programs were inspired by the work of CDS before I began this research, I was surprised by the deep and engaged influence the CDS has sustained over the years. That is, CDS, especially through the work of Joe, was actively engaged in the designing of the two programs in one way or another. To launch an account of the broadly defined, socio-historically developed social system of digital storytelling, I began by tracing the original intention for the social practice and the typified productive and consumptive processes. I also try to make sense of a loosely organized community that brings together individuals that Joe characterized as "highly intellectual and extremely sentimental."

I begin by describing the CDS' conception of digital storytelling as a complexly organized and developed way of orchestrating discursive activities and deploying multimodal resources to serve a particular set of sociopolitical, artistic, ideological, and epistemological ends. In so doing, I examine facilitators' accounts of digital storytelling to observe how they imagine, theorize, and construct digital storytelling as achieving certain ideological and social expectations. I then consider the standard three-day workshop, which the CDS has invented and refined, as a highly structured, interweaving web of genres, activities, and tasks that orients

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individual discursive acts towards highly specified meanings and values. Through the lens of genre system, I examine the highly typified workshop model as a powerful cultural tool that maintains the durability and coherence of the social practice, in how it embodies the discursive and material activities necessary in an adequate production condition and how it structures the coordinated efforts of persons, tools, texts, and activities. Lastly, I draw on one particular digital story to further explore the conception of genre as existing at the intersection of the individual and social. That is, I examine how the durable meaning potential, through the work of typified discursive and material practices, mediates situated and contingent discursive activity by giving this digital story culturally appropriate and socially accepted ideological, aesthetic, and social meanings.

The CDS' Conception of Digital Storytelling

When I asked Joe about his reasons for having spent more than a decade to developing and promoting digital storytelling, Joe provided his own vision of digital storytelling as enabling the processing of difficult stories for productive identity work,

> Your mother died a year before, and the day you were heading to the workshop, thinking "God! I need to process my mother's death." You get here and realize you can't, at least not among these strangers. So you tell the story of their dog. All of the details of them missing your mother and the complicated nature of their relationship come out the dog story. But the dog story is a step back from the mother story. You have to do the mother story to have self-revelation, truth, and understanding. We all have to do our mother stories, father stories, and significant-other stories because they inhabit and rule our lives. I work to make [a CDS workshop] to be safe enough [for people] to do that. (J. Lambert, personal communication, February 7, 2012)

What Joe noted in his comments was a particular vision of digital storytelling, a vision promoted by the Center for Digital Storytelling through the hundreds of workshops offered over the years through its regional offices and various initiatives it has helped to develop. In this

vision, digital storytelling is valued for how it provides for a particular kind of *transformative* and *creative experience* through a structured *group process.*

A transformative experience

A recurring question that persisted throughout my research has revolved around the aesthetic tendency of the CDS stories, which the facilitators I interviewed have described as mostly "sad" and "lack of diversity when it comes to funny stuff" (Dan), "moving" (Gary), "therapeutic" (Gary and Tanna), and "sentimental" (Leis). When I probed the question with the three facilitators from the CDS, they all agreed that the shared ideological orientation towards the *transformative experience* played an important role in shaping stories that tended to be serious and subtle, if not sad and tragic. In the following reflection, echoing his thinking in the opening quote, Joe gave his theory of digital storytelling as a dynamic coupling of process and product that essentially centered about identity construction. According to Joe, digital stories that resulted from CDS workshops were primarily relationship stories, which allow the author to examine the emotional and experiential significance of one's relationship with an important person, issue, event, object, or place. In this view, digital storytelling is "about finding a given moment that signifies a relationship in a way that manifests as new meaning or new understanding" (Lambert, 2012). Finding a moment that simultaneously encapsulates the relationship and reveals transformation, therefore, lies at the foundation of a transformative experience. This intention for digital storytelling, when realized, would result in healthy signpost of their identity that resulted from a creative process during which one psychologically un-stuff oneself of an attachment.

Implicit in this theory of digital storytelling is an argument that reflective processing of personal stories can bring forward profound meanings, truths, and impact. From the perspective

of CDS facilitators, digital storytelling has in part emerged in response to people's inherent

needs to explore, communicate, and grow from the meaning behind important, often problematic

experiences. As such, digital storytelling is considered a productive venue to engage individuals

in core identity work that they need and want to do. This view has been echoed by all three

participants, who suggested that they found the value of their work in its capacity to enable a

refreshed outlook on oneself, to open people up to meaningful stories, and to see people change

as the result of storytelling.

This conception of storytelling as a venue to crystallize experience is at the basis of CDS'

work. That is to say, its workshops provide a structured process of well-orchestrated genres,

tasks, and activities, which supports participants' search for authentic meaning. CDS facilitators

have often used "authenticity" to describe an "honest attempt to relay a true life event as well as

the meaning behind it" (K. Longman, personal communication, October 14, 2011). In this

process, participants were given tools and strategies to engage in authentic and honest attempts

to uncover and relay truths behind personal stories. Entailed in this conception of an authentic

process is the willingness on the participants' part to take risks—an author may get in touch with

experiences that one finds emotionally and conceptually challenging to analyze; an authentic

pursuit may call on an author to disclose unexpected or unflattering aspects of one's experiences;

a pre-conceived interpretation about the meaning behind an experience may be challenged and

undermined in the process of discovering and negotiating emergent meanings. Dan explained

that participants often thought they came to tell a story they already knew, only to discover that

the process of telling the story to a group of attentive listeners, particularly oneself, often let

them to a different way of looking at the story. To that end, even though participants are

encouraged to bring scripts of their stories, the workshop is structured in such a way that the

participants are expected to arrive at unexpected insights, shifts in perspectives, unexpected

answers, and psychological un-stuffing of emotional fixations. Made explicit to the participants

in the workshop is that the story one tells can change, so can one's "take" on a story.

In importantly ways, a story about "transformation" is as important as the honest attempt

to arrive at it. An important characteristic associated with digital storytelling, is the idea of

honesty in the discovery and exploration of a personal story. Honesty, in this context, does not

mean that participants are telling the truth, but that they are making an honest attempt to relay

not just an event or a memory, but the meaning behind the event. In Dan's words, the workshop

asks people to spend three days for the sole purpose of thinking about an experience and

exploring the meaning behind it. Essentially, participants are encouraged to give an honest

attempt by asking questions such as these: What has changed? Is there an answer to a question?

How am I going to deal with a question I don't have an answer for?

Although the facilitators actively push back on the idea that they approach their

workshop with a given agenda, they do acknowledge that their work, through the mediation of

the workshop, embodies this ideological orientation by privileging and supporting a particular

way of seeing, analyzing, and giving form to personal experiences. On this, Kay explains that the

thematic content, a story of a transformative important in one's life, is seamlessly fused with the

form of a story,

> We all feel that people want to make a story about something transformative. Focusing
> on an important moment, [such as] discovering a secret, or through an illness, or losing
> somebody, changes how you experience life. When people are thinking about an
> important event that changed them in some way. It is pretty unusual to have humorous
> stories. Usually these are at least serious stories, if not sad or tragic. (K. Longman,
> personal communication, October 14, 2011)

From a genre perspective, Kay's analysis speaks to the inherent social nature of genre. That is, the social intention of digital storytelling, partially determined by the institution and partially enacted by the individual, comes to direct the course and predict the outcome of the discursive activity. In this scenario, typified formal features arise as the result of individuals performing a particular kind of ideological work. Therefore, the lack of humor in CDS stories and the contrasting abundance of humor in Capture Wales' stories are telling of the social intention and productive conditions of the two programs.

From the perspectives of facilitators, the general feedback of participants upon leaving the workshop attests to the potential benefits of a *transformative* experience. As Kay and Dan both reported, one of the most common feedbacks has been that participants didn't intend to make a story, but they were glad they did. To that end, the CDS workshops provide an opportunity and space for people to make a story that had not been the story they brought up, or to make a story that was deeper than they originally intended.

A group process

In tandem to the vision of transformative experience is a way of looking at the ratified productive process as enabling such an experience. That is, when the social intention for digital storytelling is inwardly directed—supporting people's exploration of important personal stories for the benefit it brings to the individual, how can a group process be structured to support such work? At the CDS, the facilitators work to construct intimate group process that allows participants to tell important, personal stories that they are otherwise unable or not ready to tell.

Underlying this conception is a fundamental distinction between digital storytelling (the process) and digital stories (the products). For my analysis, the distinction is an important one because it allows me to attend to the productive process and discursive artifacts, separately and

combined, as dialectically connected dimensions of the genre. In the CDS' view, digital

storytelling is essentially about a process, "in which participants have influence on each other,

where people, hopefully, come to find and tell stories from their lives" (Dan, 2011). Digital

stories are what hopefully come out of a process. That is, at the CDS, much emphasis was put

upon constructing an intimate group process, in which listening and telling are intricately

intertwined processes that give each participant the opportunity not just to teach, educate, and

entertain others through one's own story, but to draw on the group's feedback to help one

achieve fuller and richer understanding of one's experiences. As Dan argues,

> In the group process, participants are encouraged to listen before they tell digital stories. Listening involves active discovery and examination of each other's story. It involves the group, including the author himself, asking a ton of questions and listening to what the answer might be. Each participant faces an attentive audience who holds the individual responsible for telling and getting heard. (D. Weiss, personal communication, September 26, 2011)

In making such distinctions, Dan, for one, provides an account of a ratified process that is

organized around a particular way of seeing, acting, and socially aligning with each other. An

important observation raised by both Dan and Joe is that the gathering of a small group is

something that cannot be replicated under any other isolated circumstances of storytelling.

According to Dan, being heard by yourself and a group of peers is not only validating, but also

the first step to discovering, examining, and consolidating richer and fuller understanding of

one's experience. To many of the facilitators I interviewed, the positive group process is very

much behind the richness of the stories. To Dan, there is something that is almost mystical about

facing an attentive audience that anticipates one's story,

> [S]ometimes you know everything that is wrong with your story the minute it comes out of your mouth. People feel very differently when they are reading their stories out loud. You get plenty of people who would say, 'oh my god, I've told this story a million times, but then they started crying and the group when they tell their story, I don't know why I am getting so emotional.' Recording the "story," or saying it in front of a group, or

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watching it makes the story feel differently. (D. Weiss, personal communication, September 29, 2011)

Entailed in Dan's comment is that the unique configuration of people, tools, and texts, and processes in the group setting embody the ideological acclimation that recognizes and desires a particular way of interpreting and using personal experiences for transformative purposes, specifically in the unburdening of emotional experiences, the discovery of unexpected insight, and the reshaping of stories. Even though the inwardly directed intention for digital storytelling seemingly stripped it of a process of consumption, which the online platforms of Capture Wales and Patient Voices enable, we see in Dan's account the strong presence of a consumptive process, which takes place within each workshop to partially direct the course and shape of digital storytelling.

Another important aspect of the productive condition is the careful attention paid to the physical and material arrangement of these workshops. At the CDS, a productive group process is made possible through the co-construction of a safe, homely and equitable space, in which people have positive influence upon each other in the discovery and sharing of important stories. Kay and Pip, both having hosted workshops in their homes, suggested that it was important to them that the workshops took place in a retreat- or summer-camp-like atmosphere. To these facilitators, a safe and relaxing environment is first made possible through the homey atmosphere that materializes through plentiful of fresh, home-made food, access to indoor and outdoor spaces to retreat or venture into in times of contemplation, limited access to the Internet to help people move away from their emails and work, in both physical and emotional terms. Second, facilitators work to create and maintain a space of mutual respect through the modeling and reinforcement of appropriate behavior that is conducive to constructive and supportive feedback. The space is also governed by a sense of sacred trust that is enabled through continuous

assurance of privacy, as manifested through sayings such as, "what happens in the workshop stays in the workshop". Third, a safe environment is grounded in a sense of equality between the facilitators and participants. In Joe's words, quality is rooted in "a sense of altruism on the facilitator's part". That is, whatever a participant needs to complete the process will be supported, but the option remains open for a participant to not engage in a transformative experience. Dan, for example, suggests that although he personally finds his work most rewarding when the process allows participants to arrive at personal discovery, he works to make explicit to the participants that stories not leading to transformation will be respected and welcomed. On the same issue, Joe comments,

> The "listen deeply before you tell a story" is a critical message. The environment we set up is one of deep and sacred trust between participants and the facilitators. We create an environment in which what you have to say will be listened to. Whatever you need to get through to complete the process will be supported. If you [facilitator] are really there to make yourself better known for the stories that you captured than helping the person to feel better about themselves, you are not getting the same depth [in participants'] work. What they [participants] do with the stories is their own business. (J. Lambert, personal communication, February 7, 2012)

In important ways, this focus on the group process contradicts pre-conceptions I held prior to this research. Before I participated in the CDS workshop and spoke with the facilitators, I had long assumed that digital storytelling was in part a broader cultural movement towards a massive participatory model of cultural production, in which the telling of stories was essentially a social act. Along this line of thinking, digital storytelling is celebrated for its capacity in producing tangible stories, which is empowering at both individual and social levels. In speaking with the facilitators, however, I was surprised to discover that the CDS is less concerned with capturing good stories than enabling a process that is conducive to personal growth—namely how their work can help individuals to go through a healthy, therapeutic, and creative process.

Likewise, whether or not compelling stories emerge at the end has little bearing on how the success of the process is judged.

To Dan and Joe in particular, digital storytelling is first and foremost about the process that empowers the participants and motivates them to share the same experience with others. The sense of inwardly directed altruism, I argue, marks a main distinction between the mission of CDS and the other programs I studied, which tend to focus more heavily on the tangible stories that are produced and disseminated for various social, institutional, and cultural motivations. These observations point to one area of genre durability and dynamism. Digital storytelling is a durable socio-historical construction as programs everywhere have been motivated by and sustained its commitment to engaging everyday individuals in productive processes of self-discovery. At the same time, disparate digital storytelling programs are organized around a dynamic meaning potential in that various aspects of the ratified productive and consuming processes have been modified and reconfigured to fulfill situated institutional and program exigencies. The CDS' emphasis on the therapeutic effect has given rise to its attention to building a ratified process that is collaborative, creative, and safe. When taken up elsewhere, however, this ratified productive process has been re-imagined and reconfigured towards social consumption, leading to the emphasis on the tangible products, while deviating from the CDS' inwardly directed healing effects.

Creative space of the first person

As a medium, digital storytelling draws on the affordances of multiple modes in service of the construction of the unique first-person voice. Multimodality is an enriching medium because the dynamic mix of the textual, visual, and audio not only enables a more engaging and interesting way of unpacking personal experiences, but also expands what can be portrayed about

a particular experience. One of the central tasks for facilitators, therefore, is to facilitate the creative experience that involves experimentation with different modes, media, and routes of arriving at and developing a story.

However, the coupling of self-expression and multimodality presents unique challenges. One of the recurring comments from facilitators is that they worked with and learned from participants to promote collective understanding of the unique organizational principles and logics of modes that are qualitatively distinct from those of the textual and linguistic mode. In interesting ways, the facilitators' accounts of multimodality and creative approaches are almost always juxtaposed with commentaries on print-based literacy practices associated with learning in formal settings. To Kay, for example, digital storytelling is about "trying something new in that mix between writing and visual image." The "mix" can present different challenges for writers and visual artists,

> For people who come in are writers already, they have to think about what else can be told through the pictures. For visual artists who don't usually write, the writing part is a challenge. But they already understand, 'oh I can tell a story even through just one picture, two pictures, or a whole series of pictures.' I always learned a lot about the strategies for using the visual by working with the more visual people. It is always fun to work with them on their writing. They might often approach it differently. They might not approach the story chronologically. (K. Longman, personal communication, October 14, 2011)

Kay's observation points to the diversity of approaches, skills, and expertise participants bring to a workshop. More importantly, it points to the fact that digital storytelling involves participant's re-examination and adaptation of skills and attitudes they know to be successful in types of composition they are familiar with. The challenges a sophisticated writer faces in learning to allow images to tell stories is no less intense than the challenges a visual artist faces in crafting a good narrative. Implicit in this comment is the notion that learning to do digital storytelling involves learning to navigate a multiplicity of literacies, skills, and modes in ways

that involve constant risk-taking, adaptation, and learning. In learning to compose with multiple modes and for purposes that are fundamentally distinct from what the participants were used to from years of academic training or professional work, the process also involves collaborative effort to test new ideas, to experiment with alternative routes, and to abandon certain habits, ways, and approaches one feels comfortable with. On this, Kay further explains:

> People, who come from a more academic background, are trained to write in this academic, expository voice, 'let me explain to you.' That kind of dance around the story would be fine if it was a scholarly paper. But that doesn't make the most interesting story. It's great if you can 'show than tell' a slice of life. Show us this moment--what are the details of this moment? Who were there? What did they say? What did they look like? Bring in the senses to do the vivid kind of writing. (K. Longman, personal communication, October 14, 2011)

Kay's observation points to an important dimension of the creative experience the CDS helps to build. That is, the type of meaning making that the facilitators promote is simultaneously informed by and challenges modes of composition many participants brought to the table. That is to say, theories, skills, and strategies participants developed in other literacy practices and contexts are often contested and reconfigured to create a functional aggregate that is sensible and manageable in the context of digital storytelling. In the process of reconfiguration, these skills, expertise, and mindsets can simultaneously inform and interfere with one's creative attempts in digital storytelling. As Kay's reflection suggests, what we learn in school about writing, with its pronounced emphasis on marking and forecasting turns of logical progression and the constant foregrounding of analysis and exposition, often limits the construction of a compelling and authentic voice that is so critical to the success of a digital story. In this case, genres of school writing bring to the table a range of assumptions and approaches that are actively deconstructed. Digital storytelling, in this regard, may involve the author making intentional moves away from a habitual and comfortable way of constructing meaning.

On the other hand, the tenet of "show rather than tell" is an area of cross-fertilization between genres of communicative practices, school writing, and digital storytelling. As a skill desired in both digital storytelling and certain genres of academic writing, strategies one develops through academic training can easily translate to attitudes and strategies that benefit the making of a digital story. For one thing, the co-presence of multiple modes might enrich one's re-enactment of a rich moment through the depiction (visualization) of vivid sensory details, lively characters, and dynamic dialogues. The affordances of the visual and audio, for example, will greatly enhance the expressive affordances of vivid writing by attending to different senses of the audience. In this regard, genres of school writing bring to the table an enabling way of constructing a narrative that might potentially lead to a good digital story.

Evidenced in Kay's reflection is an implicit comment on digital storytelling as a complexly organized secondary genre, which presses into complexity a range of homely, academic, and creative discourses. Homely discourses, such as a playful rejoinder, a chanceful encounter, or a stretch of dialogues may be processed into parcels of the personal narrative. Academic genres, such as personal narrative, exposition, journaling and memoir, may be used to frame and structure the processing of homely discourses and reflective analysis. Creative genres and practices visual artists have developed in their professional work may work to allow different ways of combining and reconfiguring meanings conveyed across multiple semiotic channels. In important ways, the formation of a secondary genre involves the integration and alteration of these genres, which acquire different characters when they enter into the creative space of digital storytelling. What is particularly interesting is that this creative space is a highly contested one, in which a diversity of genres bring along with them attitudes, skills, and mindsets that get constantly reshuffled and remixed in relation to each other and in light of a broader

creative intention of the institution and the individual author. To that end, digital storytelling constantly bears upon and draws from rather conventional, familiar, and mundane aspects of an author's literacy experiences.

Collectively, this ideological formation, the emphasis on the construction of a *group process* that allows participants to go through a *transformative* and *creative* experience, is encoded by a typified way of organizing events, persons, tasks, texts, and tools. This typified way remains at the backdrop of people's discursive activities and mediates the meaning of a given digital story by giving shape and meaning to it. In the two sections that follow, I work to make such connections clear. In the next section, I describe what many refer to as the classic CDS workshop model to analyze how this ratified productive process is organized to enable a transformative and creative experience. Then I draw on a story, which is the outcome of someone going through the ratified process, to explain how this story encodes and indexes the transformative and creative experience.

The Simple, Flexible Method

When inquired about the longevity and wide reach of digital storytelling, Joe uses the metaphor "yoga of media practices" to describe the inherent simplicity and flexibility of the three-day workshop model he invented, refined and promoted in collaboration with the many facilitators and storytellers he has worked with in his long career as a digital storytelling facilitator. Comparing the workshop model to yoga, Joe argues that the workshop gives people the basics, or the "five critical ways to approach yoga," that will yield consistent results. In Joe's view, the success of the workshop resides in the fundamental simplicity of the form, "250 words, 10-12 images", and the model "teach the editing tool to the basic," "don't be too or less

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ambitious." Essentially, the workshop model establishes a creative and productive compass that

gives limitations that participants should stay with. (J. Lambert, personal communication,

February 7, 2012)

Joe's comment conveys an insight that is central to my enterprise. That is, his observation

sheds light on digital storytelling as a loosely defined cultural model that is constituted first and

foremost by discursive and material practices emerging from the collective, lived experiences of

digital storytellers and facilitators to enact fairly specific rhetorical purposes within recurrent

social activities. In other words, the three-day workshop embodies, in the simplest form, the

range of literacy and material practices entailed in the social activity, which have taken on

typified structures to embody the typical productive condition. Further explaining how a three-

day workshop came to be, Joe recounts the early years of his work that has led to the

development and refinement of the model,

> [We spent] the first three years [refining the model]. We did three workshops that I was a
> part of at the American film institute. I came out of that workshop with sort of an idea of
> how we may run the workshop. Then I did six workshops in a row in the spring of 1994,
> and there I was trying to get at the model with my collaborators. In the summer of 1994
> until the fall of 1996, when I wrote the cookbook, we were tweaking what it would look
> like. And then in 96, 97, I started training people at the DS Clubhouse to run digital
> storytelling workshops. I was not just taking people through the DS process. And that led
> to another level of refinement. So by the time in 1998 when we got to UC Berkley, it was
> a recognized, branded methodology. People understood what we did, how we did it, and
> people talked about it as a very specific process. What happened then was more
> collaborators came in and refined the model further more. (J. Lambert, personal
> communication, February 7, 2012)

From a genre perspective, Joe's brief sketch encapsulates the long process of genre

stabilization and sedimentation, which brings forth a typified way of performing a given range of

tasks and activities. This account gives a particularly telling example of the model as a historical

formation, which builds upon a collective of comparable instances in recurrent social situations.

In Joe's words, the model articulates the "intention" of digital storytelling. As a historically

developed formation of discursive, material, and practical structures, the model also organizes

the discursive and practical space through a typified, interweaving web of persons, artifacts,

processes, and tools. In Joe's words, the model regulates the "creative palace" by giving fairly

prescriptive guidelines for its format and processes, such as "less than 250 words," "a dozen

images," "teach the editing at the basic level," "do not get too complicated" and so on.

What is interesting in this comment is Joe's intuitive understanding of form (formal

features and limitations) and practice (teach technology at the minimum and stay simple) as

intimately connected dimensions of the same phenomenon. Joe's comment captures the notion

that the semiotic conventions of digital stories is typically associated with and partly enacts

ratified social and discursive activities. These semiotic conventions, such as certain length

(narrative no longer than 250 words, less than three minutes), the use of images (no more than

twelve personal artifacts), and the emphasis on personal experiences, appear as ready solutions to

the recurrent problem of individuals trying to create a digital story about a personal experience

within the constraint partially determined by one's own creative capability, available tools and

technologies, and limited time and resources. To that end, the model has developed within the

particular social formation that represents the ways in which the social and institutional contexts

of digital storytelling has constrained an infinite number of discourse possibilities into a

relatively small set of conventional codifications.

Genre theory as elaborated by Miller (1994), Kamberelis (1997) and Bazerman (1997)

has been concerned with the emergence and stabilization of typified ways of organizing

discursive activities and semiotic resources in response to recurrent situations. From this

perspective, the model is a metaphorical starting place of any situated discursive activities taking

place during a workshop. The simple and ratified form, with a fairly durable way of configuring

persons (and their social relations), artifacts (texts and tools), and processes (an orchestration of

activities and tasks), articulate the necessary condition in which the production of a digital,

personal story can be successfully achieved. It is through this well articulated and defined

process that the social and cognitive structure of the social practice is maintained to guarantee in

part the satisfactory performance of the necessary discursive and social activities needed to

achieve the recurrent goal. It is also through multiple invocations of the model that the

reproductive resources are preserved and invoked to constantly inform, regulate, and infuse local

digital storytelling activities with historically accumulated meaning. In the following excerpts,

Dan explains how one ratified productive moves made at the CDS has stabilized over time as the

result of the participants to function in the productive condition of a digital storytelling workshop

and this ratified move has come to govern the productive condition. We were discussing why,

among all four programs, CDS was the only one requiring participants to bring with them a

written draft of the story they think they want to tell. Trying to explain why alternative ways of

generating ideas, such as recording story circle conversations, had been ruled out, Dan explained,

> There are definitely pros to why we are going with a written script. The pros are, how
> many people's stories in the story circle were three minutes long? Nobody's. They were
> twenty minutes long, each. If we did the story circle in the way that we just recorded the
> story circle, we would then have to teach people editing software to get a twenty-minute
> audio file down to three minutes. Not every piece has to be three minutes. But what we
> want is for people to work on something they can finish in three days. And usually that's
> around three minutes long. It used to be the speed of the computers, but really now it is
> the speed of people's own creative abilities. You have to learn the software, you have to
> edit your piece, you have to get all your images, and all that stuff. And you only get a
> certain amount of time to do it." (D. Weiss, personal communication, September 26,
> 2011)

Implicit in Dan's thinking is one way that genre has stabilized as the result of participants

responding to technological, discursive, and organizational challenges presented by the rhetorical

situation—the need to construct a productive group process and the need to enable a

transformative experience for all participants. The CDS' commitment to the group process is encoded in the typified form of a story circle, in which public sharing is the norm and much time is devoted in crafting and refining everyone's story. The particular productive condition, when coupled with the need to enable a transformative experience for everyone, an intellectually and emotionally challenging task, has created the exigency for a more efficient way to generate and refine stories. In this case, the requirement for to bring a written draft is a ratified productive structure stabilized in response to the creative, organizational, and technological pressures of conducting a successful workshop in light of broader ideological goals.

Considered together, accounts for Joe and Dan are analytical attempts to theorize the workshop model as a critical component of the cultural model that enacts specific discursive goals of recurrent digital storytelling activities. In important ways, these accounts attend to semiotic conventions and discursive practices as intricately connected embodiment of the social history, norms, and ideologies of the social practice. In what follows, I turn to the function of genre as what Bazerman calls a "social lever" or what Kamberelis calls a "social glue" to examine how the workshop model, especially through the use and circulation of cultural tools, mediates the contact between macro-structures of the social practice and micro-structures of individual discursive activities. To do that, I begin by giving a meta-account of the socially ratified processes of producing, distributing, and receiving digital stories, as entailed in the CDS model. I pay particular attention to the enduring sequence of events that has remained largely unchanged over the years and across programs. More importantly, in acknowledging classic model encodes institutionally specific ideological claims and pressures, I comment on how the workshop is reconstituted by the CDS facilitators to orient participants' stories toward desired forms, thematic content, rhetorical functions, and ideological values.

The workshop model

In this section, I give a sketch of the durable sequence of events according to which a typified digital storytelling workshop is organized. As my research suggests, this model has is again a site of durability and dynamism. Although the events I list below and the sequence in which they unfold have stayed largely the same overtime and across programs, the amount of time invested in each and configuration of focused activities on writing, tutorials, and production have varied greatly across programs, as each workshop (even workshops within the same program and offered by the same facilitator) is restructured to serve participants with different intellectual, technological, and creative capacities. Building on this description, I discuss how various aspects of the workshop design and delivery encode ideological claims and institutional pressures specific to the CDS.

Preparation. Each of the four programs had developed pre-workshop preparatory tasks and texts to get arriving participants intellectually, emotionally, and mentally acclimated to the process. At CDS, this orientation takes place through the electronic sharing of several resources, including links to exemplary stories and a downloadable copy of the cookbook, which gives a detailed account of the processes as well as elaborated discussions of desired aesthetic and ideological values. In detailed explication of the seven elements, such as insight, emotional content, moment, visual impact, and so on, the cookbook conceptually frames the process as a symbolic journey of self-understanding that creates emotional resonance in the audience and compels deeply connected listening. From a genre perspective, one work to identify is how such expectations for discursive features are dialectically connected to and articulated through genre practices. From the accounts, some of which I report in the forthcoming sections, I argue that

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these discursive expectations were communicated and reinforced through the typified workshop process.

Structured Screening. The time-intensive workshop typically begins with what I call a structured screening session, during which desired aesthetic and ideological elements and expectations, as articulated by the seven elements in the cookbook, are further explicated through collective viewing and analysis of a number of exemplary digital stories. Screening is always embedded within framing activities, such as PowerPoint presentations or structured discussions, which highlight the core qualities emphasized by the individual facilitators. That is, participants are prompted to apply ideas, such as insight, moment, or emotional content, to their viewing and analysis of exemplary stories. Facilitators interviewed for this project unanimously agree that it is important that stories selected are simultaneously *focused*, that these stories are selected to illustrate the core qualities, as well as *diverse*, that stories are included to demonstrate the diversity of themes, aesthetic approaches, and social facilities of digital storytelling in diverse social contexts and for multiple purposes.

Story Circle and Scripting. The story circle lies at the conceptual core of a CDS digital storytelling workshop. The story circle is the space where the group process fully unfolds. It is an opportunity for each participant to share and test an emerging idea and to receive group feedback and support—all in hopes of working out the core and details of one's story. Depending on degrees of participant preparation and maturity of the draft, a story circle can take as long as a whole day and as short as two hours. At a CDS workshop, initial scripting takes place before the workshop as participants are expected to bring a draft to the first day of the workshop. During the workshop, scripting immediately follows the story circle to allow participants to re-imagine their stories in light of peer feedback and privileged aesthetic and ideological values. In this

process, scripting involves further exploration into the insight, emotional content, details, moments, and alternative approaches to arrive at creative expressions. Considered together, story circle and scripting, which both take place on the first day of CDS workshop, play an important role in orienting participants towards a socially acceptable and culturally appropriate ways of telling personal stories.

Tutorial and Editing. Image- and video-editing software tutorials are typically interlaced into resource building and editing. The second day is typically used for participants to scan and manage images and to record and edit voice-overs. On the last day of a three-day workshop, participants edit the movie into a rough cut in the morning and prepare a final version emerges in the afternoon. The configuration of technology, tools, individual, and activities varies across the four programs. Typically, participants do not get access to computer and technology until the second day of the workshop. At *Capture Wales*, *CDS*, and *Patient Voices*, participants uses technology provided by the hosting organization, including scanners, audio recording equipment, laptops installed with group licensed software and sometimes other resources (e.g. patient voices installed a small bank of royalty free images). For the programs other than Capture Wales, which had a very rigorous measure against the use of copyrighted materials, focused instruction on media literacy was also interlaced into the process, including resources for locating copy-right free images and music.

Premiere . A typical workshop ends with a premiere session, where the group reconvenes (sometimes relatives and members from the community are invited) to join the culminating event. As a reflective group exercise, the premiere allows the group to watch the collection of completed stories, to observe how they have changed during the process, to reflect on their experiences, and to received comments and feedback. At this concluding event, the focal themes

of change, both in terms of the psychological "unstuffing" experienced by the individual author and in terms of changes to one's story, were commented upon by the facilitators and the group.

From the perspective of genre theory, the workshop model is a highly functional aggregation of cultural tools, constituted by semiotic tools (the cookbook and exemplary stories), technological tools (software and equipment), and material tools (story circle, premiere, and tutorial building activities). Such historically developed cultural tools mediate various aspects of the workshop process, which is at times highly distributed and sometimes solitary. To that end, digital stories and the cookbook, embody a certain way of acquiring, processing, and using personal experiences. In invoking activities, such as a structured screening and a story circle, in which tool-use is deeply embedded, the facilitators and the cultural artifacts co-construct a discursive space in which discrete instances of meaning making are oriented towards a more typified and recognizable way of storytelling.

In what follows, I will further explore the facility of semiotic and material structures in encoding what CDS considers culturally appropriate and socially acceptable ways of meaning-making. In so doing, I pay particular attention to how facilitators strategically structure the workshop in service of the ideological commitments of the center's work.

Enable a transformative experience

The attempts to orient the participants towards storytelling as a transformative experience begin prior to the intensive workshop. This is first achieved by making available to potential participants detailed account of the process as well as rich explication of the key values of digital storytelling through the sharing of a downloadable copy of the digital storytelling cookbook. As an important institutional artifact, the cookbook crystallizes a synthesis of the intention and methods of the social practice, most notably through its detailed discussions of the seven

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elements. For example, "owning your insight" frames the process as one that moves beyond a simple description of an experience to exploring the meaning behind it and implication for growth. The emphasis on "owning your emotion" encourages participants to focus on an emotional undertone of one's story as a way of enabling deep connection with oneself and the audience. Combined, these discussions consolidate the creative "palace" or "compass" that drives the stories towards encapsulation of a transformative experience—the authentic attempt to make sense of and grow from important life experiences and to enable shifts of perspectives within oneself and the audience.

Most importantly, the book lays out a key value that reverberates throughout the storytelling process. This key value—the focus on a "moment" that captures, clarifies, and illustrates the insight and the emotional content (p.13-15), plays an important role in affording and constraining the compositional structure of stories coming from a CDS workshop. The cookbook describes a moment as a moment of change that is loaded with meaning, reveals answers, and best conveys the insight behind a story. Embedded in such a reasoning is also the recognition of a rich moment, as well as scenes built around it, as a means of "showing" rather than "telling" the insight. The presence of a successful moment in a story also serves an important rhetorical function, in that it allows the audience to enter into the space of the story and to actively construct their own interpretations. In the workshop, "scene" and "moment" are often used interchangeably to convey that the digital storytelling can benefit greatly from the author's conscientious attempt in painting a vivid portrait of oneself and giving the audience rich sensory experiences of the moment. This conception of the moment therefore carries implications for how the moment is developed. Namely the participants are encouraged to use vivid sensory details to capture the sights, sounds, thoughts, and feelings of the moment; they are

encouraged to consider the benefits of painting a lively picture through the reenactment of lively dialogues, activities, and settings. As a functional part of the story, the moment is to be considered in light of the overall structure of the story, which often centers around a central moment. That is, a rich scene is selected with care and constructed in concrete and subtle ways to uncover the insight and to convey deep emotional content.

As my discussion will show, the emphasis on this particular semiotic feature is embedded in the genre practices of the workshop. For example, facilitators might use the structured screening and discussion to refocus participants' attention to other authors' use of rich moments through the showing of exemplary stories showcasing the authors' use of rich moments were showcased and discussed. During story circle, participants might be encouraged to imagine alternative ways of telling a story through the employment of telling moments. This notion can also reinforced during the productive process of individuals and through pedagogical nudges.

What is interesting here is not how the book lays out such expectations, but how such expectations are encoded by various activities, discourses, and semiotic artifacts that circulate in and out of the discursive space of a given participant but constantly remain at the backdrop of one's creative attempt. When these expectations are pointedly illustrated by exemplary stories, analyzed and applied during discussions, and referenced through pedagogical nudges and pushes, they inevitably comes to inform and shape one's storytelling process. In this vein, the discourses, semiotic artifacts, and material structures mediate the discursive work and shares the agency with the author by influencing of the nature and organization of the discursive activity.

For example, the emphasis on "insight," "emotion," "moment," and "creativity" is revisited in the structured screening session, when stories are purposefully selected and analyzed to illustrate and highlight how such values can unfold. Both Dan and Kay, for example, agree

that they always show *Tanya* to illustrate how a simple story can "show" rather than "tell" an important moment of change in emotionally compelling ways. The story is also seen by all three CDS facilitators as a powerful institutional artifact—*Tanya* being one of the first stories facilitated by Joe to reveal the expressive power of digital storytelling. The story, about the author's loss of a true friend, quickly morphs into a subtle story of change (from not having many friends to finding but losing a true event) that conveys powerful emotional mix of appreciation, sorrow, and joy.

In addition, Kay suggests that she often shows multiple stories that focus on a moment (most notable examples of a good "moment" include *Nowhere anyhow, The gift of non-violence, Letters, Go around*) because it is quite a difficult concept for participants to grasp, especially in light of the linear structures of narrative many have grown familiar with through years of experiences literacy practices. In important ways, collective sharing of these stories challenge the linear model and illustrates the facilities of and approaches to a different type of thematic and compositional movement, which centers around rich moments. In selecting such stories, Kay also commented that she purposefully selected stories that demonstrated diverse approaches to arrive at meaning, such as the construction of vignettes accompanied by lyrical use of images. To that end, the intention is to encourage participants to break away from conventional and "familiar" models of organizing stories.

In the story circle and scripting, the group process is structured in such a way that the participants are guided and supported in re-imagining their stories in light of these ideological, aesthetic, and rhetorical emphasis. Dan and Kay both suggest that they try to model productive and constructive ways of raising questions and giving comments to move stories along. In pushing a participant to explore deeply into the meaning behind a experience, for example, Dan

often insists that the participant gives an answer to "why this story." To help participants to delve into emotions, the facilitators often asked questions like, "How did you feel in that moment?" By modeling ways of latching on a story and pushing a storyteller to productive venues of fleshing out a story, Dan works to create an environment that certain expectations are made clear through such questions.

Additionally, Dan argued that he often took forceful measures to encourage participants to break away from a linear model of narrative. As we discussed what he would do if he saw a story that was not working, he recounted a counter-example in response to my question, trying to make clear the kind of narrative he would promote. In this particular workshop, a participant brought a story consisted of thirteen scenes, each constructed around a theme speaking to his gender confusion as a child. These vividly constructed scenes, such as "I'm eight years old. I am getting my haircut at the bobber and I found myself looking at a man's mustache. I can't stop thinking about it.," worked well to illustrate the overarching theme of the story. Dan, for one, was impressed by how the author intuitively moved from a linear narrative (beginning, middle, and end) and pushed back expository statements such as "here is what I learned" that explicitly signaled change. The thematic and compositional moves taken by the author, mapped closely onto Dan's orientation towards storytelling. However, after participating in the group process, seeing some of the exemplary stories and listening to others' stories, the author came back the next day, having decided to abandon his original story. In this instance, Dan pushed the author to go back to the original creative vision.

This anecdote is a telling example of how certain forms of organizing discursive meaning is encouraged as socially acceptable and culturally appropriate, despite participant's interpretation that points to the opposite. In this scenario, Dan valued the original narrative

structure created by the author. With its emphasis on revealing moments and its ability to show rather than tell, Dan saw in the story an intuitive match between the individual's and the institution's creative intentions. In this case, the situated activities of the facilitators and digital storytellers are simultaneously personal, interpersonal, social, and institutional. First, the emergence of discursive meaning is informed by the individual participant's motivation for sharing a story about his gender and his intuitive vision for how the story can unfold in compelling ways. It is inter-personal in that the storytelling process is informed by social relationships present at the workshop. That is, the storyteller's motivation and creative vision can come into clash with the perceived values, ideals, and practices modeled through the stories of others, conversations with peers, and attending to facilitators' comments. In this case, an emergent creative vision is perceived to contradict the goals and agendas of the group—a perception that was likely formed by the public sharing of digital stories and ideas for emergent stories. In structured screening and story circles, the participant's discursive activity takes place in dialogic relationship to a heteroglossic configuration of others, mainly through the mediation of discourses, artifacts, and generic structures. More importantly, these discourses, artifacts, and structures also bring into convergence multiple social historical trajectories that shape and reshape his story. Finally, the storyteller's activity is influenced by the particular institutional pressures of the CDS, which, in this case, is forcefully articulated in active measures Dan took in encouraging a creative, non-linear approach to developing narratives. In any given workshop, the ideological formation continues to reverberate through the types of "nudges and pushes" that the facilitators could give to redirect the course of storytelling towards desired forms, content, and values.

As these discussions suggest, this ideological formation is embodied by and stays live through the typified ways in which artifacts (digital stories, books, presentations), tools (prompting questions), persons (facilitators and participants in the group process), tasks (sequence of events), and processes are configured and reconfigured in a workshop. The situated activities of participants are essentially mediated acts, in that digital stories fuse individual intentions with institutional pressures to sustain forms, themes, and values that are socially recognized and culturally appropriate. In what follows, I draw on an example to illustrate how a story achieves this dynamic fusion of individual and institutional intentions. To do so, I attend to the story for evidences of a recurrent grouping of typified thematic, compositional, and rhetorical moves that embody the ideological, rhetorical, and social values expounded at the CDS. In that regard, I work to shed light on how an individual story indexes meanings as the result of mediated discursive activity.

The story, *Grand Canyons*[13]*,* was nominated by both Joe and Dan for how its thematic content, formal features, and rhetorical purposes fuse together in a way that articulates the center's commitment to using storytelling as a productive venue through which core identity work is done (Weinshenker, 2006). In this story, the author focuses on a moment in his childhood—a family trip taken to the Grand Canyons—as a venue through which he reflectively examines his identity as a child, a man, and an expecting father. To carry out a genre-informed analysis, I look for specific indications of how the author explores and conveys the *insight* through *emotionally* charged *moments* to arrive at a meaningful account of *change.* To facilitate my analysis of the thematic and compositional movements of the story, I re-arrange the story in accordance to stanzas and chapters that a genre-informed discourse analysis has allowed me to

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[13] The story can be accessed at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lN89P_z_mYw

identify. I present each juncture of the story at a time and spend time discussing the particular thematic, compositional, semiotic, rhetorical, and ideological features present in each juncture. I then present a visual model to discuss the temporal feature of Dan's story as dialectically connected to the other dimensions of his story. I end my discussion with a genre analysis, in which I build connections between the digital story to broader ideological and institutional formations in which this situated discursive act took place.

A Case: Grand Canyon

A rich moment

Visual						
Effect			Slow swirling effect across images/ as images are laid over each other			
Narrative	I think we thought it'd be funny	25 years ago, to all take pictures like this.	After all, we were at the grand canyon. The whole family have taken to the road in a rented	yellow, white-striped van for three weeks of the summer. On the drive down from San Francisco, my brother and I played K-Tel's Rock 80 album over and over again from the hand-held cassette player in the backseat.	Blondi'e heart of glass and Gary Newman's cards. trying to make it above the roar of the tires on the pavement from that single speaker on the deck. When we got there, we stayed a while, camped, took some pictures, and drove home	I got the pictures developed and put them in an old cigar box with some other pictures and some baseball cards.
Sound	Light guitar music			Sounds of cars swooshing by		
Stanza	Anchor device		The trip The van, listening to Rock 80, trip			Develop the pictures
Chapter	A rich moment					

Figure 7. Grand Canyon, Rich moment

Dan's story opens with a fairly typical title page, which tags the thematic focus of the story through visual and textual channels. The image of a coffee mug hanging from a snag tree branch has the canyon at its backdrop, which is overlaid with scarlet typefaces writing "Greetings from the Grand Canyon." Likely a postcard made out of a family photo, the title page contextualizes the narrative by locating it in connection to a place--the Grand Canyons. As the image cross dissolves from the foreground into the background, a soft piano tune begins, forecasting the beginning of the narrative. In the next 54 seconds, the author reminisces about a family trip that took place 25 years ago, highlighting two particular aspects of the trip—listening to music during the car trip and taking what he considered to be "funny" family photos.

The narrative begins with an unprovoked comment on "the photos," which the audience does not see until the third image in this sequence. The narrative enters halfway into the visual stay of the title page and carries on into the second image, which is likely a cropped Google map image that captures the main route taken by the family on that trip. This image builds on the title page to further contextualize the narrative--it situates the narrative in the context of a road trip and locates the trip in a geographical sense. This image dominates the visual until the end of the first sentence in the narrative, when the audience begins to see "the photos" the narrative has commented upon. Concurrently in the remaining 45-second stretch of the narrative, during which vivid details of the trip are unhurriedly delivered, a series of five images of the trip take turns in occupying the foreground and receding into the background of the visual field. A slow swirling motion effect is used on all five images. The trip images, in order of succession, include a collage of three images of family members "hanging off the edge of the canyon cliff", an image of the yellow van, and an image of the entire family at a picnic table.

As the narrative makes a thematic movement from the more general description of the trip to vivid descriptions of a particular aspect of the road trip--Dan and his brother trying to listen to a rock album beyond the roar of the road, a sound effect capturing the swooshing sound of car tires on the road joins the soft piano chord to add a layer of sensory details to the narrative. As the narrative about the trip draws to an end, the images slowly dissipates into a visual silence (a white, blank page), which sustains through the following spoken words about what happened after the trip, which centers around the photos.

A critical task a genre theorist takes is to make the connection between thematic, semiotic, and compositional features of Dan's story, which are results of a ratified productive process, with the broader ideological and institutional orientation that operates through the

workshop. In a genre-informed analysis of this chapter, I suggest it be read as a rich moment that lies at the conceptual and emotional core of the story. Through the complex orchestration of semiotic details, Dan situates and anchors himself and his audience in a vividly re-imagined space from the perspective of a nine-year-old. In light of my analysis of other stories in this category, the "richness" of a moment can be explicated in the following ways. First of all, the moment is rich with vivid sensory details that "show" rather than "tell" the audience about an event. Instead of telling the audience about a "carefree" or "fun" trip through expositions that might read something like "I still remember the fun trip we took when I was 9 years old," the author relies on carefully selected details to "show" the buzzes, noises, and activities of the moment. His choice of specific and concrete details, delivered through the linguistic mode and illustrated by visual and audio details, brings the audience to re-imagine and re-experience the trip with the author.

Second, the moment is pregnant with thematic and emotional threads that the rest of the story latches on. Through the imagery of "funny" family photos, the author paints the picture of a seemingly happy and normal family on a carefree getaway. We enter the emotional space of a young Dan, whose main concern fixated on a rock album and whose memory of the trip retained nothing out of the ordinary. The conceptual and emotional implications of the photos or the trip are not explicated but will become explicit as the story continues.

Lastly, the construction of the moment is particularly rich in how the author draws on multiple modes, each of which unfolds in a way that is independent of the logics of co-present modes but is deeply implicated with and echoes the central theme of the semiotic whole (Hull and Nelson, 2006). The complex orchestration of the spoken, visual, non-linguistic auditory, and animated greatly enhances the dynamism of the construction, most notably through the

conjunction of two types of non-linguistic auditory resources, the swooshing sound of the roaring tires and of the melodious flow of the guitar and piano chords. These sound effects work hand in hand to embody the emotional space of the story as ordinary, carefree, and filled with anticipation. Additionally, the lack of visual presence, of what I call a visual silence, also serves important semiotic and rhetorical purposes. The visual silence, in this case, coincides well with the progression of the story, which marks the conclusion of a three-week trip. The visual silence contributes to the construction of an after-trip scenario that is in great contrast to the "busy" scenes of the trip. Indeed, thematic and semiotic features we observe in this chapter echoes what Dan and Kay explained in terms of the type of narrative they prefer. Treated as a nugget that encapsulates broader themes, a rich moment is a focal mindset the facilitators help to develop. In a way, the emphasis on a rich moment is in tandem with the push for authors to break away from what is familiar and safe and to imagine and experiment with different modes, approaches, and routes of arriving at a story.

As such, the first chapter of Dan's story functions as an important anchor that creates a thematic and emotional space that will be constantly referenced and revisited, often in undermining and deconstructive ways. As the story unfolds, the audience will probably encounter several "a-hah" moments as they are brought back to themes introduced but not analyzed here.

A psychological fixation

Visual	
Effect	Slow swirling zoom-in
Narrative	Soon after we returned, my parents separated, sold our house, and divorced. Everything we had was split up and packed in boxes and moved. But on that trip, everything had seemed fine. My showroom was still popular, the philly's were great, and I was 9 years old. /For a year after, I wasn't able to sleep though. I'd started shaking and running home from school, 1,2, and three in the morning and there I was, awake in bed, with the lights off, listening to talk radio.
Sound	
Stanza	1: Unexpected Divorce. 2: Perceived Normalcy. 3: Listen to talk radio.
Chapter	A Psychological Fixation

Figure 8. Grand Canyon, A psychological fixation

In marking this chapter with a term that CDS facilitators often use, I work to highlight the ways in which this chapter builds in momentum and in preparation for the unfolding of theme of transformation. As the visual silence gives way, a single image of Dan's family comes to dominate the visual field in the next 45-second slice of the story. This image, which goes through a painfully slow and swirling zoom-in effect, accompanies Dan's description of his shock at the unexpected divorce of his parents and his struggle to cope with it. The narrative, delivered in an unhurried, sometimes shaky voice of the author, is often punctuated by long, uncomfortable pauses. This chapter begins to bring into life the emotional meaning of the family trip by presenting various retrospective details that are in direct contrast to thoughts, activities, and emotions described in the rich moment. What we see, again, is the author's use of vivid details to depict the scenario of parents' unexpected divorce and the tumultuous emotional experience of the nine-year-old Dan--an emotional experience dominated by disbelief, shock, and grief.

The image, taken in the form of a traditional family portrait and shows a happy family in unison, does not carry much emotion in its form. However, it is implicated with a range of

emotions found in the narrative. When coupled, the linguistic and visual modes echo each other in concert to form a consistent tenor and texture centering on a deep sense of dissonance. This dissonance unfolds in two ways. First, there is a deep sense of dissonance between the chaotic reality after parents' divorce and the perceived normalcy Dan experienced on the trip. On the one hand, we have a scene of irreparable destruction as encoded through words such as "separated, sold, divorced, split up, packed up, and moved." On the other hand, we witness the young Dan hanging onto what is emblematic of normalcy: what had seemed "fine," songs that were "still" popular, and sports teams that were still "great." The shock and the grief that follows, if only implicitly suggested through such contrasts, were soon brought to surface through details of his insomnia, running from school, and listening to talk radio at night. Second, the dissonance is conveyed through the contradictory juxtaposition of the visual and narrative. In the visual channel, the family portrait begins by maintaining a sense of normalcy, which contradicts the painful account of a chaotic divorce. As the image slowly swirls into focus, other members of the family were pushed out of the frame, compelling the audience's attention on Dan's smiling face. The visual focus on a smiling face comes into a tensional relationship with the narrative, which concretizes the grief of a nine-year-old through a vividly re-imagined scene of a boy lying in the darkness, listening to talk radio.

From a genre perspective, several observations can be made about the second chapter of Dan's story. First, the second chapter has begun to reveal the emotional underpinning of the family trip. We now know the story is not so much about a family getaway than a traumatic experience it encapsulates. This thematic focus on the traumatic is not unexpected for CDS stories. From a constant comparative analysis of CDS stories, I suggest that authors often relay traumatic stories of childhood abuse, ugly family secrets, diagnosis of a disease and so on as a

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way to create what Joe calls "signpost" stories. Reading these stories as instances of genre invocation, we and observe how a broader ideological orientation—CDS' commitment to using digitals storytelling as a way to unstuff and let go of traumatic experiences, has lent itself to author's selection of and preference for such thematic contents.

Second, the first and second chapter work in concert to tell a "before" story, based on which themes of change and transformation can unfold. As I have discussed, the sense of deep-rooted dissonance that emerges in this juncture is at the core of the trauma that haunts the adult Dan. In showing us the trauma and its consequences, Dan gets his audience emotionally acclimated for the depth of trauma and to help them anticipate what is to come. One thing that is also worth noticing here is that Dan is introducing a thematic hook, which I will further explore in the upcoming section. Using the thematic hook as an anchor, Dan moves constantly back and forth in time to bring into confluence a string of temporally disconnected but thematically related incidents, memories, and analysis.
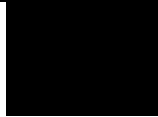
Closely related to the previous observation is a third point I want to make about a typified temporal feature CDS stories systematically manifest. That is, if we observe in Chapter one a relatively linear construction of the narrative (we drove, we camped, we took pictures, we came back), the second juncture involves a compression of multiple time frames (shortly after we came back, soon after, on that trip, a year later). We are given no clear indication of how temporally distanced or distributed these events were and the progression of the story involves a sandwiching of an analytical stanza that looks back on the trip in between accounts of what was happening after the trip. For the broader project, I argue the constant shift of time frames, which is not necessarily salient or significant here, is an important temporal feature of CDS stories. Lastly, Dan's creative use of the visual reinforces a point I have made earlier—creativity, as

defined by the CDS, involves exploring the complex intermodal relationships. By creatively designing meaning through the combinatory efforts of the linguistic and visual channel, Dan drives home the deep sense of dissonance, therefore lending emotional weight to the trauma.

Change

In the remainder of the story, the author shifts back and forth between the present and the past to illuminate the specific ways in which change, or transformation, has taken place. In juggling the two perspectives (adult and child), in light of each other, Dan skillfully crafts a reflective account of how his experiences of the present always bear the burden of the past. He also proceeds to explore new ways of making sense of his past. The last part of the story is dominated by the theme of transformation, which is manifested through changes in perspectives, knowledge, and action. Through three distinct but intricately connected vignettes, Dan etches out the concrete ways in which his present perspective stands in connection and contrast to the experiences of the child.

Vignette One: Talk Radio

Visual			
Effect		slow pan-movement from left to right	
Narrative	I still listen	to talk radio at night, almost every night. Last year, my wife bought me a pillow speaker so she could sleep.	
Sound			
Stanza	Punctuation- transition	Talk radio	
Chapter	Change: Vignette 1		
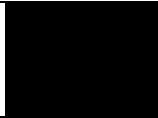
Figure 9. Grand Canyon, Vignette One

The first vignette centers on the ritual of listening to talk radio at night. The vignette begins with a visual silence constituted by a four-second matte-black page, as Dan's voice, filled

with emotion, announces the continuation of the ritual into his adult life. Following the visual silence is a lackluster image of an old talk radio. As the image pans slowly from the left to the right on the screen, the narrative delivers two simple and descriptive sentences, which, in a literal sense, convey mundane details. The way in which the talk radio vignette latches onto the preceding section, however, involves a drastic shift in time—from a time when Dan was 9 years old to the present. In making this temporal move, a sudden rise in the visual model, this juncture enables a transition from the world of the child to the world of the adult, where things have certainly changed for Dan--he is married and the presence of a wife makes slight modifications to his ritual necessary. Through "listening to talk radio," Dan shows, rather than tells, the consequential ways in which a childhood trauma bears upon one's experiences of the present.

From the perspective genre, this juncture of the story builds on the thematic momentum that has been building and allow several focal genre features to fully surface. First, this juncture is a functional transition that connects the "before" and "after" of the transformation. "Listening to talk radio" has taken on an emblematic meaning to encapsulate the trauma. In Joe's words, this long-lasting ritual is a "psychological fixation,' which hinders Dan's ability to move forward. Second, we begin to observe how the narrative structure pushes against a linear model. Although Dan's story begins with an earlier memory, he does not let the story end with the memory. Instead, teases out themes, such as the trip and listening to talk radio to bring into conflict a whole range of interpretations and analysis. In this vignette, the shift from the past to the present is built around a concrete activity, which was a way for the child to cope with his circumstances but is a symbol of the long-lasting influence of the trauma on the adult. However, the theme of change is already peeking through the detail of Dan's wife buying a pillow speaker to allow her to sleep at night.

Visual	■		
Effect		A video clip	
Narrative		This year, I went back by chance to the Grand Canyon for the first time since that trip. In the car ride up from flagstaff, I listened to the tires on the road and thought about what I couldn't hear in the van so many years ago. My father driving, my mother next to him, talking or not talking, and my brother and me so far away on the back seat.	
Sound		Sounds of car swooshing	
Stanza	Punctuation	A new trip	
Chapter		Change, vignette 2	

Figure 10. Grand Canyon, Vignette Two

In the second vignette, Dan gives a sketch of his recent trip back to the Grand Canyon. The thematic movements and the semiotic design of this vignette latches on to the opening sequence to create a concrete point-to-point comparison that is telling of another area of transformation. First of all, the semiotic design of this vignette echoes that of the opening sketch of the family trip. We experience the road trip yet again. But this time, we get to see, hear, and feel the road from a video clip shot with a stationery camera positioned to overlook the highway as Dan drives. We hear the same swooshing sound, which at times competes with the author's narrative for the audience's attention. Second, details in the narrative are selected to match those of the previous trip, which provides points of reference for the author's analysis. We now revisit the yellow van, the roar of the tires, and the boys on the back seats. And yet this time, we see it from the perspective of a cognizant and reflective adult who seeks new understanding of an experience that the child failed to make sense of—things "I couldn't hear."
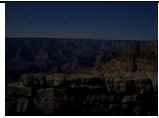
We witness here another connection between Dan's story and the broader ideological orientation of the CDS. In institutional artifacts, such as the cookbook or genre practices, such as

the story circle, one thing that facilitators encourage is that participants go through an authentic and honest search for new understandings and new meanings. This is in part a function of the therapeutic process—in looking back at things, one can potentially achieve a refreshed perspective, which often enables healing. In Dan's story new meaning is gained through the point-to-point comparison that brings to life a whole set of undercurrent themes that laid dormant in the rich moment. That is, details in this vignette are implicated with meaning that exists only in relation to the rich moment. The adult Dan now speaks back to his child counterpart as he re-imagined the undercurrent tension that must had been present during the family trip. By focusing specifically on what he had not seen or heard and deconstructing what he perceived as normalcy, the adult tries to reconcile the two realities and formulate an answer to a haunting question. Change reveals itself in the forms of reflective analysis of to the two trips to the Grand Canyon.

The temporal feature is particularly worth noticing because it is through the use of a "mirror" stanza, which references the rich moment in undermining ways, that Dan is able to reveal change and new meaning. As I have suggested, even though the story progresses in accordance natural temporality in this juncture, its meaning is only comprehensible when a moment in a different chronotope is activated and used as the backdrop of the current. The same can be argued about each time Dan references the "talk radio." Even though such references move in natural temporality (from past to present), what resides in the past always remains at the backdrop of the present, informing and speaking through the present.

Vignette Three: The Photos

	Visual					
Visual						
Effect			Swirling effect as each is overlaid on top of next			
Narrative	My wife, who is pregnant, and I have been cleaning up the house and I found some of those old pictures still in the cigar boxes.	I don't think they are funny anymore, those pictures.	The rock wall, and the river that made the canyon / that you almost can't see, and us pretending to be scared, and my parents /pretending to pretend, hanging off the edge of the world.			
Audio						
Stanza	Discovery	New insight				
Chapter	Change: Vignette 3					

Figure 11. Grand Canyon, Vignette Three

In the final vignette, we see the sustained effort of the author to make sense of his experiences. The vignette again begins with a visual silence, which is enjoined with a stretch of narratives that points to the accidental discovery of the old photos. In the first stanza, the past and the present are intricately connected through the lens of the photos. As Dan and his wife move into the future (preparing for the birth of their child), Dan's past peeks in through a box of old photos stocked away in a cigar box. Dan brings to the surface another key area of change— his perspective towards the photos and what they emblematize. As Dan's retrospective analysis blandly states, the photos are "not funny anymore." Dan recycles the same images and semiotic design used in the rich moment but infuses the old images with insights only the cognizant adult could garner. Change, in this vignette, is pronounced in a shift of perspective, which brings Dan to a state of reconciliation between the two realities that could only exist in tension previously. In recycling the same images, we again observe how the images are implicated with symbolic meanings that only exist in association with the narrative—the revelation of a sham in his parents' marriage that the young Dan was not able to see and analyze. To that end, the old,

"funny" photos have come to emblematize a broader theme—his lack of understanding and confusion that could only be cleared with experiences and age. To that end, the notion of change is made even more convincing and compelling through Dan's skillful orchestration of images and details that simultaneously bears upon and transcend earlier sections in the story.

Reading this juncture of Dan's story from a genre perspective, we see evidence of the similar thematic, compositional, and temporal moves that I have previously discussed. In short, Dan has incrementally pushed the "transformation" theme through the three intricately connected themes (old photos, the family trip, listening to talk radio). In three thematically parallel vignettes, what remains constant is the rich moment, which provides frames for interpretation and serves as the basis for change—new understandings, answers, changed perspective. The rich moment is reference not only thematically, but also semiotically, as Dan recycles, remixes, and reconfigures the same semiotic design, while injecting it with new meaning. The creative design of the story, through is adept use visual punctuations and remixes of semiotic constructions, adds to the creative expression of the author. Temporally, the story can only make sense if we consider the tangled juxtaposition of the present and the past.

Coda: An optimistic outlook on the future
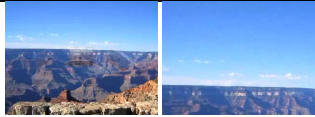
Visual	
Effect	A slow zoom-out
Narrative	Lately I've tried to stop listening to the radio at night and put my ear to my wife's belly as she sleeps, trying to hear the heartbeat of our unborn child instead. And sometimes, I put my chest there so that it can hear mine.
Sound	
Idea Unit	Change habit

Figure 12. Grand Canyon, Coda

In the final sequence of the story, the image of the canyon stays on the screen and moves though a pan movement from bottom to top, with the final image fixated on a glimpse of the clear blue sky beyond the canyon. In the narrative, Dan makes his final visit to the ritual, which also leads to the ultimate resolution that has been building in momentum through the previous vignettes. The narrative concludes with the author's "letting-go" of the ritual and the fixation it emblematizes. I argue the visual's final focus on the sky is symbolic of the destination of a difficult journey. By moving away from the past, both pictorially (the image departing from the canyon that is associated with the family trip) and narratively (Dan's abandonment of the ritual in light of his anticipation of a child), the story ends with an optimistic outlook as the result of a series of transformation revealed in the preceding sections. The sense of optimism materializes in new insights and knowledge--the reconciliation of an ancient but potent dissonance and the possibility of letting go of a fixation.

Genre Analysis

For my purpose, I have chosen a story that exemplifies the ways in which all three attributes have materialized evenly. However, it is fair to argue that these characteristics are systematically present across the stories chosen for this study, especially the identity stories. For more notable example of a rich moment, we have *Nowhere Anyhow*, *A Gift of Non-violence, Go Around*, and *Beauty*. For stories that portray transformation, we have *Tanya, Falsies, Ironing*, and *Letters*. And for creative use of multimodal resources, we see *Letters, Ironing*, and *Go Around.*

What is remarkable about Dan's story is that it disrupts a linear structure of narrative, which typically arranges events in terms of the natural chronology of a beginning, middle, and

end. Instead, we see in Dan's story a compositional emphasis on rich moment(s), constant shifts of temporal frames, and the use of what I call small thematic "hooks" to string into coherence seemingly unrelated facts, memories, ideas, and emotions. In what follows, I draw on the visual representation of *Grand Canyon* to describe and discuss thematic and compositional features that are not only manifested in this individual story, but are stabilized-for-now discursive structures found in may other CDS stories.
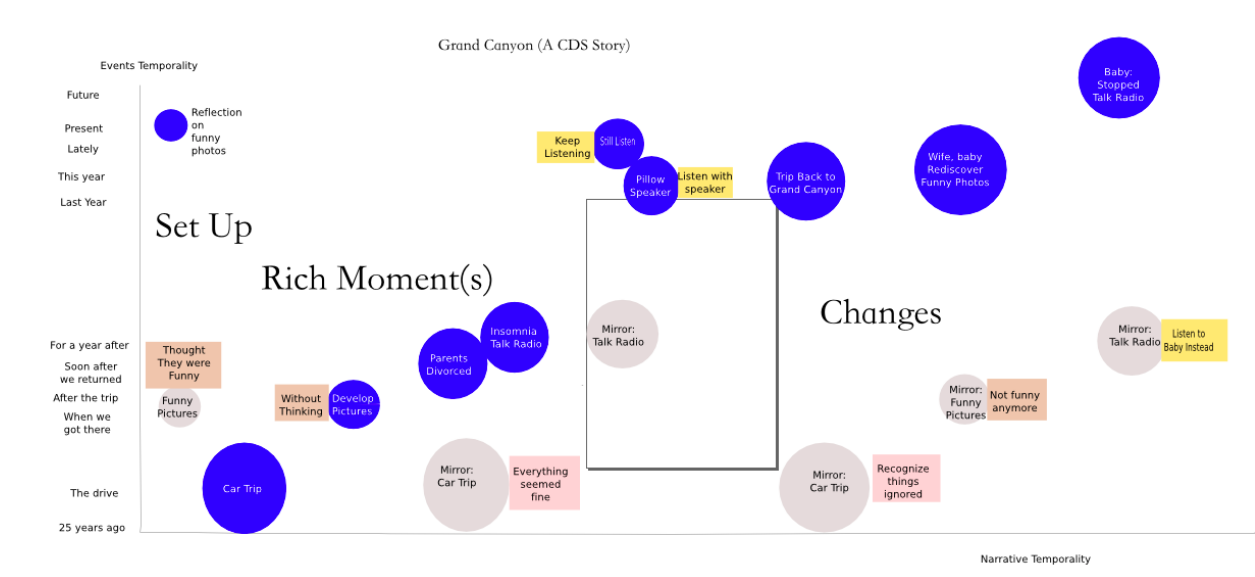

Figure 13. Grand Canyon, A Visual Model

As the model shows, Dan's story projects a progression that is anything but linear and simple. Even though the main thematic thrust of the story, visually coded in blue circles, progresses in a roughly chronological order, there are multiple occasions that the meaning of a thematic unit is heavily dependent upon and implicated with meanings found in what I call "mirror moments." These "mirror moments," visually coded in lightly shaded circles, are pulled into the main thematic thrust through the author's implicit and explicit references to, commentaries upon, and extension of anecdotes and ideas the have been previously mentioned

and described. I will draw on these two theoretical frames to guide my discussion of the typified thematic and compositional features of this and many other CDS stories. In that direction, I suggest these thematic features be considered in tandem of the temporal feature of the story as efforts to move away from a linear, conventional, and single-modal conception of the narrative.

Thematically, the story can be divided into two main junctures--a vividly depicted compilation of rich moments and an arrangement of reflective vignettes that reveals transformation. The first juncture is constituted by intimately intertwined notations on Dan's experiences around a family trip, including the funny family photos, the car trip, and listening to talk radio. These notations, vividly constructed through textual and visual details, bring forth a glimpse into a rich moment of great conceptual and emotional weight. Impregnated in this rich moment are three thematic threads that drive the story along. In carrying through these thematic threads, these notations on a family trip are then recycled and remixed as "mirror moments" that get revisited and reflected upon.

For instance, the funny photos were first "mirrored" at the very beginning of the story. Without any context or reference given, this mirroring of the funny photos functions as a rhetorical device, a "hook" that intrigues and piques the audience's curiosity. In the main juncture that follows, the visual representation of the "funny photos" continues to unfold, giving illustrations and guiding the audience's attention to different aspects of the family trip. As the rich account of the family trip comes to a conclusion, the author's brief commentary on how he developed the photos without thinking about them is buried in the main thematic thrust, serving as a thematic hook that anticipates and foreshadows the intensive emotional journey as well as transformation that are to follow. In interesting ways, this thematic hook remains dormant throughout the author's delivery of the first two reflective vignettes. When it does get "mirrored"

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again in the third vignette, however, it brings all the emotional intensity and the transformative potential of the story to the forefront.

As my analysis shows, "funny photos" is referenced on multiple occasions and takes on different rhetorical (create a sense of suspense), semantic (articulate the child's perception of normalcy), conceptual and emotional (signify an important area of change) functions. In important ways, the changing ways in which the author "reads" these photos are emblematic of the theme of transformation.

Similarly, "listening to talk radio" is another thematic thread that brings into seamless coherence disparate moments scattered through an extended temporal trajectory. What the author delivers in the rich moment—a boy using talk radio to cope with a trauma-- quickly becomes a symbolic resource that implicates later "mirror" references with emotional significance. It is through these mirror references that the theme of change slowly but steadily unfolds. The ritual of "listening to talk radio," emblematic of a powerful psychological fixation, when mirrored for the first time, is emblematic of the search for new understanding. When it is mirrored at the end of the story, the ultimate abandonment of it becomes emblematic of the "unstuffing" of the fixation and the optimistic outlook to the future.

In similar ways, the disruption of temporality and the reliance on thematic hooks to drive the story forward is a significant compositional feature for the CDS stories. Instead of unfolding in the order of a beginning, a middle, and an end, the CDS stories often involves the constant shift back and forth between the present and past to enable the revelation of transformation and change. As we see in *Ironing,* the author's account and analysis of the ironing practice of both himself and his mother are intricately connected and reconfigured to give insight to refreshed understanding of a trauma.

Closely related to these thematic features is a temporal feature that is disruptive of the linear order. As the story is driven by and organized around thematic hooks, its progression involves constant anticipation, review and reconfiguration of details embedded in the rich moment. For instance, when the author uses "talk radio" as an organizing principle, he is required to bring into coherence a string of events, memories and ideas that are temporally dispersed but semantically related. As such, the talk radio is used to bridge temporally distant worlds, which are encoded in changing circumstances—the memory of a sleepless night, a sketch of a married couple making adjustments, and the hopeful projection by an expecting father. A dynamic juxtaposition of the present and past, as an organizational feature, therefore, emerges from this need to explicate changing perspectives in light of early memories, aged artifacts, and entrenched ideas and rituals.

In *Grand Canyon* and many other CDS stories, the present is constantly remixed with and reconfigured in light of the past. This temporal feature is shown through the constant, uneven, and often-unexpected shifts in time frames. In a way, each of the transformation vignettes relies on the seamless embedding of a thematic hook, which the next quickly latches on to launch the story into a different area of exploration. Instead of arranging the three vignettes, which are logically and temporally parallel to each other, in a conventional parts-whole structure, which may entail a systematic enumeration of point A, B, and C, we see the author intentionally breaking away from the seemingly logical ways of gathering and representing parallel information. In Dan's story, we see a mode of progression that relies on thematic hooks rather than temporal order.

As my analysis also shows, Dan's story illustrates how digital storytelling can be used as a venue to arrive at a transformative experience that leads to growth and healing. Emotional

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content, such as going through a painful divorce, suffering from disease, abuse, and loss, or recovering from the loss, is often the thematic focus of such stories. Embedded in such "subtle and serious" focuses are often productive exigencies for the discovery of new insights, knowledge, and courage and the arrival at an optimistic outlook on life as the result of such discovery and learning. All things considered, the identity stories created through the CDS facilitation are notable for their focus on personal growth. As Joe articulates, the story is significant in itself as a "sign-post" of Dan's identity, based on which his outlook on the future can be re-imagined in light of the new knowledge and insights garnered through this reflective process. Even if the story is not shared with a broader public, the story is still valuable for the benefit it brings to the author.

The reliance on a rich moment is a significant thematic feature that I observe to recur throughout the majority of the CDS stories nominated for this study. These finite moments, such as the moment when one first rebels against an abusive father (the gift of non-violence), a chanceful encounter with a waitress in a diner that encapsulates the author's long-lasting yearning to the knowledge of her biological mother's identity (nowhere anyhow), or a critical moment of decision making in a rescue flight (go around), encapsulates larger meanings, insights, and emotions that shape the individual in consequential ways.

These thematic and compositional features, as outcomes of participants going through a ratified productive process, during which authentic meaning, transformation and creativity are discussed and encouraged, have come to index and encode these broader ideological meanings. In this regard, genre feature is one dimension of a social practice, in which genre practice is encoded by collaborative efforts of artifacts, persons, activities, and typified ways of configuring them. For example, the facilitator's emphasis on digital storytelling as a therapeutic venue for

healing and growth have partially given rise to the examination of "nuggets" of life experiences, which encapsulate larger, transformative possibilities. Similarly, compositional moves that rebel against the rules of temporality are the result of the facilitating team's effort to move its participants away from linear structures of narrative and to allow meaning to emerge and unfold in authentic and compelling ways. Tied to the notion of a rich moment is the creative potential that is afforded by the exploration of more complex semiotic relationships across the modes, whose relationships with each other constantly shifts and changes.

For my purpose, I have chosen a story that exemplifies the ways in which all three attributes have materialized evenly. However, it is fair to argue that these characteristics are systematically present across the stories chosen for this study, especially the identity stories. For more notable example of a rich moment, we have *Nowhere Anyhow*, *A Gift of Non-violence, Go Around*, and *Beauty*. For stories that portray transformation, we have *Tanya, Falsies, Ironing*, and *Letters*. And for creative use of multimodal resources, we see *Letters, Ironing*, and *Go Around.*

For the socio-historical project I take up, what is also of particular interest here is the unique ways in which locally constructed and professes genre features then enter into the collective stock of discursive structures, ready to be taken up, re-interpreted, and recycled by others and in other chronotopes. As I have and will continue to discuss, a collective stock of digital stories can be repurposed in various ways to socially orient participants towards the shared meaning potential. Indeed, throughout this dissertation, I have been collecting accounts of how digital stories have been repurposed into examples, advertisements, pedagogical artifacts, jumping-off boards of professional development, objects of research, tributes, social

commodities, and so on. In embodying the ideology and practice of digital storytelling, the

repurposed use of these stories are powerful agents of genre invocation and transformation.

CHAPTER V

STORIES ABOUT WALES, BY WALES

In this chapter, I continue a socio-historical account of digital storytelling as living through chronotopically-situated programs. In presenting *Capture Wales* as an interesting case of genre innovation, which involved the conjoining and negotiating the durable forces of two distinct historical trajectories, the CDS and the BBC, I continue to examine the overarching question of what it means to consider digital storytelling as a cultural genre. That is, I keep at the backdrop of my discussion the social system that embodied a meaning potential Capture Wales partially inherited and reconfigured. Through the lens of these two distinct but comparable programs, I examine genre as enacted through lived experiences. Another question I explore in this chapter is what it means to examine digital storytelling as a dynamic meaning potential. That is, I see Capture Wales' invocation of digital storytelling as a case of genre innovation. Although the design and implementation of the program were framed by practices inherited from both the CDS and the BBC, each bringing to the table a set of historically developed expectations, conventions, and rules, digital storytelling took on new typified shapes and developed a new ratified process to respond to the novel need to use digital storytelling in a public broadcasting environment.

Re-anchor the Genre for Public Broadcasting

In 2000, Daniel Meadows, a lecturer of journalism at the University of Cardiff, brought digital storytelling to the attention of the BBC. Even though I did not get the opportunity to speak with Daniel myself, I was able to piece together the genesis story of digital storytelling at Capture Wales. From various accounts I collected through interviews with Gareth and Karen and reading about it in Story Circle (Hartley & McWilliam, 2009b), I learned that Daniel, who had used documentary photography as a tool to document the lived experiences of people in the UK in his previous work, were drawn to the appeal of digital storytelling as a way to collect people's stories. For this Photobus project[14], Daniel toured England and ran free portrait studios in towns and cities across the country, many of which he revisited in 1996. He invited previously photographed individuals back for new photos to be taken and therefore was able to document the changes to local communities during the elapse of three decades.

As Karen and Gareth both commented, at the core of Daniel's work is a fundamental respect for and interest in everybody's stories and the belief that such stories should have a place in traditional media. This personal commitment, when coupled with larger institutional concerns about "equipping students of future journalism with the right tools" in response to the "era of 2000 [when] things are changing" (G. Molan, personal communication, October 07, 2011), created an exigency for digital storytelling at the University of Cardiff. Acting on such concerns, the academic program approached the BBC to discuss potential funding opportunities for a research project on the upcoming trends in journalism. Daniel, who had participated in a digital storytelling workshop the previous summer, brought and shared his own digital story, *Polyfoto* [15]

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[14] See Daniel's photography and details about the project at http://www.photobus.co.uk/
[15] This story can be watched at http://www.photobus.co.uk/

at a staff meeting at the BBC. According to Gareth, the sharing of this story and Data Atchley's

Home Movies, along with the introduction to digital storytelling struck a chord with the

administrative staff at the BBC. Digital storytelling came at a time when the BBC had begun to

be unsatisfied with a long "tradition in the Britain that the power of storytelling was within the

hands of people who owned the media and had the resource to buy the equipment and carriage

for the enterprise." Additionally, contemplation within the BBC about "a different way of

[allowing] everyday individuals to find their voice in mainstream media" created an institutional

exigency for the integration of a new genre of media production. In the institutional context of

the BBC, there had been motivations to explore different models of community engagement. In

an era preceding the rise of citizen journalism and citizen media as enabled by social media, the

BBC had recognized the potential of digital technology in transforming the media landscape and

worked to explore new ways of engaging media consumers in the production of media content.

Seeing the potential of digital storytelling in connecting to new audiences and doing something

new, BBC launched Capture Wales to create a "patch quilt" of stories about Wales, by Wales.

The meshing of digital storytelling, as Joe and others had invented and refined it, with the BBC's

vision, created an exigency for genre invocation in a public broadcasting environment.

This integration of the genre required significant re-imagination and reconfiguration of

digital storytelling, both the process and the product. That is, the stabilized CDS model, which

was invented to sustain a social practice to enable individual growth through a reflective,

creative, and therapeutic approach to storytelling, had to be destabilized and reinvented to fulfill

the unique goals and expectations the BBC's institutional context. On the one hand, the exigency

is partially familiar—the team was committed to developing a productive model to enable

everyday individuals, especially people from deprived backgrounds, to create and share personal

own stories. On the other hand, the exigency is partially novel—BBC was interested in maintaining a public platform to feature an alternative ways of engaging media consumers and to showcase everyday stories in juxtaposition with mainstream media.

Both facilitators commented on the institutional move behind the launching of Capture Ways as being "revolutionary." On the one hand, no antecedent model existed to guide the BBC's effort in sponsoring a community engagement initiative as a national broadcaster. As a matter of the fact, in our knowledge, no other national, public broadcasters had worked with or featured grass-root, user-generated materials on public media. As Kay reflects, "nobody in the BBC had worked in this way with people before, and the Internet was relatively new in terms of user-generated content." On the other hand, this move was revolutionary because it involved significant re-making of the existing model Joe and his colleagues had developed. That is, the CDS model, with its commitment to using storytelling for therapeutic purposes, had put much emphasis on the intimate and private process and therefore had not encouraged any public sharing of digital stories during the first ten years of its work--participants typically left the workshop with their digital story saved on a DVD. At a time when not a single digital story could be found on the Internet, the facilitating team had to "make it all up as [they] went along with it" (C. Leis, personal communication, October 25, 2011).

Considered together, these contingent concerns and challenges constitute a novel problem that requires the reconfiguration of the genre. In the sections that follow, I will discuss the specific ways in which digital storytelling has been re-imagined and reconfigured to fulfill the exigency embedded in the institutional context of Capture Wales.

Vignettes of mundane experiences

Inherent in Capture Wales' vision is a unique ideological commitment to cultural democracy, a value that is amply manifested in the approach the facilitating team took in teaching digital storytelling. Here we observe an area of divergence between CDS and Capture Wales. While CDS was committed to facilitating the telling of personal stories, the focus has largely been placed on the individual. At Capture Wales, however, the focus was on a model of engaging and featuring communities and individual in a way public broadcasting had fallen short of. Having the BBC and its public broadcasting tradition at its backdrop, Capture Wales specifically sought stories that were rich in its range and diversity.

Surfacing in Kay's statement is a key "novel problem" Capture Wales had to wrangle with. Even though Capture Wales organized its workshops as "intimate, tell-your-story experiences," the facilitating team was primarily concerned with collecting sharable products that were featured on a public, online platform. In that regard, the emphasis had been shifted from the private to the public and from the process to the product. This conceptual shift professed itself in a different approach to digital storytelling. The CDS focuses on providing an intimate and safe environment in which participants are encouraged to examine emotionally challenging experiences for therapeutic and creative purposes. At Capture Wales, however, the facilitating team focused on simple, mundane stories that shed light on the truth and realities of how ordinary people live their lives. As Cathy suggests, the intention for the program was to find "voices that may not have earth-shattering things to say, but reveal realities of people's lives in a way that traditional media didn't." These stories, showing little surprising things people cared about, like their "first pair of shoes or their favorite teddy bears," were little glimpses or vignettes that reveal a whole set of truths of the way Welsh people live their lives. In the

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meantime, the designers worked to bring "lightness, humor, and creativity" to digital storytelling. In her effort to make clear what these stories were about, "they don't have to be really heavy stories about wanting to change things" and what the program was about, "we were not a social activist project," however, we observe how the CDS remained at the backdrop of the formulation of a new social system of ideology and practice. To push this argument further, Cathy explained,

> [To] me personally, it [digital storytelling] is about giving us a space [and finding audiences] for voices that need or want to be heard. The kind of art therapy Joe does is certainly not what Capture Wales was about. We were not therapists or counselors; we were story facilitators. To me, the heart of digital storytelling is about giving people a chance to share their stories in a way that's right for them. (Leis, 2011)

As Cathy's comment makes clear, central to the team's thinking is the belief that digital stories do not need to be organized around a certain theme or ideological orientation. Instead, the stories are valued for revealing extraordinary truths in ordinary experiences. In this unique institutional context, the invocation of genre requires that the design team create a dialogue between the inherited meaning potential (CDS) and the novel needs and challenges arising from the need to create media content that its institutional host, the BBC, could use. From a genre perspective, the dialogue between the inherited meaning potential and contingent needs created asymmetries, uncertainties and contestations, resulting in a new way of seeing and acting through digital storytelling. A new way of "seeing," as desired by the BBC, might refer to a new way of seeing personal experiences—these stories needed to be ready for public sharing, to reveal realities of Welsh lifestyle, and to demonstrate the utility of an alternative means of media production, particularly in relation to mainstream TV broadcasting. At the same time, this novelty required the facilitators and participants to "act" differently and to "do" a different kind of storytelling.

When I invited Cathy to speak about the workshop model at Capture Wales, she pointed to a main area of divergence between the two programs. Very cognizant of the editorial influence the facilitators might have on the making of the stories, the team had abstained from a "prescriptive" framework for digital storytelling. Cathy, for one, pushed back on the idea of using digital storytelling to seek a particular sort of story, such as a story about change or personal discovery, which, in her view, often led to participants' manipulation of a story just to conform to a "cliché-ridden scheme." Instead, both Gary and Cathy suggested that they had modified the story circle for the purpose of "loosening up" people's stories and therefore allowing diversity and range to emerge. This pedagogical move away from an explicit and "prescriptive" framework also had to do with the program's intention for these stories to be viewed publicly. According to Cathy, in viewing these digital stories as pieces of media that could be presented to an audience, the team worked to encourage different ways of "coming into" a story—essentially to make them as engaging as mainstream media content. Implied in these commentary is the running theme that Capture Wales had intentionally loosen up the generic practice, as prescribed in the CDS model, to allow pleasant surprises to emerge through the telling of a large collection of stories that always had something new to show to the audience of the BBC.

To illustrate the implication of these ideological frames in guiding a new ways of "doing" digital storytelling, Cathy and Gary each shared a memorable anecdote of working with a participant to create a story that adds value to the Capture Wales collection. In juxtaposing these two anecdotes in parallel to each other, I hope to make clear the wide range of stories in the collection.

The story Cathy shared with me was *Elvis Died in My Bedroom*[16]. According to Cathy, this story had stuck with her because of the author's creative work of combining his art (photography) and a deep reflection on the life in Wales' south valley communities. Cathy suggested that she was initially worried by the "load of pictures of gable ends" and the "I am a photographer and I love taking pictures of the valley…" prospect these pictures seemed to promise. During the story circle, however, Cathy was pleasantly surprised by a unique sense of humor and a reflective perspective about the life of the valleys. Going into details to describe how the story circle helped to loosen the author's story, Cathy explained,

> The way that story came about was he started to say something, [but] we were chatting [about everyone's story]. He sat back and said nothing. We asked, "what were you gonna say?" [He replied,] "Oh Elvis died in my bedroom." Everyone was just looking at him and burst out laughing. He started to talk about it, and I said, "That's a really great opening." We are all like, "What?! How are you going to work that into your images?"

In light of earlier commentary Cathy made, this pleasantly surprising story emerged in the process of the story circle, which allowed people to freely converse, test, and solidify ideas. In this case, a great opening emerged as the result of the group questioning and building upon a seemingly random comment made by a member. Also, by taking away an explicitly orienting framework and withholding personal evaluations, the facilitators at Capture Wales allowed authors to arrive at their own stories. In *Elvis Died in My Bedroom,* for example, the author brought into coherence his photography and life events to shed light on his lived experiences in his community as mediated by television and bridged with world events

Adding to this line of thinking, Gary commented that the workshops was designed to loosen up stories people already had, not to promote the discovery of new insights. Digital storytelling, in this view, was adding to the great storytelling skills Welsh people already had. To

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[16] Elvis died in my bedroom can be accessed at http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/arts/yourvideo/media/pages/paul_cabuts_01.shtml

accomplish this, Capture Wales worked to "loosen up" the ratified process it inherited by taking away an overarching framework of art therapy and transformation, therefore enabling a new way of "seeing" and "doing" digital storytelling that allowed for novel forms and natures of storytelling suitable to the cultural context it found itself in. To illustrate, Gary remembered how an author came to a workshop, wanting to tell a story about his trip to Peru. As Gary observed retrospectively, the author's first pass at a story "was crying out to have a story beyond 'I got on the flight and arrived at Lima, then we went to…and then I came back.'" During the workshop, the story circle leader Gilly engaged the author in a conversation of how he funded the trip. Prompted by this question, the author relayed how he sold his ticket to the Cream reunion concert on eBay, used this money to finance his trip to Peru, only to discover himself in a series of unfortunate events, which led him to the deserted outback alone on the night of the concert. From a genre perspective, the making of *40 Pairs of Peruvian Eyes*[17] is a great example of genre innovation as existing at the intersection of the individual, institutional, and historical. The innovative invocation of the genre took place through the collaborative effort of the author, who brought to the table a creative idea and experiences, and the facilitator, who challenged the original vision of the author and helped to refocus the story. Such creative work, however, all took place within the overarching framework in place, the broader institutional goals of enabling and featuring fantastic mundane stories.

What these reflections and anecdotes so tellingly illustrate is that seemingly mundane stories were also sites of creativity and plasticity. By leaving out the type of ideological constraint embraced at the CDS, Capture Wales allowed for a wide range of simple and yet remarkable anecdotes, lores, and tales in everyday lives, such as a little misunderstanding at a

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[17] 40 Pairs of Peruvian Eyes can be accessed at http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/arts/yourvideo/media/pages/simon_griffiths_01.shtml

family dinner party, a hobby, a memorable (mis)adventure, or a refreshing look into one's

community. As highlighted in both anecdotes, the approach taken to personal stories was mostly

light-hearted and filled with a sense of self-deprecating humor. However, these seemingly simple

stories could also reveal important insights into one's identity, community, and culture.

From a genre perspective, Capture Wales' affordance for the telling of mundane stories is

the result of genre innovation. While the design and practice of digital storytelling involved the

witting or unwitting weaving together of inherited elements into a new generic whole, while

leaving out certain "unrepeatable" elements (Wertsch, 1998). When a narrowly defined

ideological orientation was lifted, a storyteller is left with more freedom to explore authentic

personal content and personally relevant ways of arriving at meaning. This analysis does not,

however, suggest a lack of ideological orientation at Capture Wales. Instead, it reveals a different

set of ideological values at play here—an orientation that values mundane aspects of lived

experiences, humorous and entertaining ways of arriving at and retelling of personal stories, and

a celebratory approach to everyday stories as a valuable form of media that compete with

mainstream media. As a community engagement initiative, Capture Wales complemented the

BBC's work in showcasing the rich experiences of individuals and communities in Wales from

the perspective of the people.

As a cultural outsider, my lack of knowledge in the Welsh culture has placed me in an

interesting position of entry into this inquiry. On the one hand, I found the light-hearted approach

to mundane stories both intriguing and entertaining. During the months I spent watching these

digital stories, I was never tired of the Capture Wales stories because I never knew what to

expect in the next story. I often caught myself smiling and laughing as I peeked into these

colorful individual's lives through the small window of a short digital story. On the other hand,

seeing beyond the stories and "knowing" what it really meant had often been challenging. As my exchange with both Gary and Cathy shows, these stories are anything but straightforward accounts of incidents and experiences. Rather, a full understanding of the stories involves a reader's juggling of a complexity of cultural forms, including culturally nuanced tales and jokes, objects (gable ends), and ways of looking and behaving found in the figured worlds these story-tellers and their perceived audiences inhabit. As Cathy argued, what I found puzzling in *Elvis died in my bedroom* was relatable to anyone from the valley, who might watch the story and say, "That' my street! That's the house two blocks from mine! I remember everyone was doing such and such when Martin Luther King died." At the backdrop of Capture Wales was a stronger sense of a unified culture that it represented and served.

In contrast, the CDS' commitment to certain ideological and formal structures, when amply applied in and reappropriated across multiple stories, quickly emerged as a meta-narrative, or a theory of digital storytelling, which I found particularly useful in reading individual stories as instances of genre invocation. However, when a stabilized-for-now structure had been consistently and forcefully maintained, stories could often be read for familiar and even clichéd themes of change, social injustice, and personal growth.

Cultural democracy

As I began to unpack the unique institutional exigency that gave rise to Capture Wales, the theme of cultural democracy quickly caught my attention. Because Capture Wales was designed with the specific purpose of complementing and even challenging traditions and paradigms of mainstream media, an important function of the program was to find and enable stories that would otherwise not be told. That is, Capture Wales was committed to serving people who otherwise did not have the financial resources, literacies, and technologies to engage in

media content creation. To Cathy, digital storytelling was about enabling a connection between storytellers and their audience, without the mediation of professional filmmakers and journalists. To that end, both Cathy and Gary saw themselves as "story facilitators" who "worked with people to give them a chance to share their stories in a way that's right for them."

In practice, the facilitating team had upheld the principle of cultural democracy in every aspect of its workshop design and delivery. Such work often involved the intentional breaking-away from the ways in which mainstream media had approached news storytelling. In selecting regions and communities its workshops cover, for example, the team strategically avoided "fashionable," "news-worthy," and "easy" areas and instead targeted hard-to-reach communities, such as rural areas, poverty-stricken areas, inner-city minority groups. As the producer of the program, Cathy made this intentional move to capture voices that would otherwise be ignored by mainstream media and to seek a more equitable representation of Wales. According to Cathy, they would have been able to produce good stories by running every workshop in Cardiff (the capital of Wales). However, the team sought of Wales that didn't get as much attention from the BBC because of their lack of newsworthy stories. The team also tried to spread its workshops as evenly and expansively as possible around Wales. In comparison to CDS, where participants travel to and pay for the workshops, Capture Wales' workshops were offered inside local communities and free of charge. For one thing, Cathy commented on how she was fascinated by how a community can be represented by local individuals who came forward to participate in these workshop-- "[i]t was really fascinating to see a group of 10 people coming together, who may all have lived in the area but have probably never met each other." To that end, each digital storytelling workshop provided an opportunity for local individuals to piece together an authentic "story" of their community through the very different stories they brought to the table.

This principle of cultural democracy also materialized through the specific ways in which participants were identified and recruited. Even though Capture Wales specifically targeted under-privileged and under-represented social groups along the lines of age, ethnicity, and disability, the team intentionally resisted organizing workshops in accordance to themes or for homogenous grouping of participants with shared traits and concerns. As Cathy argues, the team avoided "typical" groups of participants,

> [There is] no such a thing as a typical group. Being over 18 was the only stipulation. We would often have people from 18 to 80 in one workshop, [bringing together] someone unemployed, a student, a consultant epistemologist and so on. [This diversity of participants] hugely contributes to the stories told. It was really heart-warming to see how people, who can never be in the same room under any other circumstances, support each other, bounce ideas off each other, exchange phone numbers over the coffee break. The great workshop experience was very much behind the richness of the stories. (C. Leis, personal communication, October 25, 2011)

Along the same lines, in making sense of the fact that Capture Wales stories had a larger number of stories created by senior citizens, Gary reflected that this tendency, partially as the result of the team relying on people with free time and volition to participate, had served to redress the under-representation of senior citizens in mainstream media. In framing the workshops, the team also insisted on avoiding "newsworthy" or cliché ridden content. In the following excerpt, Gary explained why the team had stayed away from things that were "important,"

> Sometimes people would ask us to offer a workshop when there would be an anniversary of an [event]. We didn't mind going to the place, but we really didn't want to ask people to tell a story about a particular disaster that happened there. We offered a workshop in Aberfan because there was pressure within the BBC to cover a terrible disaster forty years ago, [when] waste teemed from the coalmine, engulfing the school and killing the children. A participant said, "Thank goodness you have come to the area. It is the first time the BBC has come to our community and hasn't done a fox trot about the disaster. You are saying we could do a story about anything we like? That's lovely!" (Gary, 2011)

From a genre perspective, we observe in Gary's account another area of asymmetry and uncertainty brought about by the clash of two institutions. When the "ethos" of digital storytelling, which emphasized on supporting individuals to tell stories for in ways that are right for them, clashed in to the ethos of the BBC, whose intention for Capture Wales stories were partially informed by its need to give "faces" to news-worthy stories, which might otherwise be communicated through feature articles or human interest articles in a traditional media setting. Considered this way, digital storytelling, as invoked at Capture Wales, was the result of reconstituting two meaning potentials that both informed its intention and practices. As such, Capture Wales diverged from the mainstream, the privileged, and the "normal" ways of media production by allowing people to tell stories in ways that "were right for them." In the meantime, it diverged from the CDS' model by attending to specific ways these stories could be used for social purposes. That is, Capture Wales used these stories to complement mainstream representation of lived experiences of Welsh people.

If we are to examine Capture Wales as a case of dynamic genre invocation, we can then examine how social, cultural changes functioned as an underlying mechanism to motivate incremental change to genre and genre practices. In interesting ways, Capture Wales' attempt at generating user-generated content anticipated a broader cultural movement that has continued into the present. It existed in anticipation of what Jenkins (2006) described as a convergence culture, "where old and new media collide, where grassroots and corporate media intersect, where the power of the media producer and the power of the media consumer interact in unpredictable ways." Existing at the dawn of a whole range of social, cultural, technological, and industrial changes, these everyday stories, designed to be publicly and digitally shared, were the results of an organized attempt to enable a fundamental shift of everyday individual's

relationship with media content. In that regard, the observations and commentaries made by Cathy and Gary were in part an articulation of a tension that was much larger in scale and much more influential than locally experienced. That is, their experiences of trying to tell a different "cancer story" or a patch-quilt of stories by Wales existed at the intersection of established and emerging forms of media production and dissemination. On the one hand, Capture Wales had begun to encourage and support media consumers to actively seek out and play with opportunities of media production and therefore anticipated the large-scale massive participatory model of cultural production. On the other hand, the venues through which this particular type of grassroots media content was created and the circuit through which these content circulated were under the control of a big media corporation. In juggling the multiple sets of constraints placed upon its work, Capture Wales illustrates in telling ways the struggle through which assumptions, boundaries, and norms were reinvented and remarked, sometimes seamlessly merging and sometimes colliding with the established and conventional genres and genre practices.

In what follows, I will continue to comment on Capture Wales as an antecedent of the "convergence culture' through the lens of another principle upheld by the facilitating team—that digital storytelling as a venue through which everyday individuals become empowered.

Empower individuals

Another thrust of the Capture Wale's commitment to cultural democracy is built upon the notion that digital storytelling empowers everyday individuals by giving them the tools and strategies to own and share their experiences in ways that competed with mainstream media's co-opting and packaging of everyday stories. To illustrate this notion, Gary painted a vivid scenario of how mainstream media told the "cancer story",

> When members of the public appeared on tele[vision] in the past, [they were] normally responding to questions put to them by professional interviewers. If you imagine national

cancer week, they would go and find someone who has lost a child to cancer, seat them in their lounge, and have them look mournfully through a photo album. They might show people wearing doctor's coat, [patients] with testing tubes. We all know the clichés. It's not a story that tells me anything new about cancer. (G. Molan, personal communication, October 07, 2011)

In this scenario, "they" were the professionals, journalists, and reporters from mainstream media, who were in possession of the resources, skills, and tools necessary in the telling and sharing everyday stories in forms of publicly disseminated media. As Gary's observation suggested, such attempts at co-opting everyday stories were governed by a particular type of social process and the productive condition associated with it. Entailed in this process was also a typified way of configuring individuals, activities, and tools—the professionals directed the course of storytelling by taking control of every aspects of the everyday individual's "performance" of a certain type of "lived experience" with cancer. In this context, the individual had little control over the process, including what tools to use or what stories to tell. To a great extent, the rhetorical occasion that gave rise to this genre of media content did not invite stories that refreshed the public's understanding of cancer, but rather added to an existing meta-narrative of cancer stories and illustrated themes and values sanctioned by the mainstream. At the outset of the social process was the intention for the stories to be used for purposes and interests suitable for the mainstream and the public. Using this scenario as a point of comparison, Gary described digital storytelling as a different type of social process that enabled and empowered everyday individuals. He described a contrasting scenario of a mother using digital storytelling to bring closure to losing her son to cancer[18],

When Gaynor [a participant] wanted to make a story about cancer, it was from personal experiences. It was a story about her son dying, but it wasn't a hopeless story. It was more about how they did their best to give him the best of the final years of his life. It was a very sophisticated story because she [re-enacts a conversation with her dying

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[18]Castle on a cloud can be accessed at http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/arts/yourvideo/media/pages/gaynor_clifford_01.shtml

son]—'What is heaven? Why do you ask? I need to know coz I am going there.' And you think, 'God that's so…' Throughout the story, you didn't see a person with no hair. [Instead], you saw him in Disneyland, and you heard her husband singing a song on his own guitar about how much they loved his son. I thought that was what digital storytelling does to people. (G. Molan, personal communication, October 07, 2011)

Gary's incisive observation pointed to the particular democratic appeal of digital storytelling, which other facilitators across the programs commented upon. That is, digital storytelling allows everyday individuals to take ownership. In the same process, we see the dismantling of established boundaries that had been separating the consumer from the producer. The moment Gain used digital storytelling to tell her cancer story, she engaged in a productive process that had not been available to her. The workshop process unpacked the complexity of media production in the form of concrete tasks and activities and therefore made it an accessible and achievable literacy. This new literacy enabled her to render her cancer story into a publicly disseminated media that could compete and interact with renditions that traditional, mainstream media had made available. As Cathy also recollected about this story,

I worked with Gaynor Clifford on that story. She was one of the few people who came along with a script and we didn't touch that script because when I read it, it broke my heart. It was beautiful. The piece of music at the end was composed and played by her husband. She was in the same workshop as the guy for *Elvis Died in My Bedroom*. The great thing was there was no feeling that we were trivializing her experience. She bonded with everybody, who was so supportive of her. [The diversity] really helped her because if everyone in that group was making a story of losing a child, [the emotion] would make it impossible. For her, people were respectful of her space, but helped her with creative thinking. She loved doing the little cartoon because she felt that was a homage to her son. This is something she has been thinking for a very long time, and the digital storytelling workshop enabled her to bring her little story to life. (C. Leis, personal communication, October 25, 2011).

From this perspective, digital storytelling allowed the author to tell a story in personally influential ways and for public and private purposes. Genre invocation, in this case, was a site of creativity and plasticity. The making of this story was governed by one individual's sharing of an intimate, personal experience, but was partially informed by the collective creativity capacities of

the group. The shape and form of Gaynor's story was highly dependent upon the local dynamics of the group, which, in this case, had supported her work through its diversity and respect. Various creative touches, including the acclaimed music composition and her *in-situ* improvisation that resulted in the cartoon image, were the results of creative innovations of the individuals. What's also worth noticing here is that the "loosened up" process at Capture Wales further enabled the plasticity of the site of genre invocation. That is, Gaynor had the freedom not to delve into tragic content in emotionally explicit ways, but to focus on an optimistic and celebratory outlook on the life and death of their beloved son.

These accounts, considered together, shed light on the productive condition that was enabling and empowering. That is, the minute Gaynor understood that her story to be a valid form of media, she was able to re-position herself in relation to the mainstream, the powerful, and the dominant. Whether or not a story of loss had been rendered by countless books, movies, and documentaries had no bearing on the value of her work. In the telling and sharing of her personal story, Gain became a producer of media and culture and her experience acquired weight comparable to that of books, movies, and documentaries. As such, digital storytelling shifted the power dynamics in favor of the everyday individual. In supporting the acquisition of this literacy among people who were often positioned at the wrong end of the digital divide, Capture Wales enacted what Jenkins describes as "convergence thinking" by enabling a massive participatory model. In that regard, what Capture Wales achieved was distinctly and qualitatively different from the CDS. Aside from enabling learning and positive change at individual and community levels, Capture Wales exerted a greater impact in terms of how it helped reshaping the mediascape at the time and redefining the relationship between media audiences, producers, and content.

As I have discussed in the previous sections, the design and implementation Capture Wales was a process of genre invocation that involved the mashing-together of two ethos of two distinct institutional contexts. Envisioned as a community engagement project, it took on several ideological commitments that were worked into the structure of its workshops. In very distinct ways, Capture Wales diverged from the CDS' vision for how storytelling was imagined in relation to the author and its audience. CDS imagined digital storytelling primarily for how an intimate group process might potentially benefit the author. In that regard, the self was often seen as an equally important, if not more important audience than anybody else in listening to one's own story. How a given story is received by an external audience has little bearing on the value of the process. In the CDS context, the process was foregrounded. When digital storytelling was taken up by Capture Wales, however, it was re-imagined first and foremost as a way of collecting products that could be used for social and cultural purposes. That is, Capture Wales' workshops put more emphasis on the collection and dissemination of digital stories. The group process was backgrounded at Capture Wales.

In the following section, I work to further illuminate the productive condition of digital storytelling at Capture Wales. In so doing, I focus on what Cathy called a different methodology, which was the result of a series of adaptations of the classic CDS model. I then observe how this adapted methodology functioned to encode and embody the unique ideological values and productive conditions at Capture Wales.

Reconfigure the Workshop Model

In important ways, the unique institutional circumstances of Capture Wales, most notably the public broadcasting environment in which it was couched, and the rhetorical exigency

embedded in the institutional context had given rise to a reconfigured workshop model. From the perspective of genre theory, this workshop model encoded and embodied the partially novel and partially familiar ideological, social and rhetorical values of digital storytelling. Cathy, for one, described digital storytelling at Capture Wales as a "very different methodology, a different creative process, a different means of engaging with the public," which had been the result of the team building upon, adapting, and reconfiguring the CDS model (C. Leis, personal communication, October 25, 2011). First, the public broadcasting context had led to Capture Wale's focus on the products, rather than the process. That is, every aspect of the workshop design and delivery was geared towards creating digital stories that could be publicly disseminated through broadcasting and online venues. This concern for "safe" and "sharable" products reverberated throughout the entire productive process, creating exigencies for a typified coalescence of practices, tasks, persons, technologies, and texts to safeguard participant privacy and to prevent copyright infringement. Second, the facilitating team adapted the creative process to fulfill its commitment to serving individuals that might otherwise not possess the resources, skills, and literacy to achieve the tasks required by digital storytelling. In so doing, the team had stretched, bended, and reconfigured the sequence of events as inscribed in the CDS model to "loosen up" people's story telling experiences. In the sections to follow, I focus on aspects of the reinvented ratified process to make clear how such reconfiguration encoded broader institutional and ideological formations at Capture Wales.

Safeguard participant privacy and welfare

In response to the program's vision to use digital storytelling to create a patch quilt of stories about Wales, by Wales, and *for* Wales, the facilitating team had to make quite a few alterations to the CDS model. In the mean time, the reinvented ratified process operated under the institutional pressures of the BBC. The invocation of digital storytelling through workshops therefore involves not only the reconfiguration of the CDS model, but also the reconfiguration of established BBC practices.

To learn about digital storytelling and to design its own rendition of a three-day workshop, Capture Wales brought Joe Lambert and Nina Mullen, who were then directors/facilitators at CDS, to the UK to run two workshops. These two workshops were videotaped, studied and modified to make it viable in the public broadcasting environment. To ensure that each story produced was a piece of media that could be presented to a public audience, the team had built several measures into the design of the workshops. First, participants were actively discouraged from delving into emotionally difficult experiences or sensitive materials that might endanger the welfare of any given individual. Second, the team built into the workshop an elongated consent process to ensure appropriate rights were acquired for the sake of the BBC as well as the participants.

In the following account, Cathy explained her conception of and approach to the possibility of participants using digital storytelling to engage with emotional content. Arguing that the prospect of showing these stories on the television had charged the team with the responsibilities of making this institutional intention clear to the participants upfront and every to steer participants away from sensitive issues. As Cathy described here,

> Sometimes we even steered people away, saying 'Now, you have to think about whether or not this is going into your script. It's absolutely fine [if it does], but bare in mind the

person you just talked about will see this. How are they going to feel?' We make sure they are comfortable with what they are sharing. One of the dangers of the workshop environments [is they made people feel], 'I've got unburden myself coz she just told this really amazing story. I can't talk about my favorite drum kit.' […] But my job was to make sure that it was okay for them to talk about their drum kit. (C. Leis, personal communication, October 25, 2011)

At the backdrop of this analysis is the argument that Capture Wales diverged from the CDS model mainly through its refrain from the "therapeutic approach." We see in this account a tension created by the convergence of multiple "ethos" and motivations, which were simultaneously disputed and reformulated in the emergent process of design and implementation. For one thing, we see the original "ethos" of digital storytelling, seen as a means of artistic therapy, coming under dispute. In statements such as, "it can be precarious territory to go into," or "we did not go into the workshop looking to get people in tears or revealing deaths in their lives," we see the lingering influence of the CDS being interrogated, questioned, and dismantled both from the perspective of individual belief and institutional context. Second, we observe a strong commitment to the "ethos" of digital storytelling as a process that enabled empowerment through the search for authentic, personal meaning. That is, in making emphasis upon the notion that meaning should arrive "naturally," Cathy and the team worked to ensure that participants it was culturally appropriate and socially expected for participants to present mundane topics. Lastly and most importantly, we see the "ethos" of the institutional motivation in the forefront of this account. In making "very very clear" to people that it was the responsibility of the team to create stories that could be shown to an audience and sometimes "steering people away" from sensitive or "[un]comfortable" choices of thematic content, Cathy became an agent, through which the institutional motivation spoke and took partial control over the shape and structure of individual stories.

From a genre perspective, Cathy's analysis is of great interest because it theorized digital storytelling as a cultural genre that was organized around inherently dynamic social and rhetorical structures that could be manipulated and reconfigured according to the condition of use. The historically developed CDS model was brought into clash and confluence with a different recurrent rhetorical exigency of the Capture Wales to create needs for innovation. In this case, the anticipation of public consumption of one's digital story created a unique constraint on what and how stories were told. That is, the presence of intended and unintended audience, as enabled by the broadcasting venue, placed constraints on facilitators and authors, who must become aware of the rhetorical impact of the thematic, organizational, and stylistic choices they made in the telling of personal stories, thus the need to stay away from "emotional," "sensitive," and "dangerous" materials considered unsafe for public consumption.

Second, the dynamism of the cultural genre also manifested through meticulous measures taken to collect consent from participants. When I asked Gary about this, he described the consent form as the "shortest" and "chatty" in the history of the BBC.

> For it [digital storytelling] to work for the BBC, it would have to result in a publishable outcome that we could use. For that reason, we explicitly sought consents from people portrayed in the story or people telling the story. There was a contract, and the contract was the shortest in the history of the BBC. It was on the one side of a form, and there was a line that says if you change your mind, let us know and we will do our best to remove it.

We see here again the institutional force constraining the invocation of the genre at local levels. The concern for publicly sharable products had not only resulted in a preference for "safe" content, but also in carefully designed measures taken to safeguard the welfare and privacy of involved persons. This consent process involved a complex configuration of tasks, documents, and practices, including using the public sharing of stories as a means of informing potential participants about the expectations for their stories and the drafting of a "chatty"

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consent document to seek explicit consent. Additionally, the facilitating team adapted established

practices at the BBC in terms of contracting rights to protect the "ethos" of digital storytelling.

As Gary explained,

> Usually, when BBC contracts [a piece of content], that's it. BBC then owns and shows it. We however, anticipated that some people would change their mind and not give permission. We would make every effort to remove their content. Throughout the life of the project, we have managed to hold true to that. […]As far as I know, it was quite rare within the BBC to [have content taken down] because BBC's editorial agenda is very rigid. (G. Molan, personal communication, October 07, 2011)

In this extended account, Gary touched upon the theme of genre as dynamic constructions

from another angle. That is, typified institutional practices and conventions that had developed

within the BBC, such as maintaining a rigid editorial agenda and never taking down published

content, had to be stretched to accommodate the novel exigency. The commitment to cultural

democracy, which entailed a fundamental respect for participants' ownership over content, was

in conflict with the typified, established institutional practices, which favored the mainstream

media institution, allowing it to retain complete rights over the production and distribution of

media content. The invocation of digital storytelling therefore involves not only the

reconfiguration of the CDS model, but also the reconfiguration of established BBC practices.

This tension, and the concrete measures taken to resolve it, reverberated through other aspects of

the workshop. According to Gary, similar concerns arose with the public sharing of stories by

children, people in witness protection programs, women leaving violent husbands, and other

vulnerable parties. In contrast to other genres of BBC content, such as the report on a trial of a

man wrongly accused of murder and then cleared, which would call for the BBC's permanent

retain of media content, the consenting procedure was designed to enable retraction of digital

stories on personal grounds.

In other cases, the clashing of two institutional circumstances, exigencies, and practices

created dilemmas that the facilitators struggled to solve. In the following account, Gary pointed

toward some of the difficult "judgment calls" he had to make in response to the "dual

constraints,"

> There was one story by a woman about her brother. She was quite scathing to her brother in the story. And we took the view that it was not fair on the brother. We didn't know the truth of the story, but we still had to apply BBC editorial values [with regard to privacy protection]. There was no way to proclaim in that case without being unfair to him. For that reason, we decided not to publish the story. There was another story where a father promises his daughter he would not re-offend while he was in prison. In the story, he was holding a picture of his daughter, saying 'I did this for you.' And then he re-offended. We just felt that would be tricky for the daughter. It might not be the right decision. I still don't know about that one. There were some tricky calls, and we might have made some mistakes, but we have to make such calls. (G. Molan, personal communication, October 07, 2011)

What these accounts and anecdotes captured for me was the complexity and dynamism of

genre invocation, the unfolding of which involved the participating negotiating tension of a dual

constraint arising from the stabilized and the novel. In essence, the designing and delivery of

digital storytelling workshops resulted from the effort to reconfigure practices, values, tools, and

texts embedded in two historical trajectories into coherence.

Negotiate content rights

In light of the outwardly directed aim of the program, the team had also developed

rigorous measures to negotiate the rights to online, commercial, and individual contents that

might travel into individual stories. Because these stories were to be streamed online and shown

through broadcasting channels, much of the producer's work during the budding stage of the

project involved building a model of copyright clearance. To do so, Cathy hired a copyright

expert to the facilitating team, whose specific role was to check what Capture Wales could and

could not use. To make digital storytelling work, the team had to conform to BBC standards and guidelines in that regard. Cathy further explained,

> Because we were publishing this on the BBC platform, both on the Internet and on television, we couldn't use commercial music, photographs owned by anybody else, or newspaper cuttings unless we cleared them. It was very much like producing traditional television program, but within the confines of digital storytelling context. It was quite complex. […] As we were running the workshops and collecting digital stories, my job job was to sit and look through each of the stories with my copyright guru and say, 'Can we use this? Is this cleared?' (C. Leis, personal communication, October 25, 2011)

At a time when massive participatory content generation had yet to emerge, there were no models or stipulations for how copyrights to a newspaper clipping, a personal photo, or an image on a community poster could be obtained and cleared. As a result, the team drew on institutionally developed genre practices as productive resources that guided their practice. According to Gary, however, this concern with copyright clearance had created pleasant "side benefits," including a strong emphasis on the use of personal artifacts as well as the recruitment of a professional musician to compose original tunes that drew upon and added to the ethos of each story.

From a genre perspective, what Gary described as "pleasant side effects" were evidences of genre innovation and creativity. That is, a new set of typified discursive and formal features emerged as the result of the team and participants working in response to a particular social expectation of the program. One of such side effects had to do with the heavy emphasis on the "use-your-own-stuff" message. This message was articulated not only through the emphasis on the uses of personal images and amateur artwork (e.g. cartoon drawings, photography, images of personal belongings, samples of one's own knitting, and so on) but also on systematic implementation of pedagogical moves that steered participants away from commercial music and towards music composed, played, and recorded by a contracted professional musician. Only in

Capture Wales stories do we hear storytellers using recordings of them playing an instrument, whistling a tune, or singing a song. This ideological emphasis was encoded by a particular clause of discussing story design, which was deeply embedded in the pedagogy of the facilitators and the productive conditions at Capture Wales,

> Many people come and say I want to have a bit of *I'm the* only *gay Eskimo* song in my story because it was the first dance my wife and I had at our wedding. The trouble is when you borrow someone else's sentiment, someone in Britain may associate a song with Levi's jeans; someone might be imagining a man without pulling out a pair of Levi's box shorts. They would lose the thread of the story because of a subtext that is disrupting. (G. Molan, personal communication, October 07, 2011)

This type of pedagogical talk, often used to rationalize and explain the importance of "using your own stuff" at workshops, was also echoed by Dan at the CDS. From the perspective of genre theory, it is a telling example of how genre functions as a social lever that mediates the dynamic intersection of the social and the individual. On the one hand, this pedagogical talk encoded abstract ideological and institutional tensions and values. The historically developed ethos of digital storytelling was encoded in a genre-specific emphasis on the use of personal images and artifacts. Mashed with, and probably reinforced by the institutional tension arising from the need to negotiate copyright issues, this ideological claim became encoded in a stipulation that regulated productive activities at Capture Wales. In this way, such ideological and institutional tensions were recontextualized into and articulated through concrete, pedagogical commentary on a story design issue. Instead of saying that commercial music could not be used for copyright concerns, the facilitators reframed the issue in ways that were relevant to situated, productive work. In critiquing commercial music for containing cultural connotations that might interfere with the creative intentions of the storyteller, facilitators encouraged participants to follow a route that ultimately served the goals and expectations of the institutional and the social practice.

To safeguard this institutional concern, the facilitating team also recruited a professional musician to join the Capture Wales "road show." The musician's original composition was contracted by the BBC on full-right basis and could be used freely in Capture Wales stories. Having a talented musician in the facilitating team not only addressed the previously referenced concern for commercial music, it also ensured that for everyone's creative intentions could be realized despite varying levels of expertise in musical composition. How Simon, the professional musician, played into the productive dynamism was illustrated by the following anecdote. In this anecdote, Gary remembered a woman who came to tell a story about domestic abuse. In her initial vision for the story, she wanted to use a particular piece of commercial music that invoked a particular childhood memory as well as indexed the chilling and horror feeling she wanted to convey through the story. In working with the woman, Simon the musician provoked her to brainstorm this idea,

> Simon said to her, 'okay, help me a little bit with the first thing that came to your head.' She said, 'I want something like, wu do di di di (singing).' Simon wrote that down and worked on it, locking himself in his room. He came when she was getting ready to edit her story and said, 'How about us listen to this?' She put headphones on and listened to the music. She looked at the images, her eyes soaking up with tears. She said, "Nobody has done something that nice for me. It's a piece of music just for me." (G. Molan, personal communication, October 07, 2011)

The anecdote was yet another great example of how genre stayed "emergent, self-organizing, and dynamic" primarily because it was used within "multiple, overlapping, and sometimes contradictory practices within interrelated institutions" (Kamberelis, 1999 p. 20). It reinforced an earlier point I made--certain formal features, namely the use of original music, were results of participants working through tensions embedded in the interfacing of multiple institutions, practices, and novel problems the presented. In highly situated discursive activities, the ideological and institutional contingency mashed into individual intentions in ways that were

filled with tensions. In this case, the storyteller's creative intention involved the use of a familiar, albeit commercial cultural symbol that was personally influential and relevant. From the perspective of the individual, this semiotic choice would have worked best to convey a particular emotional message. However, this original intention clashed into institutional and ideological forces, which pushed against the use of commercial music. In this scenario, the institutional constraint interfered with and overpowered the individual's original intention. In furnishing the local attempt with an alternative solution--a professional composition, however, the mashing of the institutional and individual resulted in unexpected but pleasant surprises that were satisfying to both the institution and the individual. In this case, the situated activities of the woman, the facilitators, and the musician, borrowed from and built upon prior texts fragments and conventions of discourse organization. However, they did so in the context of their continued participation in the local discursive and material activities within a particular community of practice and therefore resulted in a piece of text that was innovative and novel.

As such, we observe from these accounts a sustained theme of genre innovation. Innovation took place at the institutional level, as the mashing-together of two ethos engendered a selective combination of "repeatable" elements of genre and genre practices. More importantly, this reconfigured ethos was indexed and encoded by an incrementally stabilizing and typified configuration of newly invented procedures, artifacts, and structures. At a situated site of discursive production, innovation unfolded as participants worked towards a discursive goal that was infused with the intention of the institutional, who spoke through the pedagogical moves, activities, and texts facilitators made available.

Materialize cultural democracy

On another ideological front, the program's commitment to cultural democracy had created another set of institutional circumstances that carried important implications for the design and delivery of Capture Wales workshops. Because the workshops specifically targeted disadvantaged social groups and under-represented areas, participants were more likely to be positioned on the wrong end of the digital divide and had limited literacy and technological skills. In comparison to CDS workshops, which typically draw young professionals who were motivated enough to pay for and travel to a workshop, Capture Wales workshops were offered free of charge to members of designated communities. This issue was further complicated by the fact that the workshops operated as a mobile lab, with a team of facilitators traveling with necessary equipments and technology to selected regions and communities.

Through these examples, we see that the workshops indexed an "aggregate of the means for seeing and conceptualizing reality" and signaled the ideologies, norms, values, and social ontologies of the program in which they typically functioned (Kemberelis, 1996 p. 145). To ensure that such ideologies, norms, values and social ontologies were fulfilled, the design and delivery of the workshops involved substantial reconfiguration of the CDS model. To enable a mobile lab model, Capture Wales workshops drew on the collaborative efforts of a larger pool of professionals, including a creative director who led the conceptual design of the workshops, a producer who was in charge of identifying coordinating site, a copyright editor who worked specifically around copyright issues, a musician who worked *in situ* with storytellers, a story circle leader, and a "public relations" person who made sure participants were comfortable throughout the process. Because the team was made up of professionals who worked in multiple capacities and with other projects in the BBC, the configuration of the team often varied

according to individual availabilities and other contingent, institutional needs and constraints. In this regard, we again observe the cultural genre as a dynamic site of innovation. The situated invocation of digital storytelling at Capture Wales unfolded in the context of lived times and particular places. Each temporal-spatial configuration brought with it a set of variations and contingencies that contributed to the inherent heterogeneity of the sociohistorical trajectory of a given workshop.

Additionally, the CDS workshop model was stretched in critical ways to respond to the needs of participants, who typically had very limited literacy and technological skills. A key revision to the CDS model involved an extended period of time allowed for story discussion and development. Built into the Capture Wales model was an advanced and extended screening/advertising session, which took place six weeks prior to the actual four-day workshop. These events usually hosted at a local community organization and previously advertised in the community, would have around 150 people who were largely drawn by the brand name of the BBC. The screen session served purposes that were partially similar to and partially distinct from other programs.

In a time when people had never heard of digital storytelling, the team used this session to screen digital stories, give introductions, advertise the workshops, and distribute application forms. To increase awareness and generate interests in digital storytelling, the team selected stories that were perceived to match potential participants' needs, backgrounds, and interests. As Cathy commented, the facilitating team always selected stories that were "powerful but with a wide range of interests so everyone in the audience can see at least one story and thinks to oneself, 'oh yes, I could do that.'" Built into the screening session was also the stress on the

value of mundane and funny stories, which was done, according to Gary, through the inclusion

of funny stories, which not only relaxed people, but also generated interests for participation.

Second, As a result of working with people who were not the most literate or

technologically savvy, the workshops focused more strongly on creating a relaxing and open

space for people to discover and develop their stories. To that end, the facilitating team had

devised a wealth of generative games, or what I call pre-writing activities, which filled a long

story circle, which typically consumed the entirety of the first day. From the accounts given by

Cathy and Gary, I was able to piece together an account of what the all-day workshop looks like.

Cathy, for one, recounted a variety of games that the team organized, including the name game,

where people talked about who they were, the photograph game, where people talked about a set

of photographs they brought with them; and the memory bag, where the team passed around a

bag of objects around the circle and had people talk about any object from the bag; and a love-

hate list, where people made lists of thing they loved and hated and read them out in either a sexy

or a despicable voice. The group process at Captures Wales focused on engaging participants in

dynamic conversations around memories, experiences, and topics. In doing so, they helped

participants, especially those who struggled to find a story, to generate ideas, to listen to

everyone's unique voice, and to provide mutual support.

It is through games like these that participants were led to the sharing of extraordinarily

ordinary things--a favorite drum set, the first car one owned, or a teddy bear that reminds one of

childhood memories. More importantly, the extended conversation and games, with their focus

on discovering the humor, creativity, and lightness in everyday experiences, allowed for a whole

range of emotions, reactions and new ideas to emerge. In important ways, the extended process

allowed the discovery and exploration of not only unexpected insights, but also humor and

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lightness in seemingly mundane stories. It was a space in which the entire group celebrated

digital storytelling for how it captured everyday voices and revealed realities in a way that

mainstream media did not. Considering the whole process, the first day story circle served the

important purpose of supporting the natural emergence of stories as the result of people bouncing

ideas off of each other.

This idea of using the group process to allow stories to emerge *naturally* marked a key

area in which how Capture Wales workshops diverged from its CDS counterpart. As I discussed

previously, CDS strongly encouraged its participants to arrive with a draft of a story that the

entire process revolves around, builds upon, and works to refine. In direct contrast to this, the

team at Capture Wales actively discouraged people from arriving with a story. On this, Cathy

had this comment,

> From teaching writing as an English teacher, my view was we should focus on getting people to relax and release the story that was in them. Not everybody could write, and honestly, people often came with incredibly lengthy, wordy stories that were awful. Our view is that is not the way to go. This is a storytelling program, not a creative writing project. For people, who do not have high literacy skills, getting them to write something in advance is a killer. It is death to creativity. (C. Leis, personal communication, October 25, 2011)

Implicit in Cathy's comments was an analysis of the modified model as the result of

attending to the contingent needs of participants. In response to the fact that most participants did

not have high literacy skills, Capture Wales workshops relied heavily on the group process to

provide the help most needed by its participants—discover and develop stories. Recurring in

Gary' and Cathy's accounts was the idea that most participants needed more support in the

telling of a good story. Cathy further explained that some participant were simply "terrified of

writing anything down and had very little confidence." It is therefore the facilitator's goal to get

people to write stories and to loosen up stories so that they sounded natural and were enjoyable to read.

These accounts gave telling evidences of how the team, through situated material and discursive practices, worked to fulfill partially contingent communicative purposes and goals. The team adapted available resources in ways that accounted for novel problems and changes presented by new productive conditions. That is, Cathy might draw on resources and strategies developed in her previous work as a writing teacher to help her position the participants in relation to the new communicative task at hand. Such resources helped her to re-imagine digital storytelling in light of the challenges and trepidations of her participants. Participants were encouraged to use resources accessible to them, such as the mode of speech, to help them arrive at a natural-sounding story. These resources, too, constantly changed as the function of the situated communicative task, which brought into mix different languages, discourse styles, and practices each participants felt competent and confident with. In important ways, the emerging model was inflected with meanings from the classic model as well as changes in material and discursive practices, therefore encoding the changing productive conditions.

Considered together, various modifications to the CDS model were necessary moves that resulted from collective efforts in combating emergent, novel, and contingent problems the existing model failed to anticipate and account for. The large national broadcasting environment, in which Capture Wales was couched, created unique exigencies for how digital storytelling was invoked and the social and rhetorical purposes the stories were to serve. The program embraced a particular orientation toward the collection of ordinary but extraordinary stories. It adopted a novel institutional expectation for using such stories to achieve an equitable and democratic representation of lived experiences in Wales. The CDS workshops, which centered on personal

discovery through the revelation of the most intimate and personal aspects of everyday experiences, did not provide an adequate model that fulfilled the needs of the BBC.

As a result, the historically developed structures kept restructuring and transforming in response to the lived and situated discursive activities through which individuals and collectives worked to create publicly sharable digital stories. Emerging from such reconfigurations was a different way of orchestrating persons (the addition of copyright editor and musician), tools (consent forms, the mobile lab), and activities (generative activities, longer story circle, absence of scripting). From a genre perspective, digital storytelling stayed viable because of how its meaning and form were inscribed in and invoked within situated activities. It did so not only through replicating existing text-making activities, but also by adding new resources to the collective experiential and ideological knowledge.

As Cathy so incisively observes, such institutional pressures had essentially given rise to a " different methodology and a different creative process" that afforded different creative outcomes. Such adaptations most notably materialized in the following ways. First, the program adopted a mobile model of delivery that afforded for an expansive coverage of diverse communities and areas. Second, the workshop was reconfigured to extend the period of time devoted to orienting, preparing, and supporting the participants' discovery of interesting, mundane stories. Thirdly, certain procedures were designed to conform to established editorial, copyright, and privacy standards of the BBC.

In what follows, I will draw on one digital story to further explore how institutional pressures, as materialized in specific ways of organizing discursive activities, had oriented one situated act of meaning-making towards a fusion of form, meaning, and ideology that was valued at Capture Wales. Through the lens of *A night at duck and dog*, I hope to shed light on how the

cultural genre, now "belonging to" recurrent and situated activities within Capture Wales, spoke through an instance of meaning making. To do so, I try to describe genre as a fusion of form, situated activity, and social practice. That is, I give a detailed account of how the particular arrangement of semiotic details encodes and indexes typified thematic, compositional, and semiotics conventions, which speak directly and indirectly to institutional pressures and ideological orientations of Capture Wales. At the same time, I pay close attention to how a ratified productive process contributed to the thematic, formal, rhetorical, and ideological qualities manifested in the story.

<center>A Case: A Night at Duck and Dog</center>

The story I examine takes a celebratory stance towards a seemingly mundane experience, which sheds light on an adolescent bonding ritual. Created by Rhiannon Morgan in a Capture Wales workshop held in June 2003, this story brings to life a piece of reminiscence through a series of vividly depicted scenes. From the autobiographical sketch she provided with her story, we know Rhiannon had a background in journalism and took a "more measured approach to writing, photography, travel and enjoying the simple things in life." Rhiannon described herself as an only child, who grew up to find a "network of close friends who became [her] extended family, [with whom she] shared the ups and downs of a rich and unsophisticated adolescence in Wales." In commenting on her own story, she wrote,

> They have greatly shaped my life and inspired me to write this story - it tells the tale of a teenage night out. During the night a group of girls begin to discover an adult world. It shows how events and experiences bind people together and form part of a history, which consolidates their friendship. Despite the comic overtones, there is an underlying message - it is a tribute to friendship and to friends everywhere who support each other through the highs and lows of life (Morgan, June 2003).

This story is exemplary of the wider range of Capture Wales stories in several ways. First, this approach to digital storytelling as an occasion for reminiscence prevailed in the majority of stories at Capture Wales. Participants used digital stories to reminisce about significant moments and experiences in one's life, such as trips, family rituals, childhood, or ways of life. Second, the choice of thematic content, with its focus on a personal relationship, aligned the story with a significant body of Capture Wales stories that encompassed and commented upon a wide range of personal relationships. Thirdly, what the writer described as the "comic overtones" of her story exemplified the overall light-hearted and humorous approach to storytelling. Lastly, the writer's creative use of personal artifacts, especially the featuring of amateur artwork of her own creation, was illustrative of the general "use your own stuff" message.

In what follows, I draw on Rhiannon's story to illustrate how its semiotic, temporal, and thematic features indexed broader ideological meanings and institutional pressures of Capture Wales. To that end, I pay close attention to how the story was constructed as an interesting "vignette" that revealed a whole set of truths about the way Welsh youth live their lives. I also attend to how the choice of thematic content and aesthetic appeal were purposeful aligned with the institutional needs to steer clear of sensitive content and copyright materials. In the first part of my discussion, I arrange my discussion of the story according to major chapters. Through this descriptive analysis, I hope to make apparent the semiotic, thematic, and organizational features within and across its main parts. In the second part, I draw on the visual model to highlight the thematic movements of the story as illustrative of a more straightforward and chronologically driven approach to storytelling.

Scene One: At Sarah's House
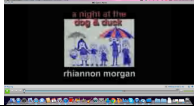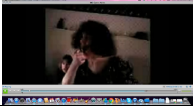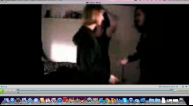
	Visual			
Visual				
Effect		Three video clips		
Narrative		It usually started with a few drinks at Sarah's house. Crowded in her bedroom we'd swap jewellery, try on clothes and giggle	in the mirror as we slapped on make-up and	Her parents got used to us running up and down the stairs, stealing vodka from the drinks cabinet and blasting obscenities as part of our charged-up bonding ritual.
Sounds		Noises included in the video clips		
Stanza	Title	Unit: about the ritual Location, activities, persons		
Chapter	Title	Scene 1		

Figure 14. A Night at Duck and Dog, Scene One

The story begins with a title page, which follows a typified semiotic design that holds stable across the majority of Capture Wales stories. That is, the author typically uses an image of the person or a personal artifact, which is overlaid with the title of the story and credits. In this story, the visual space is occupied by a cartoon image of six girls, drawn in blue ink, sharing two umbrellas. Positioned on top of the visual screen is the title of the story in bright scarlet type; at the bottom of the visual screen is the author's name in white.

Immediately following the title page, the story opens with a sequence of three clips that capture the scene of a group of girls, including the author, preparing for their night-out at Sarah's house. The video camera, probably set on a piece of furniture, records in a home-movie style the happenings in a small, unevenly lighted bedroom, which is crowded with three or four girls who constantly shift in and out of the camera frame. In the narrative channel, the author's voice unhurriedly delivers a vivid description of what we see as the part of a bonding ritual. The conjunction of the video and narrative work in concert to re-create a scene that is filled with

sounds, sights, and activities. The video clips record the girls, dressed up, putting on make-up, dancing and kissing each other, all in a hubbub of noises of chit-chatting, raucous music, and occasional excited screams. The spoken words, on the other hand, provide a more cohesively organized account of the happening, while highlighting the "norms" of the ritual. Descriptions of acts of seeming spontaneity are presented in such a matter-of-a-fact fashion that they reveal the "usual," what adults have "got used to," and what is recognized as the core of the ritual.

Considered together, each semiotic channel contributes to distinct but related aspects of the thematic content. The narrative gives meaning by way of concrete examples, such as "stealing vodka" and "blasting obscenities." The video mode, on the other hand, serves the same purpose by way of delivering vivid sensory details and portrayal of activities. For example, the dynamic integration of sounds, images, and actions of the individuals in the video flow into and fill in the sketch painted through the narrative, giving faces to the rebellious adolescent girls. The more dynamic aspects of the ritual materialize through the integration of the narrative and more decorative details from the video, including facial expressions, gestures, postures, and body movements only the video mode can deliver. For example, one of the video clips, in which a girl poses and "performs" head-banging along a rock song not only adds to, but also enriches what the narrative portrays—the rebellious stance the girls take in opposition to adults and authorities.
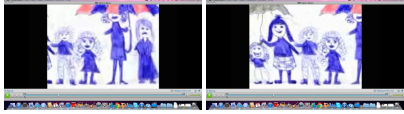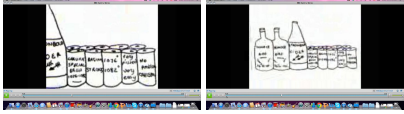
Reading Rhiannon's story in relation to the larger collection, I argue that the way she arrived at her story was typical of Capture Wales stories. That is, the opening sequence of the story did not do much in setting things up rhetorically. Launching right into the focal event through a straightforward statement, the opening left little for the audience to wonder or speculate. From the opening sequence, we already get a sense of the thematic focus of the story—a "normal" night in a group of adolescents' girls experiences. Whether or not the story

promised any unique meaning was unknown to the audience. The immediate launching of a story, I argue, is a compositional feature that is very common in Capture Wales stories.

What is worth noticing here is the author approached storytelling here through the construction of a small glimpse into one aspect of the night. Rich sensory details were selectively orchestrated to bring forward the noises, activities, and excitement. In comparison to a "rich moment" in a typical CDS story, however, the vividly constructed glimpse was not pregnant with particular emotional message or took on any analytical insight. In making a connection between stories and the broader project, one may infer that the rhetorical exigency gave rise to stories that were more reminiscent/descriptive than analytical/reflective in nature.

One thing that marks Rhiannon's story from a majority of Capture Wales stories, however, is the relatively high-tech nature of the story. Within the larger collection, only a handful stories employed videos as a mode of meaning making. These video clips, very likely retrieved from a collection of family home videos, worked well to serve the thematic focus. Second, each video clip Rhiannon used was semantically mapped onto a key idea delivered through the narrative. Therefore, Rhiannon's use of the multimodal resources was largely iconic. Considering the broader collection, I argue that Capture Wales stories systematically manifested simpler semiotic designs. From a genre perspective, this semiotic feature, namely the predominantly iconic use of the visual, indexed the broader cultural democratic project and emerged from the ratified process that involved participants with relatively lower levels of literacy and technological expertise.

Scene Two: Arriving at the Pub

Visual		
Effect	Slow pan movement from right to left	Slow zoom out effect
Narrative	Arm in arm and singing we'd head for the bus stop. I'd count money in my shoe and hand over a few sweaty coins to a driver who'd stare back in disbelief.	Arriving at the 'Dog and Duck', the bouncers would wink at us, meaning we could by-pass the queue and walk straight in.
Sound		
Stanza	Taking the cab	Arriving at the pub

Figure 15. A Night at Duck and Dog, Scene Two

In the next 13-second slice, the author uses two cartoon drawings of her own creation to illustrate the narrative, which gives a sketch of the girls' arrival at the pub. Visual effects were applied to the two images in this sequence, one of which makes its first appearance, while the other is a repeated use of the cartoon image we have seen in the title page. The first image in this sequence, a repeated use, features six girls of varying heights, hairstyles, and dresses, holding hands. The cartoon sketch seems to be done in blue ink and black pencil lines, with an occasional decorative use of the red ink. As the image moves from left to right through a slow-motioned, pan movement effect, we "'meet" each member of the group, whose individual characteristic is vividly captured by the cartoon characterizations. The audience recognizes that the physical resemblance between a cartoon figure to a particular friend is not as important as what the image symbolizes—the sense of togetherness and friendship that is concurrently conveyed through the image and the narrative, which highlights the girls heading to the bus stop, "arm in arm and singing."

The same semiotic design is in place for the next image-narrative conjunction. As the narrative continues to give selective details of the girls arriving at the pub, the visual space is

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occupied by a cartoon image of beer cans and alcohol bottles, some inscribed with short descriptive phrases that jokingly comment on their tastes and strength, such as "very pissed, very easy," or "stronghold cider." The image itself does not illustrate any single idea relayed through the narrative, but rather latches to the narrative and takes it to the next level. The image makes explicit what the narrative implicitly anticipates—the prospect of a good time enabled by the consumptions of alcohol.

In the second juncture of the story, we see a distinctive temporal feature beginning to emerge. Considered especially in comparison to *Grand Canyon,* this narrative structure of the story replicates the original order of events, faithfully following the girls from one chronotope to the next. From a genre perspective, we can again link this typified temporal feature to the various aspects of the ideological formation and the ratified process for mechanisms that led to simple, straightforward stories that were reminiscent and descriptive in nature. First, because Capture Wales expected little to no reflective analysis and often intentionally steered people away from heavy and challenging contents, its stories necessarily reflected the absences of critical examination, juggling of contrasting perspectives, and search for new meaning--thematic features that required disruptive temporal structures. Second, when games and activities were used to as a main way to generate and develop stories, the assumption was that these stories should naturally "come" from photos, memories, lists, and objects. This productive condition, when coupled with a celebratory stance towards mundane and ordinary stories, constructed a framework in which simple and straightforward stories were deemed appropriate and valuable. Lastly, the strategic "banning" of a ready-made script had contributed to the relative simplicity in the forms and contents of these stories. Whereas CDS' workshops was organized around improving the craft and depth of a written story, which allowed more time for creative design,

Capture Wales workshops focused on helping people, who might be terrified of writing anything, to arrive at a coherent story. These locally situated expectations, each encoding a broader institutional orientation, each indexed through concrete moves and flows of activities and artifacts, had worked in powerfully ways to give rise to the temporal, thematic, and compositional features we are beginning to observe in this juncture of the story.

Scene Three: In the Pub
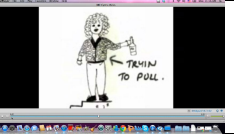
Visual				
Effect			Animation that adds illustrative remarks to an still image	
Narrative	There, in that building, we enacted the highlights of our teenage years;	smoking joints in flooded toilets, discovering men,	/wickedly two-timing them and stumbling across people /having sex on the fag-ashed carpet beneath the stairs.	
Sound				
Stanza	General statement	Details		

Figure 16. A Night at Duck and Dog, Scene Three

As the story progresses, the locale changes again to lead us into the pub. Concurrently, in the 15-second period during which the storyteller maintains her calm voice in describing their provocative activities in the pub, a series of cartoon images that maintains the same thematic and visual design occupies the visual field. Three pencil drawings of young girls holding alcohol bottles and/or cigarettes appear in order of succession, including an image of a young woman frolicking with a bottle in her hand, obviously enjoying drinking, an image of a girl standing and holding a bottle and cigarette, and a young woman standing on a pedestal, with a bottle in her hand. The cartoon images caricature what the narrative depicts--the girls engaged in adult behavior. In comparison to cartoon images in the previous sequence, which portray the girls in a more feminine and innocent light--many of them in dresses, holding hands and smiling—this

sequence of cartoon images shows the girls as independent young women—in that the images

lack color and shows the girls wearing pants and holding cigarettes. In notable ways, this

transition in the aesthetic style corresponds with the thematic movement, as the author describes

the pub as an entrance into the adult world, where smoking, drinking, and encountering sex are

distinct but-interconnected themes. What is interesting here is that the visual images follow its

own logic of progression, in which the central theme of drinking is explicated through parallel

examples. The narrative, on the other hand, provides details about the girls' activities beyond just

drinking.
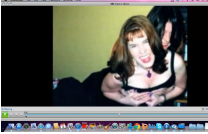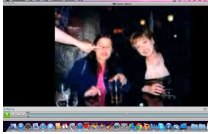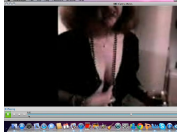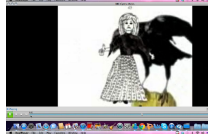
This juncture of the story tellingly illustrates the much emphasized genre practice of

"using your own stuff." The combined effect of this juncture and the one preceding it drives

home an argument that the facilitating team had long tried to make with its participants—the use

of amateur artwork, either retrieved or produced for the sake of a digital story, is an effective and

affective source for storytelling. Looking at the larger collection, we have seen on stories

visually organized such collections of one's artwork—samples of photography, stitch work,

painting, drawings, tattoos, and so on.

In *A night at duck and dog,* the use of her own cartoon drawing forcefully contributes to

the broader thematic meaning of the story. First, the use of cartoons images enacts a set of

cultural references that contribute to the affective appeals of the story. That is, the caricatured

illustration of the girls dramatizes the girls' "goofiness" that is otherwise implicitly commented

upon by the narrative. The cartoon, as a cultural genre, enacts a sense of caricature that

contributes to the humorous undertone of the narrative. Second, the medium of the cartoon

affords the storyteller's exploration of meanings in ways that are hard to achieve through more

typical couplings of image and narrative. The semi-realistic medium adds to the narrative by

allowing the storyteller to temporarily depart from the physical locales and to explore more intangible, symbolic meanings, such as friendship or trying on adult behavior. Similarly, the audience is brought into contact with adolescent antics through multimodally orchestrated details, such as storing money in one's shoes, personal commentary on alcoholic beverages, or the particular sense of fashion styles jokingly mocked and celebrated through the caricatures. Again, the semiotic integration of the cartoon and narrative not only builds upon the thematic movement of the story, which largely follows a chronological order and is mapped onto different geographical locales, but also pushes beyond the chronological progression of ideas to explore a broad thematic thread that runs throughout the story—the sharing of ups and downs that are consequential to growing up together.

It is hard to make an argument about how the author had made her decision about using video clips in one juncture, cartoons in another, and personal photos in yet another because she used them all. However, looking at the piece as an instance of genre invocation, we do see evidence of the author drawing on all resources available to her in making sense of her story. This particular semiotic feature of her story, partially arising in response to the ethos of digital storytelling, and partially dictated by the institutional pressure within the BBC, can be read as indexing the genre practices embedded in the workshop, such as the contracting of Simon's original music or strong pedagogical pushes against resources one couldn't claim rights for.

Scene Four: On the Steep Stairs

Visual					
Effect			A video clip		Animation arrangement of a bird flying by the screen
Narrative	In fact we spent most of our time on those steep stairs.	It was better than the bar or the dance floor.	Teasing passers-by,	watching bouncers breaking up fights;	and the old guy who said he stuffed birds for a living!
Sound					
Stanza	General statement		Examples		

Figure 17. A Night at Duck and Dog, Scene Four
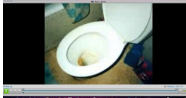
In the next chunk of the story, the storyteller takes to a favorite hang-out in the bar—the steep stairs, where the girls spent much of their time observing and making attempts to make the transition from observing to participating in the adult scene. At this juncture, we can observe a compositional pattern emerging. That is, the author opens the narrative for each scene with a general description of the setting and then draws on vivid details to illustrate certain aspects of the locale. In the visual mode, however, the semiotic design has shifted from the previous two scenes, where cartoon images were organized around themes to serve as the sole medium of visual illustration. The present scene was built through a diversity of visual resources, including photos, a video clip, and two cartoon images. In important ways, the semiotic design in this section departs from what I have discussed previously—namely the use of cartoon images to construct symbolic and affective meanings. In this scene, the visual mode functions mainly to illustrate the narrative in iconic ways. For "teasing passers-by," the author used a short video clip of a girl mockingly squeezing herself to show her cleavage; a cartoon image of two girls as

onlookers sitting at a table, heads turning towards the audience, was used to illustrate "watching bouncers breaking up fights;" the final cartoon image, with an animated effect that showed a black bird flying through the screen, was used to illustrate the "old guy who said he stuffed birds for a living." In this light, we see the storyteller experimenting with the affordances of different modes in serving a single function—as visual details that abide by the logic and progression of the narrative and illustrate various aspects of the narrative in clean and corresponding ways.

Scene Five: At the Toilet

In the next scene, the author draws on yet another series of cartoon images and a photo of a toilet to enact a lively scene, where friends gathered around to provide support for drunken friends and get ready to leave.

Visual						
Effect						
Narrative	over the course of the night, usually found slumped over a toilet.	We'd flock around in support, gathering her hair,	offering water and reassuring words.	With a bit of lipstick and powder to the nose, we'd dust each other down and prop each other	ready to face the world outside.	Then after a burger and a pee in a doorway, we'd go our separate ways
Sound						
Stanza	General description	Details in the toilet		Fresh up		Leaving the pub

Figure 18. A Night at Duck and Dog, Scene Five

Here, we see the humorous undertone of the story surfacing through the imagery of the toilet scene materialized through the recurrent constructions of the toilet, vomit, and a slumping, drunken girl. In this juncture, we see the author's use of such imagery not as an attempt to illustrate aspects of the narrative, but to drive the broader thematic movement—the inevitable "down time" culminating from this night-out. In my analysis, I argue that the imagery gravitates around the same thematic movement but follows its own logic of progression. The visual screen gives parallel examples of the toilet scene, including the toilet, the slumping girl, the toilet, and the refreshed girls. These images latch onto the narrative in uneven manners and operate relatively independent of the narrative. By noticing this categorical thread according to which images are organized and by recognizing the uneven ways they map onto the narrative, we come to realize again that the author allows each mode to do what it does best in providing information, evoking emotions, and giving examples. Indeed, a colorful image of the bright

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yellow vomit of chicken and rice, which warrants no mentioning in the author's narrative, is such a lively glimpse into a drunken night, which brings to life the memories and affections as experienced by the author and her friends.

It is through the broad thematic movement that the different compositional structures of the visual and narrative become semantically associated. In their distinct but intricately connected ways, the two modes work in concert to build the meaning of the whole juncture—the friendship embodied through holding each other's hands in down times and getting ready for a new day. In concluding the toilet scene, the story about the night also comes to an end.

Reflection

Visual					
Effect			Title appears		
Narrative	not knowing that in sharing these adolescent nights out, we were sealing a friendship - for life.				
Sound			Soft guitar chord		
Stanza	After thought		Tribute		

Figure 19. A Night at Duck and Dog, Reflection

Throughout the story, the author has allowed the audience to enter her world, as she allows a riotous night to unfold in carefully sketched scenes. So far, the author has maintained a neutral voice as she reports on the happenings of the night in a matter-of-fact manner. Thus, she has included minimal self-commentary or reflection. During the last five seconds of the story, however, the author brings to the foreground the underlying insight of the story—a tribute to these adolescent nights in sealing a life-long friendship.

The coda of the narrative is consisted of a dependent clause that latches on to the last sentence in the previous section to allow the author to express her appreciation for these

adolescent nights out. In conjunction with the narrative are two group portraits that show the friends in a different light. The first group portrait, mediated by a pan-movement effect from left to right, gives the audience a close-up look at three of the friends leaning comfortably against each other on a couch. Immediately following this semiotic conjunction is another group portrait of a larger group, appearing on top of which is the author's final tribute to lasting friendships "for my friends…for being there." In contrast to the previous sections, in which the audience's attention was drawn to the rebellious, goofy, or raucous nature of adolescent antics, the concluding section showed the friends in a realistic and more personal light. In the non-linguistic auditory channel, a soft, melodious guitar chord was used, the first time any audio effect is used in the story, to evoke a warm feeling that is integral to the message the narrative breezily touches upon. In so doing, the concluding chapter of the story builds a reflective space where life experiences sediment into memories.

 In terms of the semiotic design, I argue that the broad thematic movement, which now takes concrete experiences to a more conceptual level, requires a more engaged treatment of the implicit thesis that has been running undercurrent. In doing so, the author brings us to the beginning in a sense and speaks thematically to the entire piece. All the residual, cliché-ridden themes pertaining to friendship, which has largely remain untreated, coalesce and crystallize within the ending sequence in such a way that themes of being there for each other and becoming women together are implicitly commented upon and explicitly celebrated. In that regard, the ending sequence serves dual functions, both as a rhetorical device that identifies a much more specific audience for the story—the authors' friends, and as a thematic movement that transforms the collection of concrete memories into the context from which universal themes of friendship is celebrated. The images appear in indexical association with the narrative in celebrating a heart-

warming friendship. So do the words, which, for the first time in the story, provide analytical insights from the perspective of an adult. All things considered, the ending sequence is constituted by, builds on, and in fact transcends all of the vividly depicted scenes.

From a genre perspective, the three concluding chapters of the story complete the temporal journey the narrative has taken us. We followed the girls from beginning to the end of the evening and witnessed the author's brief reflective outlook, as delivered in the present tense. Here I want to comment upon the way reflective analysis is delivered (that is, if it is delivered at all) in this and other Capture Wales stories, especially in contrast *Grand Canyon.* In treating the reminiscence as the focal point of the story, *A Night at Duck and Dog* attached an analytical insight to the story as if it was the logical "next step" to a narrative. In so doing, the story of the night remained intact, both thematically and temporally. In *Grand Canyon,* memories were treated as subsidiary to the overarching analytical goal. Allowing an analytical framework to override the literal telling of the stories, the author also allowed the constant disruption of temporal order, as events and memories were pulled in and out of the forefront all in service of the analytical story. In this line of analysis, temporal feature is a critical dimension of a genre.

Secondly, the use of a single guitar chord at the very end of the story was especially important from a genre perspective because it was a very typified semiotic feature of the Capture Wales stories—using music and sound effects to the bare minimum, often at the end of the story. One may infer that this typified semiotic feature arose from the stringent copyright standard that held participants accountable for using their own musical composition. It might also partially emerged from the ratified process, which focused more on the telling of a good story than the technology-enabled multimodal affordances of digital storytelling.

Genre Analysis

What a fine-grained analysis of Rhiannon's story reveals are the light-hearted, straightforward, and linear approach to the reminiscing of a seemingly mundane story. In the mean time, we were able to observe how a wide range of multimodal resources, most of which taken from the storyteller's personal library of artifacts and photos, had been strategically orchestrated to reconstruct the moment-to-moment happenings at a given night. In the section that is to follow, I draw on a visual model of this story, in hope to highlight temporal, thematic, and compositional features that encode the ideological values and institutional pressures at *Capture Wales*. I argue that these rather typified and recurrent features, as amply observed across stories in the collection, are not purely the results of an individual author's whimsical inventions, but are rather the results of the individual participating in a ratified productive process, through which genre practices mediate local meaning in powerful ways. That is to say, we see in this story a celebratory and simplistic treatment of mundane experiences through the use of personal artifacts as indexing the outward directed intention for these stories.
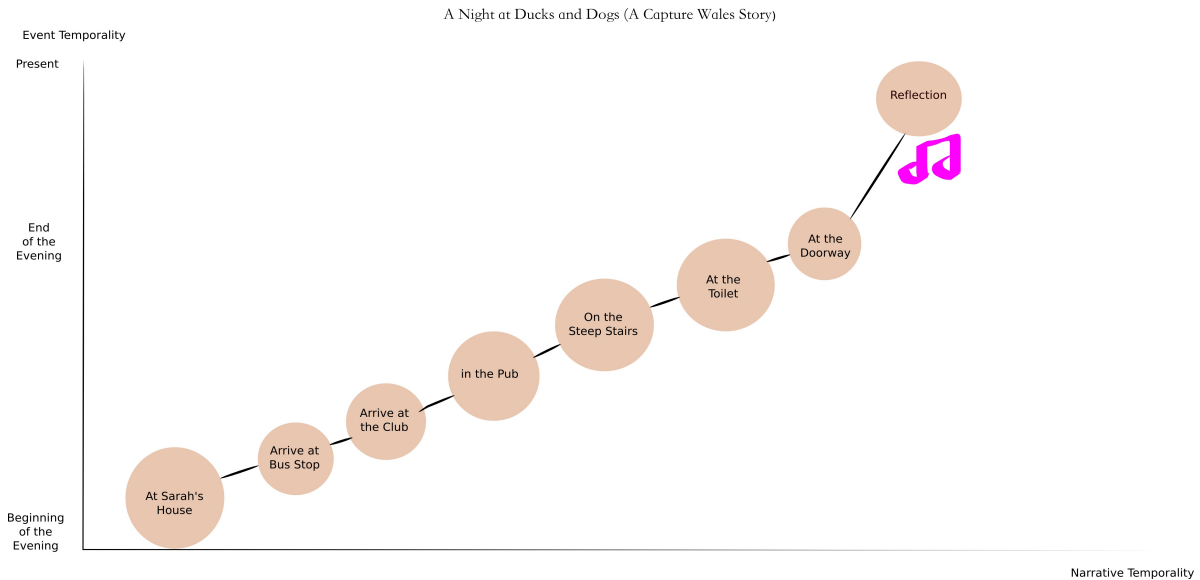
Figure 20: A Night at Ducks and Dogs, A Visual Model

Firstly, Rhiannon's story is a small "window" of "glimpse" into the ordinary and yet rich ways in which Welsh adolescents navigate through life. With the purpose to reminisce and celebrate mundane everyday experiences, the story does not strive for complex, reflective, or emotional thematic content. Rather, it is a simple and straightforward account of a regular night out, embellished with rich sensory details and humorous, first person commentaries.

From a genre perspective, this thematic emphasis on mundane and unusual experiences results from the ratified process that the facilitating team designed and delivered. As I have discussed, the exploration and voicing of mundane, media-safe, and light-hearted experiences were not only expected, but also favored. Additionally, given the BBC's primary interests in digital storytelling as a venue through which tangible products could be collected and publicly shared, its workshops had actively discouraged participants from sharing content that might be of danger to the welfare of the storyteller and those portrayed. When this ideological orientation trickled down into situated practice, it materialized in form of concrete activities designed to help people shake loose and uncover interesting stories rooted in their everyday lives. That is to say,

the thematic features we observed in Rhiannon's story were the result of situated meaning making activities, partially directed by the ratified process.

As Rhiannon's story aptly showed, a mundane story about a regular night-out could be revealing of broader themes of the Welsh culture and it found lots of resonance among other stories. Among the 24 stories nominated for this study, 7 stories were reminiscence stories in which the authors worked to bring to life a memorable experience. These experiences might entail a joke gone awry, highlight of childhood memories, a favorite pastime, or a time and lifestyle lost. In another category, seven authors treated a favorite object, an obsession, or a life-long hobby to give us a sense of who they were in light of their persistent pursuits of something that captivated their imagination and efforts. The broader theme of obsession might manifest itself in a teenage girls' bursting passion for the color pink, a retired miner's amateur photography, or a young girl's effort to play a forbidden sport. By and large, these stories are relatively straightforward narratives that describe phenomena, give accounts of something, or lace together a string of memories. They do not necessarily reveal much reflective or analytical insight, nor do they provoke strong emotional reaction or communicate the needs for social change. In Cathy's words, these stories might not convey transformation or enable therapy, but they gave the audience rich insights about how ordinary people lived extraordinary lives.

Secondly, when we consider *A Night at Duck and Dog* in comparison to *Grand Canyon,* Rhiannon's story professed distinct temporal and compositional features. As I have tried to illustrate in the visual model, *A Night at Duck and Dog* progressed according to main thematic thread that corresponded with the natural temporality of events. In a theme-driven story, such as *Grand Canyon,* the writer constantly shifted in and out of the temporal frame of the present to concurrently reflect upon, revisit, and anticipate experiences, feelings, and analysis invited by a

given theme. In a chronologically ordered story, such as *The Night at Duck and Dog,* the writer stayed with a simple account, which was not complicated by or impregnated with meanings that could be only derived from a systematic, reflective examination of present and past experiences. In that regard, the simplicity of the rhetorical purpose of the story—sharing of an interesting reminiscence—partially dictated the thematic and compositional features of the story. In contrast, the creative, non-linear structures of *Grand Canyon*, which involved the use of thematic hooks to bring into coherence disparate events located in multiple temporalities, arose in response to the unique rhetorical exigency embedded in its productive condition—using traumatic experiences as an occasion for reflection, therapy, and growth.

From a genre perspective, this linear and simplistic compositional feature, which was systematically manifested by Capture Wales stories I studied for this dissertation, encoded a ratified productive process whose primary goal was to support storytelling by participants with limited technological and literacy skills. As Cathy explained, in serving participants who came with a wide range of literacy and technological readiness, the process was designed to enable digital storytelling as a literacy that everybody could achieve. On a social level, Capture Wales was an effort to bridge the digital gap, by enabling literacy and technological learning in under represented communities. On an individual level, the ratified process, filled with relaxing and generative activities, constituted a pedagogy of literacy learning that helped participants to discover and develop skills of storytelling. In comparison to CDS, whose commitment to creative therapy mediated personal stories into compositionally and semiotically complex and sophisticated constructions, Capture Wales stories were typically shorter in length, linear in progression, and simpler in semiotic design.

Thirdly, humor was a key component in at least 11 of the 20 stories selected for this study. Acknowledging humor often entails culturally specific connotations and very much depends on what the viewer makes of it, I observe that most stories contain light-hearted stories that are entertaining to watch. I argue that both institutional and individual contingencies contributed to the general prevalence of a humor. First, the institutional processes through the stories were produced exerted great influence upon people's approach to storytelling. In view of such institutional pressure, which targeted safe, amateur media that added to the mainstream, light-hearted, interesting, and entertaining themes were particularly suitable choices for engaging the audience. Humor, in this regard, was an apt tool to enable connection and engagement.

In important ways, the prevalence of humor resulted from various aspects of the ratified production processes. For one thing, Cathy explained that the team was very wary of people who were still "in process" with personal issues. They often intervened to suggest safe-to-share alternatives. Oftentimes, knowing that one's story would be publicly shared steered people away from sensitive and emotionally challenging content. Second, both Cathy and Gary mentioned that they made sure to show several funny stories during the advertising to orient participants towards the light-hearted approach they encouraged. The story circle, filled with generative activities and games, allowed a wide range of emotions to emerge and solidify. In contrast to this, Dan has commented that the CDS' emphasis on a scripted story from the beginning had often stripped away much of the emotions that were very alive during the group process. In other words, humor emerged as the result of participants swapping and developing stories in a relaxed environment where the merit of storytelling was often tested and verified by the reaction one received from the audience, not the quality of a written narrative.

Lastly, Rhiannon's story well illustrates the "use your own stuff" message, which was partially directed by the digital storytelling ethos the privileged the first person perspective and partially dictated by the public broadcasting environment. Evidenced in Rhiannon's story was the general absence of music in the auditory channel and the predominance of personal artifacts in the visual channel. By remixing a broader ideological claim and institutional pressure into one message, which was systematically carried out in the ratified process, Capture Wales yielded stories that professed certain semiotic and aesthetic features. First, the stories often did not show the individuals in the most flattering light. Instead, these images were often authentic portraits of persons engaged in everyday activities, such as posing for a family portrait, catching a lobster, playing a sport, engaging in stitch work, and so on. Second, there was less metaphorical use of images to index abstract ideas or emotions. As we have discussed, Rhiannon's story professed a relatively more straightforward semiotic design, in that images were mostly used in iconic ways to mirror key messages in the narrative. Third, there was a general absence of auditory resources. In this story, only until the very end of the story did we hear a simple string of guitar chord to signal and accompany the ascending, analytical commentary.

This dynamic fusion of thematic, compositional, semiotic, and temporal features, when considered in light of the broader institutional context at Capture Wales, provides a powerful illustration of genre as existing at the dynamic intersection of the social and individual. Through the lens of genre, we are able to observe how the ratified processes, including its stabilized-for-now configuration of pedagogical moves, discursive activities, and meditational tools and artifacts, impregnated situated storytelling with ideological meanings. That is, the prevalence of a linear narrative structure and simple semiotic design were the results of an institutional commitment to giving voices, skills, and technologies to everyday individuals to enable the

representation of vernacular experiences in ways that were comparable with the mainstream media. The aesthetic emphasis on personal artifacts and the active resistance to resources located in the public domain encoded the convergence of a long institutional history of the BBC the short history of digital storytelling, resulting in a stabilizing mashing of the two. Similarly, the largely light-hearted and humorous approach to the telling of personal stories indexed the dynamism of genre, which realized the meaning potentials of two simultaneously competing and collapsing social practices.

From a genre perspective, digital storytelling, as it unfolded in the context of Capture Wales, should be read as a historical and dynamic aggregate that brought into convergence two social practices, each with its unique system of genres, texts, and discursive, practical, and social activities. The partially new and stable thematic, compositional, temporal features of digital storytelling at Capture Wales were therefore the result of the cultural genre being partially invented and reconfigured in continual individual and collective enactments. In that sense, digital storytelling was never to be read as a finalized resource. Instead, it took on improvisational qualities from situated activities of producing and receiving texts as storytellers, facilitators, and institutions designed and redesigned the ratified process in response to partially novel problems. This genre analysis of digital stories suggests that the meaning of discursive products, a given digital story, cannot not be fully understood until we attend to the situated activities that are simultaneously personal, interpersonal, social, and institutional.

When we position Capture Wales and CDS in dialogue with each other and on a shared socio-historical trajectory, we observe how the evolution of the social practice happened in a hubbub of lived experiences. In following the sociohistorical trajectory of genre change, we also follow individuals as they traveled to and from the sites of production, conversing among

themselves and becoming friends; we also follow organizations as they hosted meetings, generated institutional artifacts, and invented rules and conventions in response to emerging problems and practices; we can certainly also follow the trail left behind by artifacts, stories, and back stories as they were entered into and reshuffled in the socio-historical collective, their meanings and forms often taken up and recycled to direct emergent acts of meaning-making; we also witness an expanding network that brought into confluence the motivations, intentions, and expertise that were injected with social, cultural, institutional, and individual particularities.

This idea of a network, or community, is of particular interest from a genre perspective. A social practice theory of genre expects that we treat genre as only as textual forms, but also as a way of seeing, acting, and behaving in relation to the typified orchestration of tools, activities, and others. As Joe and Tony both commented, digital storytelling attracts people of the same tenor and with shared interests. In the small world of digital storytelling, where "everybody is interested in what everybody else is doing," and where "it is easy to get along with these people, [who share the same values]" (T. Sumner, personal communication, January 26, 2012), doing digital storytelling equals recognizing, understanding and practicing a point of view and a way of living.

This community or network allows people to encounter, recognize, and socially align with each other. Jokingly referring to himself as the "proud daddy of a whole bunch of babies," Joe said his commitment to spread the "good word" has been a big part of the relative longevity and vitality of the social practice. Indeed, everyone I interviewed at the three focal programs have come into contact with Joe in one way or another. Aside from doing professional work together, these people also became personal friends. Cathy might often meet up with Pip to brainstorm ideas for innovation in her current line of work; Joe might spend a day or two with

Tony and Pip during a family vacation; Pip and Dan might work together to offer a healthcare workshop in the US or UK. What we observe in the world of digital storytelling is an interlocking web of social relations that these individuals have forged through their engagement with the social practice. In that regard, identifying with the ideological framework behind digital storytelling and each other is as important as doing the work.

Chapter VI

STORIES FOR CHANGE

In the preceding chapters, I have presented a story of genre invention and stabilization (in the case of CDS) and genre innovation (in the case of Capture Wales). In attending to these organizations and their invocations of digital storytelling, I have assayed two tasks. On the one hand, I observed how genre relied on stabilized-for-now structures to retain a socially recognizable shape over time and across settings. In this regard, CDS and Capture Wales were generically connected with each other in how they both embodied parts and parcels of a shared meaning potential. On the other hand, I explored ways in which genre performance involved a constant juggling of an inherited meaning potential in light of socio-cultural changes, institutional constraints, and individual intentions. In that regard, the story I tell is one of genre innovation and transformation. As we traced the social historical trajectory of the social practice, we saw genre taking on different chronotopes, each entailing a fusion of intention, substance, style, situation, and effect (Kemberelis, 1996).

In Chapter VI, I further this theoretical position by exploring how digital storytelling has been reconfigured as a process to enable positive change in the field of medical education and healthcare improvement. In so doing, I extend the broader research narrative of genre evolution to suggest that each instance of invocation can be examined for how it simultaneously embodies and adds to a socio-historical repository of ideological and experiential knowledge and therefore modifies, extends, and redefines aspects of the genre. At Patient Voices, the story is one of re-

anchoring digital storytelling in service of an existing exigency in an established line of professional practice.

Integrating Digital Storytelling into Professional Work

When I asked Pip Hardy, one of the two founders and facilitators of Patient Voices, about what she considered to be a good digital story, she drew on a metaphor she adapted from Spider Speculation (Carson, 2006) to discuss digital storytelling as essentially an act of "passing the dragon" in our lives. "Dragons," to Pip, were "terrifying things, [who are] likely to eat you up or burn you in a flaming breath." To extend this metaphor in the context of digital storytelling, Pip explained,

> [S]tories that are really important are the ones that pass the dragon's jewels. What that means to me is that a good story needs to have some challenge. If it is a love story and nothing difficult happens--they never break up or nothing awful happens--it will be pretty boring. If it is an adventure story and the hero didn't have to reach deep into an abyss and slay a monster, it's really boring. If it is a healthcare story and somebody goes to a hospital at the right time and was seen without delay; the operation goes smoothly; the doctors and nurse are really nice, that's boring. (P. Hardy, personal communication, January 23, 2012)

In this line of thinking, a good story centers around a focal crisis, which can be overcome in life and in the process of storytelling. The best stories, according to Pip, "reveal such transformation." What Pip's explanation captured was a notion central to the vision of digital storytelling as a process through which storytellers revealed a journey of overcoming challenges, injustice, and inequity that were often imposed upon them by existing social systems. Attached to this notion was the belief that the digital stories created through their workshops were powerful agents that were capable of enacting change.

Enabling Positive Social Change

      To Pip Hardy and Tony Sumner, the two directors/facilitators of Patient Voices, digital storytelling arrived as a ready solution to a long-running problem in the professional work they had been doing. Prior to the integration of digital storytelling, *Pilgrim Projects*, the small business Pip and Tony created, had been developing long-distance educational materials in the healthcare sector for decades, particularly in the areas of quality improvement. In 2004, Pip and Tony "stumbled upon" digital storytelling through a friend, who relayed a digital story created in an earlier Capture Wales workshop. Pip immediately recognized the potential of digital storytelling as the solution to a problem they had been struggling with—to bring the "deadly boring" and intellectually challenging concept of clinical governance (top-level healthcare management) to life. According to Tony, the team had been doing "a good job in teaching people what they need to learn" and had experimented with "case studies and vignettes," all prior to the introduction of digital storytelling (Sumner, 2012). However, they were yet to discover a truly "engaging and interesting" way to connect medical professionals to this concept in an emotionally relevant way.

      From a genre perspective, there existed an institutional exigency that the stabilized-for-now structure of digital storytelling was perceived to fulfill. In this case, the genre, as embodied in a story, crystallized a system of ideological claims and practices that perceivably matched the needs of educating healthcare professionals effectively and affectively. That is, digital storytelling articulated a fusion of intention (to engage the audience), substance (emotionally compelling personal stories that vary in range), style (interesting, authentic), situation (produced by everyday individuals with varying levels of literacy and technological skills), and effects (reveal truths and realities of lived experiences) that could potentially be merged into the

established social system of ideology and practice embodied of the professional work that Tony and Pip were doing.

In this type of scenario, the institutional exigency and the text-making practices required the reconfiguration of the genre. At Patient Voices, the reconfiguration of the genre began with what I call genre testing through adapted, one-on-one workshops, first between the friend and the facilitators and then between facilitators and individual patient activists who volunteered to create their stories. In the process of creating the first handful of small stories, Pip and Hardy not only trained to acquire a partial understanding of the genre practices, but also created a handful of stories that they used in learning modules they were developing. These stories were used as jumping-off points to provoke reflections, discussions, and debates among medical students and nurses. For example, a learning module on the importance of good communication could build around a patient's tragic story of how poor communication had led to the delay of effective treatment and the untimely death of a family member. By embedding such a tragic story in the learning module, the team hoped to engage medical professionals in careful considerations of relevant issues. In so doing, the team re-anchored the genre towards the creation of outwardly directed teaching artifacts that carried very specific purposes and intentions.

In the same vein, Patient Voices has reconfigured notions of the "style" of digital storytelling. In this vision, good stories are *affective, effective,* an*d reflective.* For a digital story to be affective, it not only embodies the intellectual content of learning materials, but also creates an emotionally compelling exigency for healthcare professionals to consider why it is important to practice good communication in healthcare. Tony, in particular, emphasized on the importance of a story's capacity to catch the audience with an "emotional sucker-punch." That is, an *affectiv*e story is carefully crafted to invoke a strong emotional reaction—to catch the audience

off guard with overwhelming emotions, to take their breath away, to make them gasp, and to compel (not to persuade) them to think, "There is gotta be a better way [so that we don't allow such suffering to continue]" (T. Sumner, personal communication, January 26, 2012).

Viewers may agree or disagree with what the storyteller has to say, but an *effective* story invites and persuades viewers to sit back and contemplate, or *reflect* on relevant professional experiences and practices. For one thing, the "effective" tenet marks a rhetorical feature that moves storytelling away from didactic "lecturing" about the "three-bullet-points" of a message, which was prevalent in the established professional practices in healthcare education. Instead, a good digital story allows and encourages the audience to discover meanings and issues pertaining to professional practices. The "effective" tenet is particularly indexical of the consumptive condition at Patient Voices, which is consisted mainly of well trained, intelligent and highly motivated medical professionals. Anticipating this audience' resistance to "preaching," the reinvented genre prefers stories that provoke the audience, challenge existing thinking processes, and leave questions.

In important ways, the *reflective* message communicates the social and altruistic intention of the emergent genre. To illustrate the reflective potential of digital storytelling, Tony relays an anecdote of a midwife trying to tell a difficult story of her discovery of a female patient's circumcision and the patient's decision to have the same procedure done to her newborn daughter. Working through a swirl of professional, moral, and cultural values that were brought into clash through this experience, the story opened up the space for conversations around the boundaries of professional conduct, legal liabilities and ethics as well as the dilemmas that came with such experiences (T. Sumner, personal communication, January 26, 2012). According to Tony, reflections on such complex and problematic experiences not only benefit the individual

storyteller, but can be a valuable resource in preparing nurses for similar dilemmas entailed in their work.

In devising the EAR "effective, affective, reflective" acronym, the project reformulated a stabilized-for-now meaning potential to take on meanings specific to its own chronotope in the socio-historical trajectory of the social practice. From a genre perspective, this chronotopically stabilized meaning potential enabled a functional intersection between the two social systems of ideological and experiential formation—professional medical education and digital storytelling. The genre has taken on new purposes, forms, and practices in response to an institutionally defined and emergent exigency. Particularly notable in the case of Patient Voices is the invention of the EAR acronym, which articulates a whole range of ideological, formal and practice expectations.

What this analysis touches upon is yet again the dynamic nature of genre. When invoked in this given institutional setting, the emergent meaning potential of digital storytelling took on the new intentions of the program and gave rise to text-making activities that systematically pushed for certain thematic, ideological, and aesthetic features. In this brief account, we also observe genre invocation as genre innovation. In theorizing digital storytelling in ways that accounted for the ethos of the social practice and the exigency it was expected to fulfill, Pip and Tony injected the durable meaning potential with discursive structures (the ERA acronym, passing the dragon), practical structures (medical training, teaching challenging concepts), and material artifacts (learning modules, a favorite book). It is through such genre innovation that digital storytelling began to become institutionally and personally relevant to its participants. Drawing on metaphors, artifacts and practices developed in their existing practices, the facilitators were then able to articulate and communicate the core expectations in ways that were

coherent with the institutional context of medical education. For example, the "passing the dragon" metaphor, with all of its implications for the "horrifying" and the challenging, functionally embodies the ideological orientation of storytelling and provides a well defined conceptual, aesthetic, and emotional palace that orients people towards the telling and sharing of stories that involve somebody overcoming a challenge or recovering from something awful, difficult, and painful.

What happens here is one program's attempt at re-anchoring the genre towards an ideological framework their perceived participants will or should work from. The integration of digital storytelling therefore involved the re-anchoring of the genre in ways that aligned it with established practices in their professional work. The genre practices was thus re-imagined as a venue through which patients made sense of problems rooted in their lived experiences, supplied alternative, often overlooked interpretations, explored solutions and approaches, and compelled concrete plans for change. In revealing and giving face to patients' realities, digital storytelling was imagined as an impactful way to challenge established conceptions, practices, and stereotypes.

Creating Social Capital

Pip and Tony acknowledged their work was heavily indebted to the work of the CDS. A relationship that began with Pip taking a digital storytelling workshop and then a train-the-trainer workshop in the US has gradually grown into a working partnership, with the occasional collaborative offering of a workshop in either the US or the UK. In re-anchoring the genre, however, Patient Voices had taken on a unique institutional intention of its own. While Joe's vision has been to spread digital storytelling expansively to enable the liberation of individuals across the globe, Patient Voices has focused on what Tony called the "vertical market" of

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healthcare. In that regard, the team imagined digital storytelling as a sustainable practice that could continue to benefit practices in healthcare. Related to this area of divergence is a distinction Tony made between *theoretical* and *applied* digital storytelling. CDS, on the one hand, facilitates what Tony called "pure digital storytelling," or doing digital storytelling for its own sake. Patient Voices, on the other hand, practices applied digital storytelling by embracing a concrete goal, reaching out to a particular community, and serving a particular purpose (T. Sumner, personal communication, January 26, 2012). Consistent with this position is the focus on the tangible products, which are considered a form of social capital--resources that government agencies, professional organizations, and activist organizations can draw on to launch meaningful reflections, debates, and improvements. The stories, often disseminated through official and organizational channels, were considered potent agents for change.

In Tony's words, Patient Voices was built upon "a little bit of philanthropy, idealism, and optimism." In practice, Patient Voices encourages sponsoring organizations to allow the public dissemination of stories through a Creative Commons license just so that the ideas, issues, and concerns, or all the "intangible stuff" conveyed in these stories can be "put back into society" for good. Interestingly, this altruistic intention for building a repository of digital stories, considered as intangible assets, was motivated by requests from the first participants, who didn't "want these [stories] to go into a box [and wanted] them to be disseminated so that people could understand more about what was happening to [patients]" (T. Sumner, personal communication, January 26, 2012). From this motivation came the inspiration for an online, public repository of a larger collection of such stories, expected to be used to teach lessons, to alleviate suffering, and to enact positive change in professional practices. From my conversation with these facilitators, Tony gave the most compelling illustration of how the intangible capital of digital storytelling can be

fully realized. In this instance, Patient Voices facilitated a workshop around how people with

disabilities returned to employment. Working with patients with a wide range of health

conditions, including blindness, Asperser's syndrome, and paralysis, the workshop yielded a

collection of stories about the challenges of going back to work. The reach of these stories,

however, went far beyond the scope of the workshop and the agency that sponsored the

workshop. As Tony excitedly recounted,

> Those stories were taken to businesses, county and state to promote the idea that people with disabilities are not lost value, but are actually very good at what they do and are valuable members of the community. Interestingly, some of the other stories were then picked up by the royal college of nursing to teach respect and to talk about how to ensure patients' self-respect when their sense of identity is based on their abilities to have a job. There is lots of cross-fertilization of the stories. The stories can be used by many organizations that didn't fund their creation. They [digital stories] are here as a resource. (T. Sumner, personal communication, January 26, 2012)

This anecdote is telling of an approach to digital storytelling as assets building. As such

stories are primarily imagined as agents for reflection and improvement, their availability in the

public domain can create expected and unexpected ways of using them. It is through these

expected and unexpected uses that the intangible assets of digital storytelling were realized. To

that end, painful stories of living with debilitating health conditions and encountering harmful

stereotypes and practices could enact positive change.

Digital stories, as outcomes of such social system of ideology and practice, may embody

such formations through certain genre features: they tend to be stories that challenge established

ways of approaching patient care, harmful practices and conceptions, or stereotypical views of

patients with certain disabilities; they tend to reveal the realities of people living with a chronicle

medical condition or suffering from inadequate care; they tend to critique and challenge

inadequate and inequitable practices, such as the lack of respect and infrastructures that prevent

the effective communication of patients' needs.

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What this analysis brings to the forefront is the consumptive condition as partially

directing genre practice. As Tony explained, they were often contracted for organizations and

agencies to produce stories that were used for very specific purposes. This observation of mine

was best illustrated by a story Tony shared. In a particular workshop with young mothers with

premature babies, Tony and Pip were contracted by the National Audit office to collect stories

that were used as qualitative data in support of a research project into the impact of recently

rearranged structures for caring for premature babies in the healthcare system. The sponsor of the

workshop, the National Audit office, was an agency overseeing the expenditures of government-

funded research projects. These stories were attached to a parliamentary report produced by the

agency as evidence in support of observations made about whether it was worth spending money

and consulting on new procedures in providing care to premature babies (T. Sumner, personal

communication, January 26, 2012).

From this example, we see the consumptive condition actively shaping the workshop,

Considering this genre chronotope in the sociohistorical trajectory of the social practice, we

observe the changing consumptive conditions of digital storytelling over time and across

programs. Beginning with the private, inwardly-directed intention of digital storytelling at CDS,

when audience reaction was irrelevant, to Capture Wales' outwardly directed intention, when a

broad audience was expected but not targeted, to Patient Voices, when storytellers are brought

into direct contact with a targeted audience, whose reaction and action are the pivotal point that

pulls the genre practices together, we see a trajectory of genre evolution, which continues to

define and redefine the ratified productive and consumptive processes in which the genre is a

product and resource.

In these instances of genre invocation, we can come to recognize the plasticity of genre as historically constructed meaning potentials. Using the CDS as an ultimate point of comparison, we can observe how Capture Wales loosens the ideological formation and the ratified process to address a wider range of individual interests, artistic intentions, and cultural phenomenon. Patient Voices, on the other hand, can be analyzed for how it tightened the meaning potential in an attempt to refocus digital storytelling for more strictly defined purposes and interests.

In the next section, I move on to discuss ways in which digital storytelling workshops have been re-organized to provide for productive conditions that served the outwardly directed intention of the progrm. I explore the social and practice-oriented nature of genre by focusing more heavily on how often assigned social exigencies for production has led to significant reconfiguration of the workshop process. In doing so, I also try to account for the innovative ways in which the facilitators responded to the ever-changing conditions they found themselves in.

A Sponsorship Model

In consequential ways, the applied orientation towards digital storytelling has given rise to what I have come to call a sponsorship workshop model that embodies the unique ideological orientation and institutional pressures specific to Patient Voices. That is, the fact that Patient Voices workshops are typically contracted by advocacy, healthcare, and government organizations, are designed to serve specific purposes, and targeted certain audiences has led to significant changes to ways in which the workshop process is structured. A strong presence of the sponsor often functions to regulate the productive condition in ways that constrain the range of discursive possibilities and experiences.

This sponsorship model, central to the genre practices at Patient Voices, carries significant implications for the organization of the ratified productive process. First, almost all workshops were customized around a sponsor-identified theme. For example, a foundation might contract Patient Voices to develop outreach materials that educate people from a particular racial, linguistic, and cultural community about breast cancer awareness. To that end, digital stories were used to promote people's awareness and interests in learning about breast cancer, to change people's habits and stereotypes, and to engage people in critical conversations. A Patient Voices workshop might also be contracted to bring stroke patients together to discuss strategies for and challenges in recovery. Second, participants are typically identified for perceived embodiment of the theme of a workshop through personal commitments and tangent, lived experiences. That is, for a workshop around the struggles of stroke patients, the team would strategically recruit participants from within the contracting organization to create a homogeneous group consisted of stroke patients and care providers. Lastly, stories are often created for specific audiences and for pre-identified purposes. In one case, an organization might use stories to enable peer-to-peer outreach. In another, a collection of digital stories might be attached to a proposal/report for funding or government agencies.

In making sense of genre practices as emergent sociohistorical realizations, we can argue that the narrowly defined, agenda-driven, and institutionally specific exigencies for such workshops played a strong regulatory role in the organization of these workshops. The sponsorship model has allowed the exploratory, authentic, and expressive ethos of digital storytelling by overridden by stringent and top-down motivations. If we temporarily juxtapose the sponsorship model with the Capture Wales model, in which typicality of participant backgrounds and interests were consistently resisted, we get to see two extreme examples of

regulated discursive activities. Emerging from a Capture Wales workshop might be stories about an entomologist's adventure, a primary relationship, a childhood memory, a social activist's protest against inaction, a joke gone awry, and so on. A Patient Voices workshop on stroke patients, however, would produce stories that coalescence around a central theme of recovery from stroke, therefore showing a strong sense of coherence and a much smaller range. We might have one patient discussing gardening and meditation as her strategies for recovery, another discussing how losing and regaining her ability to bake a cake as emblematic of recovery, or another documenting the painful process to regain one's ability to speak. If we see Capture Wales stories as a "patchwork quilt" made up by pieces of varying shapes and colors, Patient Voices stories often work together to compile a "profile" of a shared experience of interest, such as recovery from stroke, senior nun's recollections of early memories of joining a convent, or professional safeguarding practices for nurses. Within this prescriptive framework, however, a range of themes might emerge to complement each other in constructing a complete profile of the problem.

A Safe and Supportive Environment

In the case of Patient Voices, the healthcare context, when coupled with the ideological orientation towards sensitive and emotional stories, entail a necessity for stronger measures taken to safeguard the privacy, confidentiality, and welfare of participants. Built into the workshop process, for one thing, is an emphasis on a retreat-like environment that optimizes the benefits of storytelling and minimizes the challenges involved in the telling of often painful and difficult stories. Pip paints a vivid picture of this retreat-like atmosphere,

> We stress the benefit of having a retreat-like atmosphere, somewhere that is quiet, peaceful, and safe. People can get away from their workplace, their computers and emails. We are really fortunate to have a spacious house that is very comfy, where we have some workshops. There are lots of rooms and we set them up so that people can

spread out. We make sure to supply plenty of wholesome and nice food. A lot of participants have commented on how nice it is to be in a really homely atmosphere, because it makes them feel safe and they can open up. The environment is an important aspect of the workshop. (Hardy, 2012)

From the perspective of genre theory, this account captures the distinctive ways in which material structures, or typified ways in which physical spaces, technologies, artifacts, and texts are organized, emerge alongside with discursive and practical structures to maintain the stabilized-for-now productive condition at a given site of genre invocation. In other words, a group effort in the making of heart-wrenching stories partially dictates a "homely" and "safe" physical arrangement. Every single aspect of the material structure, including the arrangement of the physical space ("spread out" across multiple rooms), food ("wholesome," "fresh," and plentiful), and technology (get away from emails and work), contribute to the overall appeal of the productive condition.

How this particular material structure came to be, however, presents an occasion to explore the stabilized-for-now nature of genre structures. If we position Patient Voices in juxtaposition with CDS, we can see a striking similarity between how the two programs make typified material arrangement to afford the kind of storytelling expected of their participants. From a genre perspective, this similarity partially reflects genre durability. That is, ideological and experiential knowledge that Pip built through attending two CDS workshops, partially encoded by a particular way of looking at material arrangement, might have come to shape the new material arrangement at Patient Voices. The durability of this genre structure can also be explained from the perspective of genre practice as dialectically connected to the social exigency for production. That is, the similar social exigencies—enabling the telling of emotionally challenging content, have given rise to the typified material structure that best supported this type of discursive activities.

Aside from such physical attributes, a particular practical structure has been built into the workshop to ensure a safe environment. Pip's background in counseling allowed her to quickly recognize the need for an elongated consent process as a "*safety mechanism*" [emphasis added]. This process begins with an informational session, when facilitators use exemplary stories, quotes from previous participants, and pictures of workshops to not only acclimate potential participant intellectually and emotionally for the training, but also to ensure that participants obtain adequate information needed to make decisions with regard to consent and participation. Even though people are encouraged to sign the consent form even before they commit to a voiceover, the facilitating team does not release the stories until participants have had the chance to think about their stories and made necessary revisions after the conclusion of a workshop (P. Hardy, personal communication, January 23, 2012).

Another novel problem arises from the needs to attend to the physical, mental, and emotional conditions of patients, who often not only lack technical and literacy skills, but also mental and emotional facilities to complete the intensive process. This novel problem partially redirects the course of each workshop, which is constantly adapted to safeguard the physical and psychological welfare of patients and facilitators. For example, Patient Voices workshops typically operate with a lower facilitator-participant ratio and are decorated with intermittent breaks, all in order to ensure adequate and individualized support. To further explicate this point, Tony recounted his experience working with a dementia patient, which brought to the forefront a whole range of pedagogical and practical issues arising from working with patients with limited cognitive and psychological facilities,

> It was really quite sad to see people clinging to their stories. Working with the patient was interesting because the concept of the story was different for her. Because she couldn't hold her story, my role was largely to hold her infinitely branching story and to help her walk back to the trunk [of her story]. Every couple of minutes, she would

diverge off a little bit. What I had to do was to hold a whole map of her life story so that when she finishes a small step, we could retract back to the main story and carry on. (T. Sumner, personal communication, January 26, 2012)

This is a compelling point, especially when we consider the productive condition at Patient Voices in comparison to the CDS, where accomplished young professionals are expected to tell artistic, creative, and reflective stories. Here, the telling of a story in itself is an accomplishment. A big part of Tony's work involved "learning to adapt to different teaching styles and methods to help people with different sets of disabilities." To work with various physical disabilities, such as speech problems with stroke patients or cognitive impairments that prevent people from reading from a script, Tony often invented technological devices to allow participants to proceed. From basic measures of providing computers installed with organizational folders and royalty free images to customized technological tools, such as a "laser scanner on people's heads" or modified "printing technology that allowed [them] to print out speech with one sentence per page," the team has worked into their process a mechanism that allowed them to respond to the special needs arising from various health conditions and disabilities.

Lastly, the need to work with emotionally challenging content created a problem for the facilitators, who ran the risk of being negatively influenced by experiences and emotions shared in their workshops. In response to this challenge, Tony and Pip resorted to clinical supervision sessions to discuss how the stories may affect them and to receive support for their own psychological well-being. In the following account, Tony explained the dangers of working with mental patients,

> We did a workshop with a group of mental patients in a revolving doors institution. They stay there for a day or two and get out. They go back in when they need to. As Pip and I came back from that workshop, we were both completely wired. It had been a really crazy workshop. These people managed to do this, but they were still clearly in the midst

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of their issues. Our counselors said, "It is very clear these people are projecting their issues onto you because they are trying to explain to you how crazy they feel. You take it up because you are trying to understand what it feels like to be them." (T. Sumner, personal communication, January 26, 2012)

From these anecdotes, we see telling examples of the myriad mental and physical problems facilitators need to work with and around. Pip and Tony worked to enable the sharing of painful stories in such a way that healthcare professionals were brought into direct contact with the realities of their patients, which they encountered on a daily basis but often failed to understand. The various limitations that come with the individuals' health conditions may render the stories less delightful, creative, and dramatic than their CDS and Capture Wales counterparts, but the productive and consumption conditions in which they are products and resources render them into equally compelling cases in service of the ideological function expected of them.

In what follows, I will draw on one acclaimed story, *Getting to the Bottom of Things*, to illustrate how the institutionally reinvented genre, with its fusion of an altruistic intention, emotionally compelling content, and capacity to provoke reflection materialize through the design of this particular story.

A Case: Getting to the Bottom of Things

According to Pip, *Getting to the Bottom of Things* was one of her favorites, one that she always showed at conferences and workshops. From such showings, Pip reported that people had called this story a "love story," a "crime story," or a "story that every health professional should watch." To Pip, the story was one of "great humanity and courage" and a "moving tribute to her [the patient's] husband" for the great care he provided. In this story, Jean, a middle aged woman, tells a story of living with rheumatoid arthritis, a disease that completely changed her life for the worse. Even though the story relays painful experiences of a once energetic woman losing her

dignity and independence to a terrible disease, the author tells it with such grace and humor that an audience couldn't help but feeling a deep sense of empathy and admiration. Embedded in the story are many thought-provoking messages that are conducive to changing the attitudes and practices of healthcare professionals. In analyzing this story, I work to identify ways in which the altruistic intention materializes and to look for thematic and rhetorical moves that speak to the overall theme of overcome and survival.

The dragon: An Introduction
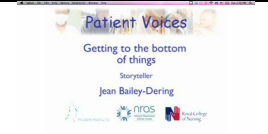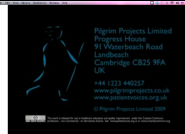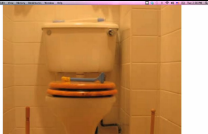
Visual				
Narrative			I'd always been an independent and active person, so the first time	my husband had to wipe my bottom, I was mortified
Effect				
Sound				
Stanza	Title		Introduce the Dragon	

Figure 21. Getting to the bottom of things, Introducing the Dragon

Using a simple semiotic design in her title page, which made use of a little slice of royalty free, classic music, Jean launches her story with a general statement that reveals an unexplained dissonance. In the visual field, a photo taken of a beautiful and healthy young woman in an outdoor setting is followed by a shot of a toilet, with two bottom wipers placed on top of the toilet cover and the flushing station. Each image corresponds to a stretch the narrative, which centers around an unexpected shift from a brief depiction of the author as an "independent and healthy" person to the fact that she feels mortified for having to use a bottom wiper. This drastic and yet unexplained contrast creates a deep sense of dissonance that drives the viewer to look for an explanation. From the outset, the author pronounce the global theme and purpose of

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the story—an independent woman's struggle to overcome a debilitating health condition that makes the simplest daily task a challenge.

From a genre perspective, two semiotic features in this sequence are suggestive of broader themes found in the typified productive conditions at Patient Voices. First, the simple, universal semiotic design of the title page, which prevails across all the stories in the repository, can be read as a discursive structure that encodes the sponsorship model. In embedding logos of the sponsors and the program in these pages, the title page situates this individual story within a broader institutional context and in relation to professional organizations that were as much invested in the storytelling as the author. In that regard, the discursive structure—standardized title design, functioned to socially align stories with each other and the genre practices of the institution.

Second, the scanty use of royalty free music, typically only at the beginning and the end of a story, is reminiscent of the genre practices of Capture Wales, which shared the outwardly directed intention for digital storytelling and therefore provided productive resources that guided Patient Voices' practices in applying copy right standards. However the development of this practical structure, is partially novel. Instead of hiring a professional musician to work with participants *in situ*, Patient Voices devised its own solution to the problem. Tony, for one, suggested that he has come to recognize the importance of installing a bank of royalty free images and music to ensure the smooth process of digital storytelling. In situating Patient Voices as a chronotope in the sociohistorical trajectory of digital storytelling, I argue it is fair to infer the this genre practice was partially inherited as the result of Pip and Tony accessing the experiential and ideological knowledge accumulated through Capture Wales. It is likely that this access was enabled by Pip's active participation in the social system, which is partially enacted through

social relationships with key players—Pip and Cathy, who became good friends through digital storytelling and often gathered to brainstorm ideas, and networks—the frequent exchange and collaboration between Joe and an expanding reach to individuals, artifacts, and practices within the network. As Tony commented, the "digital storytelling world is close community, where most people know each other very well." In this community of "like-minded people, everybody is interested in what is going on." Therefore, we observe in this case how the social system of ideology and practice, is embodied through a network of interested individuals, programs, and practices, whose collective work keeps the genre alive.

The dragon: The disease

Visual				
Narrative	It wasn't what either of us had planned or expected. We were in our forties when my immune system started to attack me.	Many people think of arthritis as a condition of the elderly	But rheumatoid arthritis can occur	at any age, even in childhood.
Effect				
Sound				
Stanza	diagnosis	facts about the disease		

Visual		
Narrative	It causes joint destruction, extreme exhaustion, and	sometimes heart disease.
Effect		
Sound		
Stanza		

Figure 22. Getting to the bottom of things, Dragon the disease

In this juncture of the story, the author provides a painfully realistic and embodied account of rheumatoid arthritis. The sequence begins with two portrait-style photos that show the couple, happy and healthy. The viewer's gaze is naturally anchored by Jean's warm smile, which light up her beautiful face. The narrative, which gives us a sense of the untimely onset of the

disease, actively dismantles the emotional and aesthetic instinct of the images. In the second image-narrative pairing, Jean sets out to clarify a common misconception that associates rheumatoid arthritis with the elderly by putting her own face on a younger population that suffers from it.

What makes this sequence particularly powerful is Jean's courageous and disconcertingly realistic display of her disfigured body through images of her deformed hands and feet. The visual-pictorial mode, which forcefully represents the atrocity this horrid disease can afflict on the body, contrasts and complements the spoken words, which maintains a fairly objective and composed voice in delivering a series of scientific facts pertaining to the disease. In juxtaposing the scientific and the intimately personal, Jean anchors the audience further to a direct and intimate contact with her embodied experiences with the disease.

From a genre perspective, the thematic and compositional moves Jean take here powerfully indexes the "passing the dragon" metaphor. "The dragon" of the story, the horrifying disease that destroys her body and takes away her independence, is constructed in two ways. In the narrative, the disease is constructed as a scientific concept. In the pictorial mode, however, the disease is constructed as lived experiences. The images, painful to watch, give face and life to atrocity of the health condition. This dual construction of a health condition, as scientific concepts and embodied experiences, is very common in Patient Voices stories. The embodied experience may speak through images (such as Jean's), sounds (the voice of a stroke patient who is yet to regain her ability to speak), and narratives (the hopes before and heartbreaks after each cancer scan). Often speaking directly back to the scientific, which is often spoken through the voices of healthcare professionals or common assumptions, the embodied construction of a disease is one of the most "effective" thematic moves to create an exigency for change. In the

same vein, the reflective piece of the story begins to build in momentum through the uncomfortable juxtaposition of the author's calm, if not optimistic outlook on the disease and the unavoidable pictorial evidence that brings to life the inconveniences, pains, and struggles that the narrative barely comments upon.

The dragon: The bottom wiper

Visual					
Narrative	I need help with most aspects of personal hygiene.	My shoulders,	elbows, and knees have all been replaced,	but they are still stiff and painful.	My wrists don't bend, so I have to use
Effect					
Sound					
Stanza	General statement	physical conditions			

Visual				
Narrative	a bottom wiper.	There are few different types of this device,	/but I haven't found the truly	/ efficient one yet.
Effect				
Sound				
Stanza		inefficiency of bottom wiper		

Figure 23. Getting to the Bottom of Things, Dragon, Bottom Wiper

In this section of the story, Jean continues to explore the disease as embodied through a specific example of her daily struggles, her inability to clean herself. This section makes a thematic shift from the universal, scientific truth to a focused exploration of one aspect of her reality as an arthritis patient. In the visual space, Jean continues to use images of her disfigured body to illustrate key ideas in the narrative, giving evidence for the joint replacement surgeries she went through, her "stiff" and "painful" joints, and her unbending wrist that keeps her from performing the simple task of wiping her bottom.

Speaking in light of these painful experiences, Jean pushes the story forward by bringing to the forefront the inadequacy of current approaches to caring for arthritis patients. Through the concrete example of the bottom wiper, which are shown in rather unflattering light in both the narrative and pictorial channel, Jean speaks directly to the main concern of Jean's thesis—the inadequacy of professional care as emblematized through what she later calls the "beastly" device. Surfacing in this juncture of the story is an implicitly commented upon exigency for change. The story is building in momentum especially with regard with its reflective potential. As her audience, I find myself wincing at the absence of a smart design for this special need and asking, "isn't there a better way?"

Also important here is the approach Jean has taken to process and represent her emotions. I argue that her graceful and even humorous approach to painful emotional content is powerfully indexical of a broader system of considering digital storytelling as intangible assets and rhetorical artifacts. Because the workshop often brought together people with shared experiences around inadequate care, emotions often ran high. As Tony suggested, some participants might be "iridescent with rage for what happened to them" and wanted to use the workshop just to "rant about that." The broader orientation towards the building of social assets, however, expects these stories to invite and entice reflections, not dictate them. Therefore, Tony and Pip often spent much of their time explaining that digital storytelling workshops should not be seen as a way to "fix each other or the health system." Rather, participants were persuaded to see it as an opportunity to fix the story. In making such statements, the facilitators invoke a view of digital stories as rhetorical artifacts and potential intangible commodities. For these stories to take on values, they need to work. In fact, the group often engages in conversations around "what works." Some participants might come forward to say, "You don't get people to listen if you

yell at them. " Others might say, "Instead of really putting them down, how about you saying this?" Evident in these conversations is a collective building of a shared understanding towards the ideological and practical orientation of the workshop—creating stories that can be used to engage people, not alienate them. In helping participants to leash, channel and craft their emotions for productive purposes, the workshop process also orients them towards the broader institutional purpose.

Passing the dragon: A solution

Visual				
Narrative	That's when the cry for help goes out	and my husband respond in the same caring	/but practical way that he does when he helps me to dress	and bath.
Effect				
Sound				
Stanza	Great care provided by husband			

Figure 24. Getting to the Bottom of Things, Passing the dragon, A Solution

As a typical story of survival, Jean's story, like many other stories facilitated through Patient Voices' workshops, does not stop at a pessimistic account of challenges but rather documents a persistent struggle to overcome or live with disease. Even though the tremendous efforts may not always lead to a full recovery, underlying such stories are often an optimistic outlook on life.
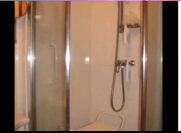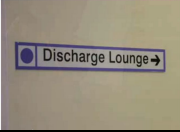
In this slice of the story, Jean proceeds with an account of a solution, a way to pass the dragon. In this short sequence, Jean uses three images of her husband and her to capture the dynamism between the couple—a disabled wife turning to her husband for help, and the husband as s steady, reliable source of support and care. The realistic, unembellished style in the visual field acts in concert with the warm, descriptive narrative that is infused with Jean's appreciation

for the help her husband has provided. Considered in relation to the macro-level organization of the whole piece, the thematic shift marks the beginning of a dual structure of critique and celebration. In this comparative structure, Jean shifts back and forth between criticism of the insensitive and impersonal care she has received in institutionalized settings (as embodied by the inefficient bottom wiper so far) and an appreciative comment on the "caring" and "practical" way in which she is cared for at home.

With an eye towards other stories in the same category, I argue that the discussion of solutions and strategies devised in home environments is an important thematic thread that prevails in stories of survival and recovery. Patients often provide accounts of what work for them at home, often in juxtaposition with what they receive in hospital settings. By engaging healthcare professionals in conversations around alternatives, such discussions serve the overarching goal—a collective building of social assets that are conducive to the improvement of healthcare.

The offering of alternative approaches and Jean's way of approaching it in this section, I argue, also indexes a broader genre feature of the Patient Voices stories. In Tony and Pip's view, stories can only work when they anticipate the audience's reactions. In light of this view, Jean's story does not revolve around the "three tenets of what you are doing wrong," which will very likely alienate the audience, largely well trained doctors and nurses who would go "I am way too smart for this." Instead, Jean approached the critical aspect of her story that center around emotional engagement. By focusing on the concrete details of this alternative care, which are delivered with such care and warmth, Jean is going what Tony considers "right way to go about a story"—to anchor audience into an emotional space and help them think, "this is nice, can this happen in my own practice?

Passing the Dragon: A Counter Example

Visual				
Narrative	However, I had a bad experience in hospital. It wasn't my local hospital,	and although I had completed a personal needs questionnaire, it didn't seem to reach the care staff.	They seem to think that I was just an awkward customer.	Many patients were able to use the showers, but they are able-bodied apart from their recent surgery.
Effect				
Sound				
Stanza	a bad experience at a hospital			Jean's unique challenges
Visual				
Narrative	Ankle and back damage means I can't stand for long	and I can't wash myself anyway.	Not only did I receive no help with personal care	But to add insult to injury, one day, as I was shuffling along, one of the
Effect				
Sound				
Stanza			early discharge	
Visual				
Narrative	care assistants told me to pick my feet up.	So even though I was recovering from surgery, I discharged myself early		
Effect				
Sound				
Stanza				

Figure 25. Getting to the bottom of things, Passing the dragon counter example

Directly set in opposition to the care Jean celebrates in the previous slice is a more elaborately built counter-example, through which Jean's critique of institutional practice is forceful presented. In this anecdote, Jean relays an example of bad care she received at a local hospital. Particularly notable in this anecdote is again the conflicting perspectives between health care professionals and patients. From the perspective of the patient, Jean outlines her effort, in completing the necessary questionnaire, in explaining her physical disability, and in taking charge of her own care. On the other hand, her efforts were met with indifference, ignorance, and insensitivity that are pronounced in "their" failure to read patient questionnaire, their lack of

effort to provide help on matters of personal hygiene, their view of Jean as "awkward." By giving faces and works to the faceless institutionalized practices, Jean compels medical staff to examine their own practices.

This juncture, especially in considered with the preceding section, furthers my argument about emotion as a critical dimension of the genre. In this section, anger and frustration steadily surface as Jean builds her critique around concrete, irrefutable experiential evidences. However, Jean did not use her anger and frustration to position herself in opposition to the professionals. Instead, by constructing a patient who is vulnerable, conscientious, and persistent, she crafts an emotional space that provokes empathy. Here we might see Jean giving her audience what Tony calls an "emotional sucker punch," compelling the audience to think "Oh my gosh, is this happening in my own practice?"

When considered in the larger collection, Jean's story stands out in its sophisticated embodiment of the EAR tenet. Its conceptual complexity and emotional richness probably have contributed to the overall acclaim of the story. However, in other stories, we constantly observe authors making similar moves, raising questions, seeking empathy, and challenging established thought processes.
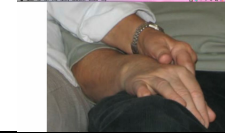
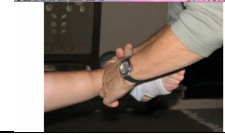|				
Visual				
Narrative	I am fortunate to have a husband who's gone through the journey of disability with me.	who's gone through the journey of disability with me.	He gives me all the support that I need	and doesn't shrink from the inefficiencies
Effect				
Sound				
Stanza	Explicit comment on care from husband			
Visual				
Narrative	of the beastly bottom wiper.	He hasn't forgotten that I am still the same person as I was in my able-bodied days,	when he used to complain that he couldn't keep up with me.	
Effect				
Sound				
Stanza		Implicit plea		

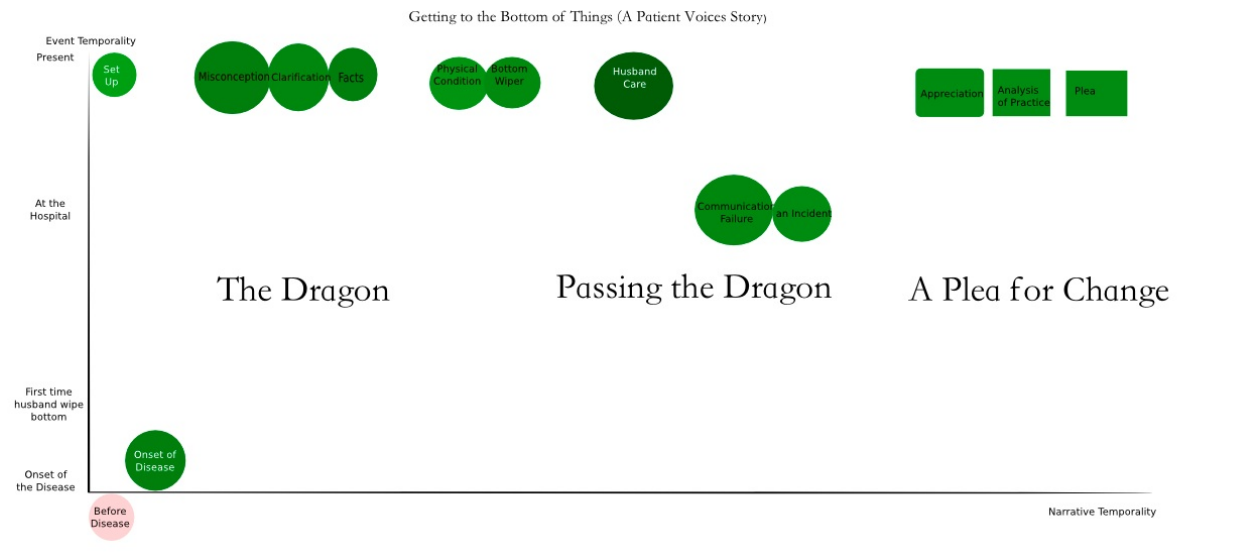*Figure 26.* Getting to the Bottom of Things, Plea and Tribute

In the final sequence, Jean makes a final thematic shift to focus on the good care provided by her husband. Jean identifies and shows appreciation to the key aspects of her husband's care, with a particular emphasis on a feeling of enabled by husband's respect. In the visual space, Jean maintains the tenor and texture of the story by using more images that feature her husband and her in everyday settings. Instead of using such images mainly for iconic, illustrative purposes, images in this section are used more for their indexical and symbolic associations. The first image, featuring a flight of stairs taken from a low angle, joins in conjunction with Jean's comment to create a hybrid construction of the "journey of disability." In image 2 and 4, the author uses two images of "holding hands" to bring into the hybrid construction a unique cultural connotation that points to ideas such as "protection," "bond," and "comfort." In indexical ways, these images coincide with the narrative's description of a sense of

persistent support and companionship between the couple. In the fifth frame, Jean revisits an image of the bottom wiper in adding a commentary voice that was absent in the previous display of the device. The narrative, which describes the bottom wiper as "beastly", finally brings to the surface much criticism lurking beneath the seemingly calm and matter-of-factly accounts in preceding sections.

What is most interesting in the final sequence pertains to the metaphorical juxtaposition of two portrait photos taken of Jean in a similar posture and facial expression, at two different times of her life, which create a deep sense of dissonance and reveal an underlying theme of the story--the yearning to be respected and seen as an able-bodied person, which is at the basis of what Jean considers good care. When considered especially in light of the rhetorical purpose and institutional intentions of the story, the images in the concluding sequence symbolically embodies the message that Jean deserves to be treated the same despite the debilitating disease.

The concluding section becomes a coda that brings us back to the beginning in a sense and speaks to the themes and thrusts that run through the entire piece. Namely, the ending sequence finally brings a sense of reconciliation—learning to live with a debilitating disease. Implicit in the affective, effective, and reflective message that culminates from the entire story is a plea for change in existing social systems of care. All of the messages that lingers unspoken and all the residual meanings coalesce within the thematic moves in the narrative and the images' symbolic meanings in such a way that global themes of bonding, support, perseverance, and respect are powerfully emblematized.

Figure 27. Getting to the Bottom of Things, A Visual Model

As my analysis has shown, Jean's story articulates several key rhetorical, thematic, compositional, and semiotic features shared by many Patient Voices' stories. First of all, the explicit and implicit rhetorical purpose of the story maps onto the altruistic intention of the program's vision. That is, Jean tells a rather painful story of living with a debilitating condition, with the explicit and implicit purpose to help improve healthcare quality. The story draws upon the expressive and affective powers of the narrative (anecdotes and analysis) and visual modes (disabled body and clumsy tools, cold and impersonal institutional settings, and the warmth conveyed through personal care) to give a realistic and honest account of the atrocity of the disease as well as the great inconvenience it causes her. In explicit ways, the story *informs* and *educates* its audience about the realities and truth of her experiences, which can be easily extrapolated to describe shared experiences of patients in this small community. Implicit in the story, however, is a sustained critical intention. The sharp criticism of the lack of understanding

by medical staff and poor quality of care provided by hospitals is made pointedly open when it is compared against the celebratory account of the care received at home.

More importantly, the purpose of Jean's story is informed by the prescribed framework, which assigns it publicly oriented and practical goals. In a genre-informed analysis, I suggest that the optimistic ideological undertone and the particular thematic moves, which lean towards the sharing of effective strategies and solution, emerge in response to the unique rhetorical occasion entailed in Patient Voices workshops. That is, the storytelling process is heavily mediated by activities, discussions, and sharing of texts that model and convey not only the facilitators' pre-conceived notions of why stories of "passing the dragon" from the perspective of patients matter, but also the institutionally defined, outwardly directed intentions for how such stories should be used. A participant's storytelling necessarily involves the take-up of stances, attitudes, and approaches deemed as appropriate and acceptable by in a community constituted by the facilitators, sponsors, and participants in the same group as well as storytellers whose efforts precede the present. As Pip and Tony suggest, the intention for how patient stories are used has remained relatively stable over the years. In allowing the patients to have a unique voice in a publicly accessible platform, Patient Voices envisions that such stories be used to help patients who are going through similar struggles find a space to commiserate, comfort each other, and survive together. It is also the intention of the workshops to create stories that will engage healthcare professionals and patients in productive discussion of how to better support patients' recovery from or living with a health condition. In light of such intentions, the discussion of strategies and appreciative acknowledgement of help one received are concrete thematic moves that emerge in response to the internalization of institutionally configured rhetorical and social goals.

Second, the broad thematic movement of the story is driven by the theme of "passing the dragon's jaws." That is, Patient Voices stories collectively paint a picture of how patients overcome a daunting challenge, which manifests itself in various forms of illnesses and the inconveniences and changes caused by them. In important ways, the challenge is the basis of such stories, the overcoming of which may entail persistent efforts and/or an optimistic outlook. As such, the stories progress by outlining the efforts, measures, and tools taken by the patient, family members, or helpful staff and organizations to facilitate recovery. This may materialize in a stroke patient's discussion of how meditation and gardening has facilitated the regaining of one's physical and mental capabilities. Embedded in such discussions are often criticism of specific ways in which an existing method and approach fall short. Building on the complexity of describing and analyzing personal experiences, the stories often point to concrete and specific ways for improvement. In many ways, the thematic and compositional movement of Patient Voices stories resembles that of Creative Narrations stories in that it often follows a predictable pattern of progression—beginning by constructing a challenge, followed by outlining key moments in a journey for a solution, and ending with concrete proposals for positive change as well as an optimistic outlook on the future.

When we compare the visual model for Jean's story with that of Matt's story, however, we see a striking resemblance projected by a "dip" in temporal order, the "sandwiching" of a personal anecdotes between framing, questioning, analysis, and criticism that take place in the present. In other words, storytellers in these particular rhetorical contexts are more concerned with creating a compelling "problem space" that they wish to tackle. In so doing, they often approach the narrative reflectively and analytically, entailing the delivery of an account in the present voice. Memories, stories, and anecdotes, when retrieved and reported, are used in service

of the broader reflective and analytical agenda, thus often appearing in tandem with and in preparation for explication and analysis.

Finally, the semiotic design of Patient Voices stories tends to stay simple and straightforward. As I have discussed previously, the institutional context in which these stories are created place a unique set of constraints upon how the meaning potential of digital storytelling can unfold. Most notable among such constraints are the limited physical, mental, literacy, and technological capabilities of participants. As Tony suggests, the ability to create a digital story is an achievement in itself for most participants. This constraint, as it materializes in digital stories, shows through the standard design of title and acknowledgement pages, the use of everyday images to portray individuals in realistic light, more uses of royalty free images of institutions and medical staff, and the relative absence of audio resources and animation effects. When considered especially in relation to CDS stories, which manifest much more elaborate semiotic designs (such as more metaphorical uses of images and frequent uses of visual and animation strategies), Patient Voices stories often demonstrate simpler inter-modal relationships, which corresponds with the limited physical, mental, and literacy capabilities of the storytellers.

When we consider digital storytelling at Patient Voices, we are able to observe genre as simultaneously durable and dynamic. Through the lens of genre, we are able to see the shared thematic, compositional, and semiotic features as the result of the program performing relatively typified social and cultural functions—contracted by sponsoring organizations to promote certain patient activist or healthcare improvement agendas. Over time, these problems have developed, overtime, typified and predictable discursive and material activities as well as discursive and semiotic frames (passing the dragon, anecdote and point) that embody such rhetorical and communicative functions. In another direction, we see genre not as rigid forms, but rather elastic

and generative structures that unfold in response to changing social and cultural realities. In their attempts to solve partially novel rhetorical problems, such as limited mental and physical capacities at Patient Voices, we see the genre affording a wealth and diversity of discursive and social activities that emerge from agglomeration of programs, institutions, designers, participants, practices, artifacts, and technologies.

As durable constructions, digital storytelling does not only "remember" historically developed system of ideological and experiential knowledge, its meaning potential, part of it being its ethos, is also partially reconstructed in the ongoing textual practices of patients and activists who institutional, organizational, and individual intentions, styles, thematic substances, and ways of conceiving personal narratives. For example, the meaning potential of digital storytelling takes on the institutional accent at Patient Voices to give rise to stories of survival, while, at the individual level, allowing Jean to add her individual intentions and circumstances.

Finally, what we see in these accounts is how meaning is constantly re-accented in the process of text production, circulation, and reception. The fact Patient Voices is organized around an altruistic, outwardly directed intention plays a particularly important role in shaping what and how personal stories are constructed and shared. First, the contractual relationship between the sponsoring organization and the program partially dictates the thematic choices available to participants. Second, the fact that these stories are to be shared with targeted audiences superimposes individual creative intentions with institutionally defined rhetorical purposes. Lastly, the social activist agenda carries important implications for the organizational structures. For example, anecdotes are always imagined as subsidiary to a broader activist agenda partially determines how personal stories are used and in what relationship to reflective analysis. When we consider digital storytelling as partially durable and partially dynamic

meaning potential, we come to attend to digital storytelling as constantly reconstructed through historical realization in particular institutional, program, social, and cultural practices of individuals and collectives.

For the broader socio-historical project, I often imagine these locally produced stories as travelers who went to places. Their travelling sometimes follows a designated route as intended by their hosting organizations, such as the pre-mature baby stories who went to the national audit office as a part of the accountability report. While these intended errands may leave an impression or mark, their stay is often temporary.

At other times, these stories may travel to places by pure accident and for unintended but great purposes. For example, the digital story created by Daniel Meadows with the CDS was brought by him to the BBC to initiate the launching of a large-scale media project. This trip taken by the story was a pure accident from the perspective of the CDS, whose intention for these stories had been re-interpreted by the BBC and Capture Wales in alignment with what they wanted such stories to do. We observe a similar accident when a friend brought a Capture Wales story to Pip and Tony's dinner table, which gave the facilitators a new vision to their work. These "travelers" who often roams into unfamiliar territories, may take root and begin to grow. In the case of Pip's vision, the seedling burgeoning from that Capture Wales story has always been growing (changing) as it branches into different directions, reaches into other areas, and interlocks with other constructions.

When considering the three focal programs together, I found these stories of the travelling stories of particular resonance and insight. By following the trail left behind by these travelers, we many uncover an often overlooked but productive contour of genre evolution. In

this line of thinking, these stories become powerful mediating artifacts in a process that is filled

with uncertainties, surprises, and innovations.

CHAPTER VII

DISCUSSION

At the beginning of this dissertation, I posed these questions. What does it mean to consider digital storytelling as a cultural genre? What does it mean to consider digital storytelling as a durable and dynamic meaning potential? My purpose was to explore and bring to the forefront the historically accumulated, often shaded forces that often come to co-construct and co-direct the course of situated discursive activities. In equally important ways, I worked to explore the ways in which the dynamic intersections between the social and the individual unfold in complex ways to create discursive meanings that are simultaneously familiar and novel. My journey with the Center for Digital Storytelling, Capture Wales, Patient Voices, and Creative Narrations throughout this dissertation has offered a glimpse into some of the nuanced and complex forms and meanings a digital phenomenon has taken on in its short history. This glimpse has challenged some of my initial thoughts and assumptions about how digital storytelling has been invoked across virtual, geographical, and institutional contexts.

Thus, in this concluding chapter, I share some of the ways in which my ideas and understandings about digital storytelling as a cultural genre have evolved over the course of this study. I then consider the implications that the story of this dissertation has for classroom pedagogy, writing research, and future research, followed by my own reflections and critiques of this dissertation. I conclude by offering a vision for a socio-historical framework as a promising way of examining new literacy practices and digital phenomena.

The Durable and Dynamic Digital Storytelling

In this dissertation, I am able to construct a narrative of how a cultural genre has evolved and developed at institutional and program levels. Through the lens of three interweavingly connected focal programs, I trace the ways in which the cultural genre has evolved and transformed as the result of its invocation in different social, cultural, and institutional circumstances. The ethnographic data, on the other hand, has allowed me to observe how genre change always takes place within the framework of inherited meaning potential and locally constructed creative palaces. The research questions that guided this dissertation allowed me to explore ways in which new practices always bear upon and draw from skills, structures, and texts that are familiar.

What does it mean to consider digital storytelling as a cultural genre? In this regard, I have explored the various degrees of typicality when it comes to describing the genre features of digital storytelling at the program level. In attending to recurrent thematic, compositional, semiotic, and temporal features, we are able to observe the influence of the collective, both the socio-historically accumulated and locally constructed, on the individual. That is, when multiple authors try to tell personal stories in reaction to stabilized intentions, purposes, and goals, the stories often coalesce around a creative palace that defines their nature and shape.

First and foremost, the participants in this study taught me about the multiple ways in which they took up the creative affordances of the social practice to perform literate and cultural identities. This endeavor, however, is not an act of impromptu representation and expression, but is socially and historically constructed. From a genre perspective, the emergent making of identity is mediated through the historically developed genre. As I look through the stories garnered for this dissertation—stories about selves and stories of how such stories came to be, I

see, increasingly clearly, how different versions of the genre as encoding figured worlds (Holland, Skinner, Lachicotte, & Cain, 1998). As digital storytellers go through the structured discursive activities, they entered into, or rather were recruited into a particular set of frames and interpretations of personal experiences. The situated discursive act of telling a personal story encodes a particular ideological frame of understanding what a good personal story is constituted of, what kind of personal experiences are valuable and worth sharing, and what can be gained in the production, circulation, and consumption of such stories. The ideological orientation is the result of institutions, designers, and participants negotiating an inherited meaning potential and contingent pressures and constraints. In that regard, digital storytelling is imagined as cultural tools. It can be a cultural tool that mediates identity work, as in the case of the CDS; it can be a cultural tool that shifts existing relationships with media; it can be a cultural tool that builds social asset and promotes social activism, as in the case of Creative Narrations and Patient Voices. To that end, personal stories, when read in light of institutional contexts, are vehicles of carrying the messages of the institution and an important tool for maintaining coherence across individuals, workshops, and themes.

What we observe across the distinct programs are also interlinked discursive, practical, and material structures each program partially inherited and partially invented to orient participants to the sharing of an experience or a person in culturally appropriate and socially expected ways. Such historically developed structures give rise to typified textual forms, such as the emphasis on transformative moments and complex multimodal relationships at the CDS, a simplistic approach to mundane experiences at Capture Wales, or the point-anecdote format at Creative Narrations and Patient Voices. As such learned structures are cycled and recycled

during situated workshops, they articulate and direct a concrete framework, against the backdrop of which specific individual stories unfold and emerge.

What does it mean to consider digital storytelling as a durable cultural genre? As I wrangled with this research question throughout this dissertation, I hoped to provide an account of how genre practices mediate the work of programs, projects, and individuals in powerful ways. As stabilized-for-now structures and metaphorical starting places, genre exists to connect the individual with the social, offering productive resources and orienting frameworks that not only supports, but also constrains the storytelling efforts of individuals. By situating these individual cases of digital storytelling within a broader stream of ratified productive activities, we are able to extend the story of how the "powerful participants" of the social practice influence storytelling through physical arrangements of the productive space, pedagogical moves, circulation of texts and discourses, and ways of arranging persons and social relationship. As parts and parcels of the typified process, such material, practical, and discursive structures work with the human agents to impart a way of seeing, acting, and interacting with stories and storytellers.

What I wish to note here is institutional pressure and ideology do not exert their influence through direct and explicit instruction, but through guided reappropriation. Just like AA members are not told how to tell their stories with alcoholism (Holland, Skinner, et al., 1998), digital storytellers at CDS are not told to organize their stories with reference to moments of change. Instead, participants are oriented towards a particular way of seeing, reading, acting, and thinking entailed in the system of genres and generic activities. First, participants are exposed to the "figured world" of digital storytelling (the CDS version) through exemplary stories, which they had access to through meetings, structured conversations, and brainstorming sessions. These

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stories, encoding the ideology of the figured world, brings to the surface and gives shape to abstract formal features, such as "intentional disruption of linear model of narrative," "storytelling as therapeutic," or "creative approach to multimodality." These principles, often communicated through concrete thematic, compositional, and semiotic moves, enter into stories as general guidelines for describing expectations. Through such conversations, participants also learn to review slices of their personal experiences as evidence of transformation and to supply interpretations encouraged and sanctioned by the CDS. In addition to learning from stories, participants also begin to craft their stories through social interactions with peers and facilitators. For example, the story circle, often commented upon as an occasion to form communities, is an occasion for public sharing and forging social relationships. During this cooperated effort, experienced storytellers, such as facilitators scaffold neophyte's efforts by latching onto and inquiring into relevant themes, redirecting analysis, pushing back on inappropriate choices, and supplying alternative interpretations.

A telling example of this can be seen in Capture Wales' workshops, when facilitators steered storytellers away from copyrighted materials and emotionally challenging thematic choices. Just as the telling of an AA story requires an alcoholic learns to tell and understand his life as an alcoholic, the telling of a digital story at Creative Narrations requires that a storyteller reads his life events as evidence of social injustice and storytelling as a vehicle by which personal experiences can be transformed into something useful. In so doing, digital storytelling offers much more than an opportunity to tell a story, but is rather a process through which participants find alliance between oneself and the ideological and experiential knowledge of the social practice

What does it mean to consider digital storytelling as a dynamic cultural genre? As I traced the short history of digital storytelling and traveled the temporal, spatial, and virtual spaces, I came to realize the creative possibilities that digital media provides are as powerful as the those afforded by reading books, writing papers, watching movies, listening to radio programs, and other communicative activities. The theme of dynamism, although amply explicated at the program level, has not received enough attention at the individual level. That is, this dissertation has allowed me to tell a compelling story of how projects innovate with the productive resources they inherited as the result of entering into the social practice, it has not allowed me to capture the creative potential of the individuals.

When provided access to a highly functional model with which to design stories around issues important to them and people they work with, facilitators of digital storytelling were constantly finding their way through a web of constraints, expectations, and needs brought to the table through a convergence of historical trajectories of the social practice, institutions, programs, and individuals. In Joe Lambert's words, digital storytelling is "an intention, not a method." It is the discursive intention, which is essentially reflective, multimodal, and social, that defines digital storytelling. The methods and processes of achieving such a goal, as I discussed throughout this dissertation, are loosely structured around the classic CDS model, which, while remaining largely steady in its form, has been modified, reconfigured, and injected with new intentions and meanings. For instance, when digital storytelling is used to help victims of abuse to tell emotionally challenging stories at *Silence Speaks*, the workshops are often extended to four long days, with the first day entirely invested in creating a comfortable space for the launching of difficult stories. Jane, who offered digital storytelling as an extracurricular activity in a University in southeast China, not only restructured the workshop into six

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consecutive morning classes on Fridays to accommodate the needs of university students, but built a more collaborative learning space that allowed her to draw on the strengths of local faculty members and students to resolve a range of linguistic, technological, and cultural issues arising from a different contexts of teaching and learning. I also learned from Tony and Pip how the team needs to be "very adaptive and quite agile" in working with patients with varying levels of capabilities as well as disabilities, which call on constant shift across different methodologies, teaching styles, models, and tools. Viewed this way, the cultural genre exists in dialogic relationship to the socio-historical aggregates of the social practice and is constantly reconfigured in light of the personal and interpersonal forces that are all vividly present at the site of situated discursive activities. The story of digital storytelling is a story of adaptation and dynamism.

The facilitators also mentioned that they constantly adjusted mundane aspects of their workshops in response to changing needs and goals of any given group of participants. This was most tellingly exemplified through the purposeful selection of stories during the orientation screening sessions. All facilitators have commented on the fact that they customize the selection of stories for the purpose of better framing practice in connection to participants' backgrounds and purposes. While ensuring a diversity of stories are shown to appeal to a wider range of interests, motivations, and approaches to the type of storytelling desired within each program, the facilitators also customize the selection of such stories to specific needs and motivations of participants.

As I have discussed throughout this dissertation, a driving force behind this story of adaptation often involves the facilitators, who constantly draw on the myriad literacy experiences, skills, and knowledge they have built in other spaces to give meaning, structures

and motivations to their work and to reappropriate it to meet particular institutional and program needs. This was exemplified by Dan's use of other popular cultural genres, such as comedy show, to explicate digital storytelling's unique orientation towards emotional content. By critically comparing the CDS digital storytelling processes to that of a comedy show, Dan was able to attribute the typically "heavy" and "emotional" aspects of the CDS stories to the unique affordance of the process, which strips away a wider range of emotions, most notably humor, that are otherwise lively present in a live comedy show. In similar ways, most facilitators I interviewed have commented on how they constantly draws on their experiences as consumers of other texts, genres and literacies, such as popular radio programs (Dan discusses *Story Corps*, Tanna discusses *This American Life*), books (Pip's use of *Spider*), and practice (Joe's *yoga* metaphor) to further inform, complicate and convey their reappropriated conceptions of digital storytelling.

In important ways, facilitators also draw on skills and expertise built through previous professional and academic experiences to deal with contingent pedagogical issues embedded in digital storytelling workshops. Dan' and Pip's counseling background brings them a set of attitudes and tools useful in supporting the telling of emotionally difficult and deeply private stories. In a context where many participants struggle with stories that they had not shared or were still in process, this background in counseling enables these facilitators to gauge the issues quickly and develop strategies to help participants deal with emotional content. In another capacity, Kay and Cathy, who were both trained and practiced as English teachers, suggest that their experiences enable them to understand the rhetoric and properties between the different genres of writing people invoke for various purposes. When these accounts are considered together, they allow me to observe how the "ontogenetic" trajectories of individual facilitators

bring a wealth of skills, mindsets and attitudes to the table, compelling facilitators to formulate

theories of how the learning and teaching of digital storytelling are structured.

As my analysis of the four programs has shown, the loosely structured model of digital

storytelling affords for new ways of carrying out the social practice in local contexts. In addition

to changing as the result of the recurrent activities being reconfigured in variant activity settings,

digital storytelling is also constantly reconstructed through the processes of social negotiation

and interpretation by real actors working within institutional settings and through situated

activities. In other words, situated activities of digital storytelling are laminated by a "confluence

of phylogenetic, cultural-historical, mesogenetic, ontogenetic, and microgenetic trajectories that

weave together people, practices, artifacts, and institutions" (Prior 1998, p. 138). The social

practice brings to the situated act a range of ideological, aesthetic, and social conceptions of what

digital storytelling is. However, this socially and historically acquired ethos is constantly

reconfigured in light of contingent rhetorical, social, and institutional goals. Additionally,

facilitators, aside from embodying the durable forces, also inject situated activities of digital

storytelling with conceptions, experiences, attitudes, and skills acquired through one's socio-

historical trajectory as a literate individual. Finally, each digital storytelling re-accent the creative

task with unique rhetorical intentions and experiences and expertise, which orient them towards

particular ways of orchestrating multimodal resources. As such, the production of each digital

story is under the influence of various socio-historically accumulated forces and intentions.

When we view digital storytelling as a meaning potential, we begin to see how it is

constantly re-accented and reconfigured in the socio-historical realization of it in concrete social

and cultural activities of individual and organizations. As a social lever that connects individual

micro-acts and social macro-structures (Bazermen, 1997), the system of interlinked genres and

typified social and discursive activities not only articulates the social systems and defines the discursive field of digital storytelling, but also stays alive through local invocations and performances that advance individual interests and realize contingent social, discursive meanings. That is, the classic model of digital storytelling, which gives shape and grant meaning to the work of individual facilitators, is constantly stretched, adapted, and reconfigured in response to the needs of the institutional contexts, facilitator's intentions and interpretations, and individual authors' creative intentions.

Implications for the Field

I was recently questioned by a writing program director with regard to the uses of multimodal composition in undergraduate writing classrooms. Implicit and explicit in her questioning is a deep skepticism towards the digital genealogy stories my students created as a legitimate form of composition that can compete with, say, a literacy narrative essay. To her and many of my colleagues at this public state university, multimodal composition "takes away" valuable class time that could be used redress more "important" issues in their writing; computer-mediated writing can be easily brushed off as cheap tricks to gain student interests; digital texts, when they are read and assessed, are often not seated comfortably within the existing rubrics, standards, and requirements developed around genres of writing maintained in print-based environments of teaching and learning.

As I thought through the implications of my dissertation for classroom pedagogy and future research, I found myself continually coming back to this conversation. More importantly, I found myself thinking about this conversation in relation to other conversations I had with digital storytellers and facilitators, which sometimes gave me ideas that I am sure will strike a chord

with my colleagues, while at other times presenting problematic incoherence and contradictions. In what follows, I offer discussions of how my research can open up opportunities for addressing the problematic bifurcation between forms of literacy learning privileged in schools and the diverse contours and routes of learning that takes place in contexts beyond the classroom walls.

An important implication suggested by this dissertation is the study of writing curricula and pedagogy in after-school educational contexts. By broadening the scope of writing research to explore the teaching and learning of multimodal composition in non-traditional educational contexts, we encounter compelling cases and stories of how people of varying aptitudes and experiences learn to do important and meaningful literacy work. As my analysis has suggested, the participants at the four programs arrive at a given workshop with a very wide range of interests and skills. It is therefore important for the designers to bend and stretch the classic model to create appropriate literacy and creative tasks for their participants. This is no easy task. In documenting and analyzing these moments of adaptation, reconfiguration, and innovation, we might enter into the unpredictable dynamics of pedagogical design that is necessary in increasingly diverse classrooms.

This area of research is particularly fertile, necessary, and promising also because it gives a realistic and compelling account of how literacy practices, when we allow them to go beyond writing classrooms, do serve social, rhetorical, cultural, and institutional aims. A multi-sited perspective on the social practices gives writing teachers concrete ways to re-imagine the kind of composition work we ask our students to do. As suggested in this dissertation, digital storytelling can be used to preserve cultural histories, enact social change, perform identity work, and explore the scope of creativity as enabled by multimodality. Digital storytelling, which aims for authenticity and social engagement, requires authors to compose for specific purposes and listen

for and incorporate audience reactions, all of which are skills valued in schools. This recursive contour of composition, which involves constant re-invention and revision, experimentation with alternative approaches to arrangements, and constant re-positioning of the author in relation and in response to audience, enables authentic and situated literacy tasks that are develop important attitudes, habits, and approaches towards meaning-making by and large.

At the backdrop of my thinking and research is also a concern for creating venues through which teachers and students can learn to recognize, understand, and use skills, expertise, and experiences they bring into the classroom from other temporal-spatial moments situated in various socio-historical trajectories. As the stories from this dissertation illustrate, our conceptions of digital storytelling are shaped by our own literacies and the literacies of others. Memories of our experiences with reading a book, watching a movie, attending comedy shows, listening to a radio show, missing the perfect timing for delivering a punch line, hearing a story from grandma, or writing a story for a class, are scattered in different times and places that reach beyond the confines of the present and far into our past. However, they often converge in the present to give us tools, strategies and inspirations as well as fears and reservations when doing literacy work. Thus, literacy educators are challenged to consider their practices and the practices of their students as productive meshing-together of multiple contours of learning. In that direction, I argue that we must move away from the restrictive, singular focus on the present literacy moment that is designed for the sole task of completing an assignment, to spaces in which teachers and youth draw on their facility with literacy, media, and technology to perform literacies and to design texts that are important and meaningful to their lives and communities.

From the standpoint of writing teachers, it is worthy of our time to consider how familiar literacies and genres can travel to help us make sense of and reconfigure a multimodal

composition task for local pedagogical purposes. As Jane and Tanna recycled the Ira Glass'

model of storytelling into their conceptions of what constitute good storytelling, which was in

turn worked into the 60-page curriculum they distribute, conversations with participants around

exemplary stories, and nudges and pushes they gave during story circles, parts and parcels taken

from another Discourse are fused into an existing model, which bring its own ethos, processes,

and ideologies, to drive the participants' discursive work towards a desired outcomes. This

socio-historical perspective not only recognizes and legitimates the complex ways in which

teachers and youth access, consume, and produce texts, but requires that we become cognizant of

the critical ways in which the logics, ethos, and aesthetics of other genres, media, and social

practices get remediated through a coalescence of texts and activities.

Further, my research has pointed towards productive areas of investigation with regard to

the concrete ways in which writing instruction and digital practices can support or interfere each

other. First, various aspects of digital storytelling can be highlighted to illustrate and model

principles of good composition. The unique ethos of digital storytelling, which validates and

builds on the first person perspective, can help build a social space that allows students to

explore the appeal of their own voices and experiences. For students entering the university,

many of whom are led to believe that the first person is not compatible with the academic

discourse expected in their writing, digital storytelling can be a powerful venue through which

such misconceptions can be complicated and examined. In promoting a unique aesthetic and

creative approach to storytelling, which good digital storytellers achieve through the use of vivid

sensory details, dynamic dialogues, compelling characterizations, and unexpected twists and

turns, digital storytelling can illustrate the concrete ways in which great details can work in the

benefits of one's writing. With its emphasis on discovering a unique insight behind a particular

experience and delivery of the insight within the very limited compositional space, structured discussion and conversation around digital storytelling can serve to move students away from linear structures of narrative and towards reflective analysis of the insights or the meaning behind a particular event.

Underlying such pedagogical suggestions is an observation that is often contrary to popular beliefs. Based within an understanding of the creative ways in which authors in this study play with modes, narrative structure, and approaches to storytelling, I have come to realize a rather uncanny coherence between the principles used to describe and assess good writing and digital storytelling. Indeed, revealed in many facilitators' conception of good digital storytelling are core qualities that writing instructors value and emphasize. For example, Tony defines a good story as effective, affective, and reflective, with each quality coherently echoing a writing teacher's emphasis on logical appeal (logical progression of ideas organized in concise and to-the-point language), the emotional appeal (emotional content that engages the audience), and that it creates a rhetorical space that centers around productive reflections on critical issues. In the same way, CDS' conception of good narratives is built around an emphasis on the affordances of different modes in projecting vivid details, creative experimentation of narrative structures and approaches, an authentic representation of an original insight, and the emotional connection with the audience. Thus, by making a space for such discussions can facilitate students' facility to both process and produce texts that convey complex meaning, critical insights and emotional appeal through creative and logical orchestration of ideas, modes and structures.

Recognizing the potential ways in which digital storytelling and writing instruction can cross-fertilize, however, I have also observed how attitudes, skills, and mindsets developed in academic environments can interfere with the teaching and learning of digital storytelling and

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vise versa. Kay, for example, points to the fact that the expository voice" one develops through years of training and practice in writing in academic genres, might interfere with the telling of interesting and engaging digital stories. The expository voice, which is marked by the logical progression of ideas, constant forecasting, and reflective pronouncements appropriate for scholarly writing, is incoherent with the desired outcome of a good digital story, which emphasizes upon the orchestration of a moment that implicitly conveys reflective insights. More research is needed to reveal the complex and subtle ways in which authors negotiate the affordances, constraints and expectations embedded in different genres and modes through which composition take place. However, my dissertation has made clear that literacy researchers and educators become more cognizant of such differences.

A final implication of my research for writing pedagogy concerns the potential of digital storytelling as a means of empowerment and social change. The stories and accounts studied for this dissertation show how the production, dissemination, and consumption of digital stories can help to construct an authentic space for composition that allows people in the community in the sharing of their own realities and truth as well as the struggles and injustice they combat everyday. By legitimating students' stories and giving them tools and strategies to publish and disseminate stories around topics important to their communities, teachers may allow for a productive shift in students' relationship with literacy and media. As many of facilitators has commented, the telling of personal stories is the starting place for engaging students in productive identity play, in critical conversations around the power and injustice, and in projecting plans for positive individual and social change. As I have discussed throughout this dissertation, I observed multiple ways in which digital storytelling, when considered together,

can be valuable social assets that better the welfare of individuals, communities, and society at large.

Future Directions for Research

A Genre-informed study

      The obvious next step to take with the genre-informed, socio-historical analysis I have developed is to use the methodology to study situated, ongoing discursive activities. My analysis of the four focal programs suggests that a genre-informed framework yield useful insights, frames, and questions about how to proceed with ethnographic studies of the teaching and learning of digital storytelling in various institutional contexts. The real proof of the facility of such tools, however, can only be tested when they are used to direct the collection and analysis of ethnographic data.

      In Chapter 4 5 and 6, I have described the broad steps I have taken in performing a retrospective genre analysis of the processes and products of digital storytelling. Here I will give an account of what I consider to be an ideal model of the proposed methodology. It assumes a site that is open to piloting research, elongated participant observation, and recursive procedures taken to verify emergent understandings. This description therefore presumes an organization and participants that are open to participatory research: the methodology asks participants to contribute their time, thoughts, and emotions in multiple interviews, including focused group interviews, and requires that they are willing to share and analyze deeply intimate aspects of their personal experiences.

      The first step in a genre-informed study of digital storytelling is to investigate, through interviews, the various degrees of knowledge, skills, and experiences participants profess in relation to print-based, media, technological, and other (e.g. artistic) literacies as well as their professed knowledge of digital storytelling as a cultural practice. An initial mapping of these projected expertise and knowledge is important because it gives the researcher baseline data that

can be tracked along discrete types and levels of expertise as they are located in different socio-historical trajectories. Along the same lines, interviews can be conducted with facilitators to generate an initial understanding of the processes as well as visions and values attached to this line of work in local, institutional contexts. Cultural genres are dynamic constitutions that fulfill various social, institutional, and individual functions. I would, to this end, advocate that the researchers' initial interview protocol include questions that tag into the following dimensions: personal beliefs and experiences of what a digital storytelling workshop achieves, institutional pressures that manifest through concrete goals for how such stories are used and for what purposes, ideological values assigned to the processes and products, as well as facilitator's knowledge of the socio-historical trajectory of the social practice. These discrete categories help the researcher get at the social and ideological formations as well as the discursive, practical, and material structures that embody the productive conditions, social histories, and ideological formations.

The second step is to collect ethnographic data of a workshop, through which the researcher works toward a situated account of the process, while attending to the specific ways in which a system of genres and generic structures indexes ideological and social formations and mediates ongoing discursive activities. In so doing, I suggest that the researcher pay particular attention to identifying particular pedagogical moves, including curriculum materials distributed, structured ways of initiating and framing individual and group activities, as well as ways of introducing, analyzing, and responding to digital stories.

Built into the second phase should also be recursively organized, semi-structured interviews which helps the researcher to get at the productive processes of individual digital storytellers. To perform a genre-informed analysis, it is important to recognize that individual,

situated creative intentions are constantly negotiated with the social, ideological, and institutional forces. Therefore, it is important that the researcher pays close attention to how individual storytelling process internalizes and embodies the Discourse of digital storytelling the one hand and draws on frames and tools authors developed through their literacy past on the other hand.

The final phase of the research begins with discourse-based interview (Odell, Goswami, & Herrington, 1983) with digital storytellers to verify emerging understandings of the productive processes of each digital storyteller as a site of both durability and dynamism. To conclude the research, a researcher could also conduct a focused group interview with the participants. At this group meeting, the task is to discuss the inventory of ideological, social, and institutional values in the context of a collection of digital stories. That is, the researcher draws on the collective experience of the group to arrive at a multi-perspectived understanding of how macro-level structures mediate individuals' discursive work through specific thematic, rhetorical, compositional, and semiotic moves.

It is difficult to project the entire arc of this proposed methodology past this point. Ideally, though, the process of repeating the methodology across multiple workshops, and investigating the discrepancies across would yield valuable insights into simultaneously durable and dynamic nature of situated and mediated discursive activities. Additionally, continuous testing of analytical frames and categories should bring the researcher to a more grounded inventory of analytical tools.

Future research questions

Building on emerging areas of research interests that I was not able to investigate given the scope of my research, I have identified the following research questions:

1. How has the typology of digital stories emerged and changed over time within and across sites?

2. Can the genre-informed analytical framework be usefully applied to studying other new literacy practices?

3. How do digital authors cycle and recycle existing expertise, knowledge, and skills with other cultural and literacy practices in the making of digital stories?

4. In what ways do knowledge and skills in traditional literacy practices benefit or interfere with one's making of digital stories and vice versa?

5. What are the implications of a genre-theory informed discourse analytic framework in developing tools for assessing multimodal composition?

In addressing the first question, I am imagining ways to expand the socio-historical scope the present research to map and mark the cultural landscape of the digital phenomenon. A particularly intriguing question concerns if and how stabilized sub-genres of digital stories have emerged in light of and inspite of institutional goals and pressures. As my review of literature and research show, a wide range of digital and literacy practices fall under the definition of digital storytelling. Within the exclusive and interlinked web of socially influential nodes that enjoy a significant degree of shared alignment and purpose, the forms and practices still unfold in innovative and divergent ways. Therefore, an emergent understanding of the typology of sub-genres can lend great analytical insight to understanding the durability and dynamism of the social practice. In equally significant ways, studies that reveal how the cultural genre, including a typology of sub-genres associated with it, changes over time can shed important light on the cultural phenomenon.

In pursuing the second question, I am interested in further exploring the theoretical and methodological facilities of genre theory in mapping other new literacy practices. In comparison to other forms of new literacy practices, such as online memes, fanfiction writings, and amateur digital content production on social media sites, digital storytelling has a relatively well-defined and easily traceable social historical trajectory of development. Important methodological issues arise when we adapt the methodology to study online memes, which are not attached to any tangible site of production but rather follow a massive participatory and impromptu model of collaborative production that cannot be easily mapped onto a trajectory or identifiable individuals. Such questions may include where do we find evidence of a socio-historical trajectory of development and how do we capture it? How do we collect accounts from insiders of the community of practice to garner insights on how some of the discursive, structural, and practical structures have developed? When no explicit instruction can be observed, how do teaching and learning happen? And most importantly, how do temporally and geographically dispersed individuals, who do not have immediate contact with each other, recognize and develop, shared ideological, aesthetic, and social values attached to their work? While the programs for this study present tangible points of entry for research, I am tempted to think that a general framework of analysis might point a researcher to productive ways of analyzing online literacies.

In addressing the other three questions, I am concerned with the pedagogical implications of the methodology I propose. That is, how does a socio-historical approach facilitate emerging understandings of areas of connection as well as disruption between myriad literacy practices youth navigate on a daily basis? Central to my concern here is to challenge the established bifurcation that separates the informal and formal, the print and multimodal, and schooled and

indigenous forms of literacies. As my research has suggested, there are equally important opportunities for cross-fertilization and mutual support in composition across modes, media, and genres than what the research community has begun to understand.

Many who have created digital stories have agreed that the processes afforded the rare opportunity to make sense of unexpected or even forgotten stories. This project has given me an opportunity to uncover and make sense of many behind-the-scenes stories that are equally telling of the durability and dynamism of the social practice. While I moved into this project, I maintained a critical stance towards the celebratory stance that has largely lauded the democratic, expressive, and pedagogical potential of the practice. As my own investigation unfolds through accounts, stories, and conversations, four distinct but intricately connected stories emerged. These stories of cycling and recycling a cultural model in fulfillment of individual and organizational goals, when considered together, helped me to build a meta-narrative of how the effects of digital storytelling are always shaped and informed by cultural, social, political, and institutional contexts. As such, digital storytelling is indeed a convenient fiction that allows us to read this particular category of texts in terms of pragmatic and rhetorical ends they achieve, the productive situations warranting such achievements, and their relationship with intended audiences that can be defined however narrowly or broadly. The cultural genre and the system of generic structures give these individuals, including me, a discursive template for interpretation and production. However, in inhabiting the discursive space of digital storytelling, we not only enact particular forms of being, acting, and speaking entailed in and mandated by the social practice, but also add to an accumulating base of knowledge, experiences, and frames by constantly re-accenting and reconfiguring it for our individual, contingent, and creative intentions and styles.

Appendix A. Recruitment Letter

Dear   ,

I am a doctoral student in Language, Literacy and Culture at the Department of Teaching and Learning, Vanderbilt University, USA. For my dissertation study, I am looking at digital storytelling as a global cultural phenomenon. A big part of this study is to examine how socially influential programs, such as Capture Wales, organize workshops and develop projects to engage everyday individuals in active learning of technology, literacy, and themselves.

I am particularly interested in the reasons behind launching digital storytelling as a large-scale regional program and the social influences of Capture Wales. I am also interested in understanding how different workshops, offered in different times and places, are organized to maintain a sense of coherence and consistency. I am studying this because I feel it is important to understand why digital forms of reading and writing are especially appealing to everyday individuals. More importantly, I want to further understand how they support new expressive and democratic needs.

I'd be really grateful if you would spare a little of your time to tell me about your experiences working with participants in digital storytelling workshops. If you are not familiar with the projects, (since I know digital storytelling program has terminated in 2008), I am wondering if you can help me by pointing me towards people who used to work with this program. If you agree to help, we can make arrangements for me to call you at a convenient time. You could really help me by spending an hour telling me about your experiences. In anything I use from what you say, I will make sure that no clues are given to your identity.

I hope you will help me with this project, sorry to have wasted your time if you are not interested.

Appendix B. Consent Letter

This informed consent document applies designers/facilitators for focal digital storytelling

programs.

Name of participant: _____ Age: _____

The following information is provided to inform you about the research project and your
participation in it. Please read this form carefully and feel free to ask any questions you may
have about this study and the information given below. You will be given an opportunity to ask
questions, and your questions will be answered. Also, you will be given a copy of this consent
form.

Dear   ,

I (Xiqiao Wang) am a predoctoral fellow of language, literacy, and culture at Vanderbilt
University. For my dissertation research, I am examining several notable digitals storytelling
programs around the world. I have chosen to study your program because it has been very active
in the past ten years and has s big influence in the field. I am also studying four other programs
that are similar to yours. These programs are: *Center for Digital Storytelling, Capture Wales,
Australian Center for Moving Images' program on digital storytelling, Patient Voices,* and
Stories for Change. An important part of my research is to get the perspectives of people who are
familiar with the work of these programs. I would like to invite you to take part in this research.

The purpose of the study is to learn more about the ways in which digital storytelling has been
implemented to meet different social and communicative goals. I want to learn more about the
goals and values of your program as well as the daily activities and routines of the digital
storytelling workshops you help to design and facilitate. Also, I want to know more about the
types of stories that people have created with your help over the years. With this knowledge, I
hope to learn more about how we can better support the use of digital media in literacy
classrooms. This letter describes what I will do in the research and asks you to give permission
for your interview data to be used.

I would like to invite you to participate in an interview to talk about your work. This interview
will take place in one sitting, lasting for about and hour. In this interview, I will ask you to
describe the general practice of the program and the structure of the digital storytelling workshop
you help to design and facilitate. It will take place at a mutually convenient time and through a
medium you feel comfortable with. I can email you the questions, call you at a number you
provide, or join you in a Skype video-conference. I am asking for your permission to record your
interview in a way that is appropriate to the medium. For example, I will audiotape the interview
if it takes place through a phone call. I will save our email exchanges if you opt to answer my

questions in an email. Here are examples of possible questions you may be asked:
- What experiences have you brought you to digital storytelling?
- Describe to me what digital storytelling is?
- Can you nominate several digital stories that are the most memorable to you?
- What constitutes a good (bad) digital story?
- What activities, tools, artifacts, texts, and norms do you often and why?
- How variant are your workshops in relation to each other, in relation to other's offerings you know of?

None of the information you provide to me will be used in any way to evaluate your work in a particular way. In anything I use from your account, however, I will make sure no clues are given to your identity. First, all research data, including email exchanges, audio recording, transcripts and documents you share with me will either be stored in locked cabinets in my office or on my password protected laptop computers. I will ask you to create a pseudonym for yourself, which is to be used in all reports of this study. Finally, you should know that people from the Vanderbilt University Institutional Review Board and the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Human Research Protections can see these data if they need to check on the way I did the research.

Future audiences of this research may include researchers, literacy teachers, and others who are concerned with the use of new media in literacy education. Because my data will be shared publicly, there is some risk of you being identified. However, I will take every precaution to protect our anonymity when I present my findings.

You may benefit from participating in this research activity in that it may increase your awareness of important aspects of your practice in relation to a larger network of programs and individuals and may lead to improved practice and esteem in your profession.

I would be very grateful if you could spare a little of your time to tell me about your experiences. By sharing your knowledge with me, you can help me finish my dissertation and help literacy educators to learn more about new literacies. Your participation is entirely voluntary and I will not provide any payment for your participation. If you decide to participate in the study and then at a later date decide to withdraw from the study, you can do so. Furthermore, if at any time in the study you wish to withdraw your permission for any specific piece of information collected, your request will be honored.

If you are willing to participate, please sign this consent form prior to our interview. Please keep a copy of the consent form for your records. If you have any questions, please contact Xiqiao Wang at (01) xxx-xxx-xxxx or at my email. If you have additional questions regarding this research or about giving consent to participate in the research, please call the Vanderbilt Institutional Review Board at xxx-xxxx or toll free at (xxx) xxx-xxxxx.

Appendix C. Interview Protocol

Project: Digital Storytelling as a Cultural Genre
Time of Interview: Interviewer:
Date: Interviewee:
Place: Position of Interviewee:

Questions:

Background
   1. Describe your background in relation to digital storytelling. (What experiences do you
       with regards to digital media and storytelling?)
   2. How long have you been working with the program? (How did you come to work here?
       What's your role? Have your roles changed?)
   3. What kind of training did you receive when you started to facilitate workshops? Ongoing
       training?
   4. What are your beliefs about good teaching? What experiences have shaped such beliefs?
       How are these applied in your workshops?
Social and ideological meanings of digital storytelling
   1. Describe to me what digital storytelling is.
   2. In what ways does digital storytelling affect the authors and their relationships with
       intended audience? (skills, experiences, identities, and relationships?)
   3. In what ways does digital storytelling affect communities, and society at large? (social
       issues and social structures?)
   4. What constitutes a good digital story? What properties does a good digital story typically
       manifest? How are decisions made with regards to which digital stories are featured on
       the program's website?
   5. What constitutes a bad digital story? What properties does a bad digital story manifest?
   6. In what ways is digital storytelling different from more traditional forms of storytelling?
   7. How does the integration of digital media and technology contribute the distinctive
       potential of digital storytelling? How does the integration of digital media and technology
       bring new challenges for production and instruction?
Generic Structures
Activities
   1. Walk me through a typical three-day workshop (activities, sequence of activities).
   2. What did your first workshop look like? How has the structure of your workshop changed
       over the years?
   3. What are some of the routine you adhere to across workshops?
   4. What changes/adjustments have you made to your workshop? Have you done things
       differently each time you have offered it?
Technology and Tools
   5. What technology and digital tools are made available to participants?

6. What knowledge and expertise (technology and media) are expected of participants prior to attending the workshop?
7. What activities are designed to facilitate the learning of technology and new media?

Texts
8. Are there texts (readings, videos, digital stories) you often use? How are they used? In which activities? For what purposes?
9. Are ongoing drafts, scripts, and digital stories participants create used? How are they used? For what purposes?

Artifacts
10. Are there artifacts (forms, worksheets, storyboards) that you often use? How are they used? In which activities? For what purposes?
11. When did you begin to use a certain artifact? Where did it come from? How have you changed it? What recurrent pedagogical program does it help you address?

People
12. Who are the participants? What are their purposes for enrolling in the workshop? In what ways do you adjust your workshop to suit participants' expectations?
13. What is the nature of the relationship between you and the participants and among participants?
14. Have you received feedbacks and assistance from other facilitators? Have you offered feedbacks and assistance?

Sub-genres
1. What are the most common types of stories that people often tell?
2. How do you characterize digital stories? What properties do you attend to in determining this is a story of a certain type?
3. Do you assess and provide feedback to a digital story based on what you know about this particular type of stories? In what ways does your knowledge of the type help you in assessment?
4. What are the reasons why digital stories often come down to these categories?

	Story	Nominator	Program	URL
1	A dog's life	Cathy	Capture Wales	http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/audiovideo/sites/yourvideo/pages/allan_jeffreys_01.shtml
2	A little misunderstanding	Gary	Capture Wales	http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/audiovideo/sites/yourvideo/pages/paddy_mcnally_01.shtml
3	A night at the dog and duck	Cathy	Capture Wales	http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/audiovideo/sites/yourvideo/pages/rhiannon_morgan_01.shtml
4	A quest for understanding	Cathy	Capture Wales	http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/audiovideo/sites/yourvideo/pages/richard_pugh_01.shtml
5	Castle on a cloud	Cathy, Gary	Capture Wales	http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/audiovideo/sites/yourvideo/pages/gaynor_clifford_01.shtml
6	Elvis died in my bedroom	Cathy	Capture Wales	http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/audiovideo/sites/yourvideo/pages/paul_cabuts_01.shtml
7	Just in time	Cathy	Capture Wales	http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/audiovideo/sites/yourvideo/pages/tony_Janekins_01.shtml
8	Memories written on my face	Cathy	Capture Wales	http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/audiovideo/sites/yourvideo/pages/giorgia_carpagnano_01.shtml
9	Most honorable thing	Gary	Capture Wales	http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/audiovideo/sites/yourvideo/pages/kaifeng_peng_01.shtml
10	My picture	Gary	Capture Wales	http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/audiovideo/sites/yourvideo/pages/samiya_s_01.shtml
11	My streets	Gary	Capture Wales	http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/audiovideo/sites/yourvideo/pages/malachy_odonnell_01.shtml
12	Pink Laydee	Cathy	Capture Wales	http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/audiovideo/sites/yourvideo/pages/jessica_jones_01.shtml
13	Pinky, baby, and me	Cathy	Capture Wales	http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/audiovideo/sites/yourvideo/pages/anita_badha

				n_01.shtml
14	Something on my heart	Cathy	Capture Wales	http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/audiovideo/sites/yourvideo/pages/doris_cole_01.shtml
15	The lost valleys	Gary	Capture Wales	http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/audiovideo/sites/yourvideo/pages/betty_davies_01.shtml
16	There is nothing more frightening than active ignorance	Gary	Capture Wales	http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/audiovideo/sites/yourvideo/pages/paula_symon_01.shtml
17	Two Families	Cathy, Gary	Capture Wales	http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/audiovideo/sites/yourvideo/pages/dai_evans_01.shtml
18	Two stubborn girls	Gary	Capture Wales	http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/audiovideo/sites/yourvideo/pages/qin_xin_01.shtml
19	Walking with Maurice	Gary	Capture Wales	http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/audiovideo/sites/yourvideo/pages/hanne_jones_01.shtml
20	Winter green	Gary	Capture Wales	http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/audiovideo/sites/yourvideo/pages/amy_broadstock_01.shtml
21	A note to self	Kay	CDS	http://loveyourbody.nowfoundation.org/letstalk/videos.html
22	A seed of never seen hope	Kay	CDS	http://www.vimeo.com/12541154
23	Beauty	Dan	CDS	http://youtu.be/9-N-vzziQew
24	Dear Grandma	Dan, Joe	CDS	http://youtu.be/AAVe4Bob3Ys
25	Deep Water	Dan	CDS	http://youtu.be/VeXhmIT2LhM
26	Falsies	Dan, Pip	CDS	http://youtu.be/QuPp1vf9R-Q
27	Grand Canyons	Dan, Joe	CDS	http://youtu.be/lN89P_z_mYw
28	Home Movies	Joe	CDS	http://youtu.be/bKuGpBaWqQk
29	Ironing	Dan	CDS	http://youtu.be/mqfmkjbMAmU
30	Letters	Joe	CDS	Not available anymore
31	New Orleans	Joe	CDS	http://vimeo.com/35933290
32	Nowhere anyhow	Kay, Joe	CDS	http://youtu.be/Snw1HMIz_Oc
33	Pralines	Dan, Kay, Joe	CDS	http://youtu.be/4ChBH_qEWaM
34	Rituals	Joe	CDS	http://vimeo.com/28872013
35	Sacrificios	Dan	CDS	http://youtu.be/QBf9syEsX4A
36	Tanya	Dan, Joe	CDS	http://youtu.be/D0zA9q7qJZc
37	The gift of non-violence	Kay	CDS	http://youtu.be/P_aZtlsoziU
38	Bridge to Health	Jane	Creative Narrations	http://www.creativenarrations.net/node/136

39	Engineering education for the 21st century	Jane	Creative Narrations	http://www.creativenarrations.net/node/137
40	Imagining community	Tanna	Creative Narrations	http://mappingvoices.org/story/video/imagining-community
41	In their own time	Tanna, Jane	Creative Narrations	http://www.creativenarrations.net/node/131
42	It's my story everyday	Tanna	Creative Narrations	http://www.creativenarrations.net/node/126
43	Lean on me	Tanna	Creative Narrations	http://www.creativenarrations.net/node/81
44	One size does not fit all	Jane	Creative Narrations	http://www.creativenarrations.net/node/128
45	Our babies' health	Tanna, Jane	Creative Narrations	http://www.creativenarrations.net/node/62
46	Search Garden project	Tanna	Creative Narrations	http://mappingvoices.org/story/video/sun-earth-rain-community-health-serch-garden-project
47	The dump is doing this to us	Jane	Creative Narrations	http://www.creativenarrations.net/node/156
48	Treat everyone as if they are your mother	Tanna	Creative Narrations	http://mappingvoices.org/story/video/treat-everyone-if-they-were-your-mother
49	What the water gave me	Tanna, Jane	Creative Narrations	http://www.creativenarrations.net/node/16
50	A bright world waiting	Pip	Patient Voices	http://www.patientvoices.org.uk/flv/0073pv384.htm
59	A world of difference	Tony	Patient Voices	http://www.patientvoices.org.uk/flv/0040pv384.htm
51	For the love of Lee	Pip	Patient Voices	http://www.patientvoices.org.uk/flv/0054pv384.htm
52	Getting to the bottom of things	Pip	Patient Voices	http://www.patientvoices.org.uk/flv/0110pv384.htm
53	Go around	Pip, Tony	Patient Voices	http://www.patientvoices.org.uk/flv/0369pv384.htm
54	Jimmy's Story	Pip	Patient Voices	http://www.patientvoices.org.uk/flv/0047pv384.htm
55	Knitting	Tony	Patient Voices	http://www.patientvoices.org.uk/flv/0121pv384.htm
56	Only connect-a life told in stories	Pip	Patient Voices	http://www.patientvoices.org.uk/flv/0132pv384.htm
57	See me now	Pip	Patient Voices	http://www.patientvoices.org.uk/flv/0112pv384.htm
58	Yeah, I'll go	Pip	Patient Voices	www.patientvoices.org.uk/lssc.htm

Appendix E. Typology of Digital Stories

Genre	Stories	Thematic Content	Rhetorical Purpose	Compositional Features	Semiotic Features	Ideological Values
Social injustice						
	Treat everyone like it was your mother (Creative Narrations) What the water gave me (Creative Narrations) The dump is doing this to us (Creative Narrations) One size does not fit all (Creative Narrations) In their own time (Creative Narrations) Garden Project (Creative Narrations) Our babies' health (Creative Narrations) Lean on me (Creative Narrations) There is nothing more frightening than active ignorance (Capture Wales) Sacrificio (CDS)	The story identifies and examines injustice in the existing system, which can be in the form of a environmental injustice, an inequitable policy, a current approach that does not serve the welfare of the community the author is a part of. The author draws on one or more personal experiences of how one had suffered as the result of injustice, such as one or one's family contracting disease due to water pollution, or one's school was destroyed as the result of an educational policy, or a government not listening to its people's voices in stopping a war.	Help people recognize social injustice in the system; Explicit and implicit plea or call for change at different levels—individual stereotypes, perceptions, and bad habits, an approach and policy to doing things; Express anger and frustration at lack of action or intentional harm; ends with an optimistic outlook on projections of future.	Pronounced juxtaposition of two contradicting perspectives—we versus they. "They" are often individuals or agencies in power, under whose charge the social injustice materializes. "We" are often member's in one's own community whose welfare and efforts for positive change are often impeded by "They." Personal stories are used as evidence for the impact of social injustice; as means to enact emotional appeal; as the basis and rationale for change.	"They" in the stories are often invisible—no intentional efforts are made to use narrative or images to pinpoint the single individuals. Extensive use of personal images of individuals at work to accomplish their goals; Images other than the personal are more often used, such as maps, quotes and data from research, books as references, graphs, and drawings to contextualize the problem in research. Music is more adeptly used to signal the change of emotional state.	Cultural democracy; Social change
Genealogy						
	Home movies (CDS) Pralines (CDS) Sacrificio (CDS) Seeds of never seen dreams (CDS) The lost valleys (Capture Wales) Falsies (CDS) Two stubborn girls (Capture Wales) New Orleans (CDS)	The story relays persons, events, anecdotes, rituals, and other experiences located in one's family history. The making of the story often involves the author's research into and effort to reconstruct family's past. The story is an effort to learn more about one's ancestry and to position one's own identity in relation to it.	Preserve family or community history; To gain new knowledge and new insight into family's past; Make sense of one's identity in light of one's ancestry; Implicit commentary on the event reported and one's perspective to it;	The author is projected as an objective reporter of past events, whose thinking was often guided by a leading question, such as: what is my family's relationship to racism? What were my family's experiences when such and such happened? How is my feminism shaped by the matriarchal society women lived in? Evidence from family history are collected as compelling evidence in light of the question; one makes a point to analyze these evidence to	Extensive use of aged family photos (black and white), or ancestors, artifacts, places, and landscape to put a face on people, events, and places portrayed in the story.	Cultural democracy; Transformative experience

				shed light on one's identity		
Reminiscence						
Event	A night at ducks and dogs (Capture Wales) A little misunderstanding (Capture Wales) Castle on a cloud (Capture Wales)	Author reconstructs a memorable or significant event in the past. It is often attached with explicit or implicit commentary on its significance.	Preserve personal experiences; Entertain the public through the sharing of interesting anecdotes; Make sense of past experiences to shed light on one's identity; Use humor as a part of the celebratory stance towards life	The story is often organized around scenes that are rich in concrete details, such as enacted performance of dialogue, sensory details, activities, and feelings. These stories do not revolve around a central conflict that awaits resolution, but is a themed display of memories.	Creative use of diverse types of visual resources to reconstruct dynamic and vivid scenes (one's photography, cartoon drawings, video clips, old family photos, photos taken for the specific purpose of enacting the scene) that not only illustrate the narrative, but adds to the narrative.	Cultural democracy Creativity
Clue	Elvis died in my room (Capture Wales) Memories on my face (Capture Wales) My streets (Capture Wales) Only connect: A life in stories (Patient Voices) Winter green (Capture Wales)	Author presents a perspective on a specified collection of memories, which are organized around a central theme found in the perspective. An example may be: every wrinkle on my face tells an interesting story about my past, or my father's life story can be told through a series of stories.				
Journey of survival						
	Brighter future waiting (Patient Voices) See me now (Patient Voices) Getting to the bottom of things (Patient Voices) It's my story everyday (Creative Narrations) Deep water (CDS) Grand Canyon (CDS) Castle on the cloud (Capture Wales) Something on my heart (Capture Wales) The lost valley (Capture Wales)	A story that documents the process through which an individual(s) survives, overcomes, or learns to live with an illness (often debilitating), a loss (family, friends, or lifestyle), or finding peace through a traumatic experience. The story often ends with either a celebration about a triumph over the disease (such as regaining one's health after a stroke and learning to paint), or a state of equilibrium (for example, having learned to live with son's health condition despite constant worries, or seeing mother, a cancer survivor still living a rich life despite of knowledge that she wants to terminate treatment someday).	Document a difficult process; Unburden oneself of a fixation that marks the beginning of healing; Help others in the same situation (offer a word of wisdom, to help people connect); Celebrate one's triumph over a debilitating condition; Convey pain, struggle and sadness, often ends with an optimistic outlook at the end.	A story is often organized in a chronological order that begins with the onset of a disease, followed by challenges to cope with (grief, loss of abilities, loss of peace of mind), approaches to cope with it, and a resolution (or the lack of so). These stories revolves around a central conflict (a dragon) and one's effort to pass the dragon and regain the ability to live again. A typical story arc is often present.	Non-personal images of research data, hospitals, staff, and tools are often used to create a sense of setting in which the story occurs. Personal images are used to reveal the realities of the individual living with the condition (images of disfigured joints, cakes made, the person in her garden, doing meditation).	Cultural democracy Social change
Primary Relationship						
I-in-relationship	Beauty (CDS) Dear Grandma (CDS) Falsies (CDS) Grand Canyon (CDS) Ironing (CDS) Letters (CDS) New Orleans (CDS) Nowhere anyhow (CDS)	Relationship stories are essentially identity stories. An author addresses a primary relationship with a significant object, a person, a place, or a hobby, through which one gains important insights about one's identity (e.g. friendship in Tanya) (e.g. Ironing), to make sense of one's experiences (e.g. being black in the south	To learn and grow from experiences; To make sense of and unburden oneself of a traumatic and problematic problem;	CDS stories are often organized around rich moments that show the state of affairs, including the author's thoughts and feelings interlaced with the unfolding of events and activities. A rich moment often portray a	Use of personal images often serves to put a face on the individuals portrayed. Since the stories do not always show the individuals in the most flattering light, the images also do not glamorize the individual, but to show	Creativity Transformative experience

	Rituals (CDS) Tanya (CDS) The gift of non-violence (CDS) Two stubborn girls (Capture Wales) Most honorable thing (Capture Wales) Walking with Maurice (Capture Wales) A quest for understanding (Capture Wales) Pinky, baby and me (Capture Wales)	or being physically abused as a child), to unburden oneself of a troublesome experience (e.g. not being able to write to brother in Jail in Letters, or girlfriend's obsession with shoes), to begin healing from a traumatic experience (e.g. recover from parents' divorce in Grand Canyon), or to celebrate a relationship that enriches one's understanding of life (e.g. friendship with Maurice in Walking with Maurice).	To inform and educate others; To document moments of change in one's perspective towards a significant issue; To arrive at a crystallization of personal experiences that can be used as the basis for projections of future plans It often involves very emotional and painful experiences, but ends with an optimistic outlook on life.	central conflict that rivets the author's sustained attention and emotional response, such as being a child suffering from abuse or racism, or going through parents' divorce, or losing a friend or parent. Rather than telling the audience a meaningful change has taken place, the author often constructs comparative moments to show the change. The stories leave much space for the audience to enter into the story, to wonder, guess, and connect with the story. In comparison, the Capture Wales stories, are light – hearted and follow a rather essayistic model of development, in which the author tells rather than shows the problem, what one makes of it, and what effects the relationship has on the author.	them in the most realistic light. Images of settings and events are used to help construct the rich moment. More metaphorical and lyrical uses of abstract images to show emotional state (such as using a bird in cage to show a sense of loneliness). Sounds are often strategically used to co-construct the mood and moment in the story. In comparison, the Capture Wales relationship stories just show the persons portrayed in the story engaged in everyday events, such as walking in the woods, studying, or at family gatherings.	
Object	A dog's life (Capture Wales) My picture (Capture Wales)	It can be about a favorite object.	To celebrate life's little adventures; To provide glimpses into people's realities	A story is organized as an exposition on one's perspective on a particular passion or an object, why are the values of this hobby, how one has pursued it, rewards and achievements. If often ends with a success of finally achieving the goal, which makes the author very proud.	Themed images of the person engaged in activities associated with the hobby or object are displayed to illustrate the narrative. The images do not necessarily add an additional meaning to the narrative.	Cultural Democracy
Hobby	Pink Laydee (Capture Wales) Two families (Capture Wales) Just in time (Capture Wales) Winter Green (Capture Wales)	It can be about one's pursuit with a life-long passion or hobby, such as catching lobsters, the color pink, or playing cricket.				
Reflection on practice						
Single Case	Go around (CDS) In their own time (Creative Narrations) A world of difference (Patient Voices) Jimmy's story (Patient Voices) Only connect: A life in stories (Patient Voices) Our babies' health	A reflection story in this category is built around a concrete experience one has encountered in one's professional or personal life that requires the author's analytical attention. The experience often stirs up ambivalence within the author as one juggles a range of moral, ethical, professional, and personal beliefs and practices, such as . Such an experience is therefore an exigency that invites	To make sense of and grow from personal experience in light of professional practice; To reveal and critique problems and to praise benefits embedded in a current approach;	A concrete narrative of the experience dominates the story and serves as a jumping-off point for reflective analysis. The narrative is rich with descriptions of person, activities, emotions, and thoughts of people involved. Analysis is either attached to or interlaced into the narrative	Personal images of the person at work are used to illustrate the narrative and as emotional appeals; impersonal images of settings, people, and events are used to contextualize the happening. Metaphorical uses of images to show a sense of community and belonging,	Change in community; Transformative experience; Cultural democracy

| | (Creative Narrations)
Yeah, I'll go (Patient Voices)
For the love of Lee (Patient Voices) | reflection on professional practice in ways that potentially enact positive change. | To help people in communities and to enact change in professional community;

Frustration, anger, and sense of dilemma are portrayed in concrete ways to appeal to the audience's sympathy. | in the forms of questions, comparison of before-and-after perspectives, and explicit or implicit plea for change. | | |

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