



Tell Your Story Newsletter (TYSN):

Specializing in Entrepreneurial and Organizational Storytelling

Let me tell your story!

Welcome Mid-June, 2020!

After experiencing a very cool, damp and windy start to spring in Saskatchewan, many folk are longing for the sun--not only to grow farmers' crops and power our solar industry, but also to feel it on our faces, as we move outdoors, still in the midst of Covid-19.

Last week, we entered phase three of the Saskatchewan Health Authority's policy for partial (50%) re-opening of hospitality related businesses. Writers and creative types keenly await a similar, partial reopening of the branches of Saskatoon's Public Library, as we long to replace the materials we signed out last winter with those we wanted to read before now!

Whether online through podcasts, social media promotions, articles or blog postings, many of us have sought refuge from the pandemic in stories and storytelling. Some of the sources I've drawn on for weeks, months and years make up Article One.

In it I share a source that may supplement your own. And please send me your additions, to share with fellow readers and me! (If any of the links prove to be broken [though already double-tested], please write me. I'll happily send you the listing electronically.)

Whether to apply to your projects or for fun that will preserve your mind as we weather ongoing uncertainty, storytelling is a timeless process. From Ancient Greece and Rome to contemporary SEO methods, stories underwrite much of civilization. And storytelling will long outlast its status as a fad in the marketing world. That's why I rebranded my business with the concept, in 2019.

In "Storytellers' Corner" this month, I follow up on last month's discussion of a "mondegreen" with the concept of the "malapropism." The malapropism is another linguistic error that carries potentially hilarious implications. And who among us couldn't use a laugh?

Our summers are so fleeting; the growing season, woefully short. So notwithstanding the due diligence we must practice to contain Covid-19, I do hope, good reader, that you'll partake of one of the podcasts, audio books or a newspaper, book, ebook, blog series or other medium listed below--*outdoors*--where the warmth of daylight and the coolness of the grass will refresh your minds and spirits for the next few months.

I'm reminded of Susan Jeffers' great book, *Embracing Uncertainty*, reviewed in an earlier issue of this newsletter. Please buy or borrow the book, if you find yourself battling anxiety. Jeffers reminds us meaningfully that we are in this together.

In solidarity,
Elizabeth

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Article One: On Stories and Storytelling: a Curated List for Entrepreneurs and Other Creatives

Resources on how storytelling pertains to marketing, entrepreneurship and/or creativity:

(1) Some of **my blog postings and some issues** of my enewsletter use or refer to storytelling:

(i) "An extension cord and a chocolate cookie: distractions are everywhere":

<https://storytellingcommunications.ca/an-extension-cord-and-a-chocolate-cookie-distractions-are-everywhere-in-this-weeks-blog-posting/>

(ii) <https://storytellingcommunications.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Tell-Your-Story-Newsletter-January-2019.pdf>

(iii) <https://storytellingcommunications.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/TYSNewsletter-November-2019-on-Storytelling-in-Business.pdf>

(2) An excellent, **UK-based copywriter (Henneke Duistermaat)** incorporates storytelling into her marketing materials and blogs extensively on it:

<https://www.enchantingmarketing.com/>

(e.g.) <https://www.enchantingmarketing.com/inspirational-business-storytelling/>

Henneke also shares valuable book titles and embeds links to various articles/content, within her blog postings. You'll see them when you connect to the above links.

(3) The wonderful **American marketer** (and humourist) **Michael Katz** uses stories and storytelling extensively in his blog postings, newsletters and webinars:

<https://bluepenguindevelopment.com/newsletter-blog/>

4) Seminars/Workshops:

Marketing guru **Seth Godin** and novelist and writer **Bernadette Jiwa** launched an “Akimbo **workshop**” on storytelling in recent years (and that they periodically repeat). Its purpose is to teach creative and entrepreneurial types to become better storytellers: <https://thestoryskillsworkshop.com/>

Godin stresses that a good story “is about the listener, not about you,” and that it can “make things better. Storytelling is a skill. It’s not something you’re born with, it’s not based on charisma or authority. It’s more simple than you think, but it takes practice.”

Robert McKee:

Story seminars: <https://mckeestory.com/>, notably “Storynomics” for entrepreneurs and business leaders.

Seminal article in the “Harvard Business Review”: <https://hbr.org/2003/06/storytelling-that-moves-people>

(5) Popular sources of storytelling worth listening to (and watching):

Spoken word poet Tomos Roberts’ “pandemic poem” elevated his struggling career to stardom (earlier in Covid days):

<https://www.thenational.ae/arts-culture/books/the-great-realisation-why-this-british-writer-s-pandemic-poem-caught-the-eye-of-jake-gyllenhaal-1.1015262>

CBC Radio’s Terry O’Reilly tells stories at the outset of his weekly show, “Under the Influence” (available as a podcast):

<https://www.cbc.ca/radio/podcasts/arts-culture/under-the-influence/>

Recordings (CDs) and books of the late fabulist, **Stuart McLean**, of “The Vinyl Café” are filled with stories and can be found in libraries or purchased online:

https://www.amazon.ca/s?k=vinyl+cafe+audio+cd&crd=3BU81HPF5BV52&srefix=Vinyl+Cafe%2Caps%2C176&ref=nb_sb_ss_i_4_10

https://www.amazon.ca/s?k=vinyl+cafe+books&ref=nb_sb_noss_1

Maria Popova tells stories of literature, the arts and cultural criticism that have widespread appeal. One article carries links to potentially many more: <https://www.brainpickings.org/>

TED Talks (the best ones) are often full of stories. Here are a couple of stellar speakers who harness stories to illustrate the theory and practice of their careers:

Sir Ken Robinson (on education and creativity): https://www.ted.com/speakers/sir_ken_robinson

Shawn Achor (on positive psychology):

https://www.ted.com/talks/shawn_achor_the_happy_secret_to_better_work/transcript#t-8612

Popular newspaper articles abound that discuss stories and storytelling. This is merely one (and not necessarily one you or I would agree with):

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-secret-benefits-of-retelling-family-stories-11573468201>

(6) **Books on storytelling** (even a simple Amazon search or library search unearths many books on various aspects of the topic):

(i) Two of my ebooks tell the stories of local creative professionals: *Keep Going* (2017) and *Getting Past It* (2015):

<https://storytellingcommunications.ca/books/>

I also am writing “success stories” of several graduates of the Praxis School of Entrepreneurship, to celebrate the school’s 30th anniversary in 2020 (forthcoming at <https://praxisschools.ca/entrepreneurship/>)

Other books:

(ii) *Made to Stick: Why Some Ideas Survive and Others Die* (Chip Heath & Dan Heath)

(ii) *The Storytelling Animal: How Stories Make Us Human* (Jonathan Gottschall)

(iii) *Building a Story Brand* (Donald Miller)

(iv) *Story: Substance, Structure, Style and the Principles of Screenwriting* (Robert McKee)

(v) *Stories that Sell* (Casey Hibbard) on case studies

(vi) Never forget that **biographies of all kinds** tell the complex stories of people, countries and epochs that contribute to all kinds of creative and entrepreneurial projects.

Local **biographer, Alexandra Popoff**, has won many prestigious awards for her books, including *Vassily Grossman and the Soviet Century* (2019) and *Sophia Tolstoy: a Biography* (2010). Here are some of her details:

<https://www.simonandschuster.com/authors/Alexandra-Popoff/48166051>

(7) **On technical website development, marketing and storytelling (SEO from Yoast.com):**

<https://yoast.com/what-is-storytelling-and-why-should-you-use-it/>

<https://yoast.com/how-to-use-storytelling-in-a-blog-post/>

<https://yoast.com/why-storytelling-is-good-for-seo/>

<https://yoast.com/using-storytelling-on-product-pages/>

(8) Sources on Indigenous Storytelling (There are many; here is a small sample):

SaskCulture offers workshops and presentations on the topic:

<https://www.saskculture.ca/events/936>

Academia offers research into Indigenous storytelling in SK:

<https://journals.uregina.ca/ineducation/article/view/213/815>

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/1177180117741351>

The University of Saskatchewan also offers a training certificate on the topic:

<https://admissions.usask.ca/indigenous-storytelling.php>

(9) Organizations pertaining to storytelling:

A Canadian not-for-profit for traditional storytellers (not necessarily for entrepreneurial application) is “Storytellers of Canada.” With a national headquarters in Toronto, they have online events, resources and a free email (bi-monthly) newsletter:

<https://storytellers-conteurs.ca>

PLEASE SEND ME your sources on stories and storytelling and I will add them to future editions of this collection, crediting you, along the way!

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STORYTELLER'S CORNER



STORYTELLER'S CORNER: What is a malapropism?

A "malapropism," the *Oxford Literary Terms* dictionary tells us, is a confused, comically inaccurate version of a long word or words. The term arose from the character, Mrs. Malaprop, of Sheridan's play, *The Rivals* (1775).

The dictionary chronicles that the character, Mrs. Malaprop (after "mal a propos" or "inappropriately") is remembered for her bungled efforts to use learned/genteel speech.

She refers to another character in the play, for instance, as "the very pine-apple of politeness," instead of "pinnacle."

The problem occurred much earlier than its naming, however, since the speech of the character Dogberry in Shakespeare's comedy, *Much Ado about Nothing* (1598), also featured many malapropisms.

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SHOP NEWS:



I'm grateful this month for the collaborative project I've been working on with Monica Kreuger, Megan Kent, Christina Cherneskey, Elaine Mantyka and developers at Trusted Marketing, as we prepare stories for the 30th anniversary of the GlobalPraxis 30th year.

Special thanks to Praxis' startSMART program, whose alumni, Joscelyn Armstrong, Ebtsam Elsheikhe and Richard Jelsma, have all agreed to being interviewed as a "success stories" feature on the GlobalPraxis anniversary site.

A shout out to friends and colleagues who have shared their stories with me of caregiving they've done for their elderly family. This can be such hard work, emotionally, and even when the stories are better than the care home atrocities reported in Ontario and Quebec. The good stories that do exist tend to be forgotten! (Do I hear an ebook beckoning, Luther Care?)

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ABOUT US:

Between 2011 and December 2018, Elizabeth Shih Communications chronicled the stories of B2B marketing and communications on the Prairies and across the country.

Effective January 1, 2019, I rebranded as "Storytelling Communications." I now write marketing and communications documents and lead workshops that help entrepreneurs, small businesses to strengthen their businesses; and economic immigrants to secure better jobs.

Interested in learning more? Please contact me through my CASL-compliant website (www.elizabethshih.com).

After I receive your message, I'll be pleased to discuss projects with you! Please visit my website for more information (<http://www.storytellingcommunications.ca>).