

Assignment for MAS 845
Spring 2004

Due Thursday 2/12

These readings provide a mini introduction to the philosophical, cultural, and technological issues surrounding the existence, creation, and reception of stories. They provide useful entry-points to an enormous corpus of human expression: the art itself (stories expressed through a particular medium) and ruminations on the processes, forces, and constraints that shaped the making and sharing of that art.

To untangle our own perspective of story from this age-old web of signaled communications, we must seek out what others have thought and created, and -- most importantly -- we must practice the art for ourselves.

As you read these articles, think about a story you have just told someone. Think about your first remembered experience of story listening and of storytelling. Think about a story that you have judged to be "great." Why does it have the form it has? How does it reveal the story world? Think about the multiple situations in which you use story as a structure for social exchange and memory: which use is more critical?

This assignment has two parts to help initiate your quest within the context of this course:

1) An exercise to distinguish information from story.

Assemble a small collection of information from your personal life. Weave this information into a very short story. Post the information as such and the story onto the class web site. Be prepared to present your journey in class.

2) An exercise in connecting theory to an actual artifact.

Create a short presentation that links your analysis of a movie of your choosing to one of the readings. Remember that the representation you use for your analysis will be key to communicating the relationship you wish to focus on to other people in the class who have not seen the movie but have read the articles.