The Heart of Care:  
Quantum Storytelling and Ontological Inquiry  
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What is Quantum Storytelling? Quantum storytelling is a basic way of grasping the meaning of Being, in an entire life-path, the life-time of material entities ontologically in Being-in-the-world, environmentally in work-world, equipment-world, supplier-world, consumption-world, welfare-world, and their relationship to physical Nature by understanding and interpreting the ‘heart of care.’ Quantum storytelling is those ‘moments of vision’ in Being-in-the-world, in-time of one’s life path where spirit is grounded in ‘heart of care’ for the world’s environmental realms: work, equipment, supplies, consumption, welfare, and their concern, care, or exploitation of Nature. Quantum storytelling is about the journey of the Self from birth to death through the connectedness of lifetime through detaching from morphic fields of attraction and attachment to the ‘they-self.’ They-self, is what all Others (i.e. stakeholders) prescribe and demand as one’s role in the path of the spiral-antenarrative journey. We are called to that path, from the future ahead-of-itself. Who is the caller? Answer: Spirit! What is the call? Answer: A call to conscience of a heart-of-care. How do we answer the call? Answer: By falling. The Heart-of-Care is our ontological standpoint in facing one Situation after another along the life-path, and on paths we could disengage from, in-order-to find ‘new’ paths that are more caring and concernful. The null set is those paths not taken, yet still existential. There is a double-meaning of ‘care’: (1) the ontological Heart-of-Care for our spiral-antenarrative ways of Being-in-the-world (all its environmental realms), and (2) the ontic concernfulness of being-alongside-Others in relationships (webs of living stories emerging and unfolding present-at-hand). An antenarrative is a ‘before’ the narrative coheres, and a ‘bet’ on what is to happen in the future.

What are the Five Fores? There are five ‘fores’ or ‘antes’ that are thoroughly ontological: fore-having, fore-telling, fore-conceiving, fore-structuring, and fore-caring (heart-of-care).

What is fore-having?

(Heidegger, 1996: 140, # 150): “Things at hand are always already understood in terms of a totality of relevance. This totality need not be explicitly grasped by a thematic interpretation. Even if it has undergone such an interpretation, it recedes again into an undifferentiated understanding. This is the very mode in which it is the essential foundation of everyday, circumspect interpretation. This is always based on a fore-having.”
“... something is understood but still veiled, it becomes unveiled by an act of appropriation and this is always done under the guidance of a perspective which fixes that with regard to which what has been understood is to be interpreted. The interpretation is grounded in a Foresight that “approaches” what has been taken in fore-having with a definite interpretation view. What is held in the fore-having and understood in a fore-seeing view becomes comprehensible through the interpretation. The interpretation can draw the conceptuality belonging to the beings to be interpreted from these themselves or else force them into concepts to which beings are opposed in accordance with their kind of being. The interpretation was always already decided, finally or provisionally, upon a definite conceptuality; it is grounded in a fore-conception.”

Next we look at how the life-path and lifetime of a spiraling journey between Birth and Death winds and weaves a pathway spiral-antennarrative through morphic and quantum fields of context (aka landscape of Being-in-the-world, in-place, in-time).

**What is Lifetime and Life-path**

The quantum storytelling life-path of a lifetime is imagined here as a spiraling-antennarrative weaving and being stretched, and stretching itself along around what Waddington in the 1950s called a ‘chreode’ landscape (see Figure 4). A chreode (potentiality for future) rolls down the etched valleys of a landscape to one of four potential futures, already furrowed in the landscape.
Figure 1 – A Chreode rolls down into one of four possible valley-pathways that are already etched into the landscape

Figure 2 – a side view of a very simplistic chreode landscape

Figure 2 represents a very simplistic, much too linear approach to chreode landscape.

Both Rupert Sheldrake and Stuart Kaufman have worked with the chreode landscape. For Sheldrake, as in figure one, the past morphic fields constitute landscapes of the past that influence similar form-patterns up to the present. For Kaufman (Figure 2) the focus is on the future, on what he calls the ‘fitness landscape’ where a chreode (usually an innovator or entrepreneur) is seeking to find pathways through a landscape to higher levels of fitness with a lucrative environmental niche. Finding local optimum places (see A, B, & C in Figure 2), an adventurer may settle there, or sensing higher plateaus keep venturing forth even when the path is downward, hoping it will turn upwards. And from time to time, an entrepreneur takes a quantum leap across several peaks and lands in a valley or on some peak and is better or worse off (leaping is not a precise process it seems). A ‘bet’ or as I call them an ‘ante’ is made on the future, that the landscape and its paths will transform.
Rupert Sheldrake (2009: 86) says morphic field resonance is ‘nonenergetic’ and does not ‘obey the laws of bodies, particles, and waves.’ And morphic resonance only “takes place from the past” (ibid). “An immediate implication of this hypothesis is that a given system could be influence by all past systems with a similar form and pattern of vibration.” We will therefore use the term ‘morphic field resonance’ (vibrations) to concern how influences of a first, second, third, and fourth past-systems, in Figure 3, influence a fifth present-system, even where they are no direct ties. For example, Felix the Cat was an imitation of Charlie Chaplin, and later implicated in Walt Disney’s first toon short-feature-character, Oswald the Rabbit, and this influenced Mickey Mouse, as well as Minnie Mouse. Disney invests a great deal of money, talent, and time expanding the cumulative morphic resonance.

Similarly, the McDonaldland cartoon characters feed and adapt to the past morphic resonance of Disneyland characters, and to earlier imitations of Speedee, Bozo the clown, and various incarnations of Ronald McDonald.

**Figure 4 – Morphic Field of Past Ronals**
First Grimace was the plagiarism of the Puf n' Stuf character (produced by H.R. Krofft): The 1971 depiction of “Evil Grimace” with six arms and a furry purple body resembles the Puf n’ Stuf character Seymore the spider (who has orange fur). Puf n' Stuf was the most popular Saturday Morning cartoon series of its day (it aired 6 September 1969 - 4 September 1971). An ad agency (Needham Harper & Steers) hired former H.R. Krofft animators to create characters and theme for a ‘McDonaldland’ series. Sid and Marty Krofft, the series producers, sued McDonald’s (charging that the company and its advertising agency. 1st Grimace (i.e. Evil Grimace) was a milkshake thief, more the Rogue part of his chronotope than the Fool.

As we grow up we navigate through various morphic fields of attraction and attachment.
What is the difference between morphic fields and quantum fields?

A morphic field is an accumulation of past field resonances into the Present one. Morphic fields are interconnected resonances of past attachments of people and corporations to food, religion, beauty, ancestral (founding) heritage, etc. that influence present ones that have similar resonance patterns, even when there is no direct physics involved, no vector of particle-to-particle, or wave-to-wave material physics. Vector energy is linear in an atomistic physics, and Newtonian mechanistic physics way of system understanding.

Quantum fields have nonlinear vector energy (wave-to-wave patterns & and waves collapsed into particle relations by Observer Effects). There is also scalar energy that is not just nonlinear (& non-vectored), it is also a non-sequential conception of time Experiences. Spectral energy in quantum fields is where the future is ahead-of-itself and affecting the Present, and the pasts are also energizing the Present (but in ways that physical-energetic and material, unlike morphic fields).
It is possible to shift the resonances of accumulations of past morphic fields through storytelling, in particular through ‘restorying’ (Epston & White, 1996). Restorying involves deconstructing a dominant narrative of one’s past that is stuck, preventing someone in the Present from moving on. Restorying is finding little Wow moments of exception to the dominant past narrative, and constructing those fragments of Wow into a ‘new story’ one that changes one’s life path and future.

In scalar energy, the future and past are sending energy waves to the middle, to the Present, and resonating back to the past and future, with more power than the initial scalar energy possessed.

It is proposed here that storytelling is integral to both morphic field resonances among past systems to some present one, and as well integral to quantum fields of more material Physical nature of particles and waves.

My own contribution is instead of chreode (usually represented by a ball or several of them) rolling down a pre-defined landscape of hills and valleys, is to instead imagine a spiraling path through the landscape.
Figure 7 – A Life-Path of a Lifetime through a World of Being

**Step 1** – we are thrown into a world of Being, into a landscape of the World, its environmental realms, into Situation after Situation for a lifetime.
Figure 8 – The Spiraling-Antenarrative through a Landscape

In Figure 8, (please draw your own), there is a spiraling-antenarrative, with paths taken, and not taken (null set) from birth to death (& after). There are datable spans in the spiral, which have ontological meaning. Each twirl of the spiral (the light blue) is a choice-point, a Situation of Being-in-the-world that matters. The paths not taken are co-existent existentially with one’s taken. In the landscape there are several figures which I will magnify below. You have your own figures, photos, etc. from your own life-path, where there are these choice-points of which path the take, which path to abandon, divorce, and which to reenact again and again.
Born Dec 17, 1947
Spokane, WN
Memorial Hospital

Figure 8 A – A time and a place of Birth
Figure 8 B – A time and place of war-world; Even golf pros get that mood of PTSD
Figure 8 C – Pushing the rock up the workaholic-world slope each day, and then it rolls down and I start over again, and again; Sisyphus in the figure shown.

Storytelling gives us three inter-related perspectives on the quantum field.
Step 2 - HOW DOES FUTURE ARRIVE AHEAD-OF-ITSELF? ANSWER: 5 ways of FORE (aka ANTE): Fore-having, fore-structuring, fore-sight, fore-conception, & fore-caring (Heart-of-Care); we work out the fore-having (and the other fores of Being-in-the-world)

Step 3 – 10 D’s. Here are first Six
Imagine that each life Situation has these D’s, as forces simultaneous that one is reading (pre-linguistically). And the spiral as in 9A flows twists and twirls through Situation after Situation.
Figure 9 A: The 6 D’s (maybe 4 more) are forces of the Situation, as the spiral (in green) winds through Situation after Situation

There are four other "D’s":

7. Detaching from they-ness of Present

8. Disavowal of past, repetition of antiquarian

9. De-dispersal of fragments of Self into they-self relationalities

10. De-distraction of projects of they-self trying things out
Figure 10 – What is Ontological Storytelling Inquiry?

The small print:

What is EPISTEMIC INQUIRY?

Thematizing Subjectivity

Cognitive

Judging

Representational

Abstract historicity (past)
What is ONTIC INQUIRY?

Thematizing Objectivity

Actuality – Factual

Measuring Relationality

The ‘they-self’

The ‘monstrous’ Now

What is Ontological Storytelling Inquiry?

OSI is defined as a methodology of inquiry that elicits ontological assumptions in the storytelling of an organization.

Interpreting & Understanding Heart of Care in PRIMORDIAL lifetime


Step 4 – is making sense of ontological moods.
To research moods see sections 134-139 of *Being and Time*, for the initial definitions. Then read on to section 170 where the first ontological mood, of curiosity is defined and developed, and on to the end of the book for eight more (particularly # 339-346). In Section 134, mood introduced as “our Being-attuned” (p. 172). Epistemic moods are feeling, and ontically we can stare a mood and be concerned. Slipping into and out of a good or bad mood is nothing ontologically (those are feelings). Yet the feeling moods and one’s ontically stared-at are sometimes rooted ontologically in a mood or a balanced lack of mood, can disclose the primordial. In his introduction Heidegger (1962: 173) introduces a mood of elation, about alleviating a “manifest burden of Being.” I did not include that one in the figure above.
Finally a definition: A mood makes manifest ‘how one is, and how one is faring;’ (p. 173, section 134). Our path on an antenarrative-spiral is always disclosed ‘moodwise” by the nine moods depicted in Figure 11. Not to give in to various mood clusters, not to face what is disclosed is for Heidegger no evidence of moods not Being of the ‘there’ or in the ontic ‘that-it-is; (an ontico-existential sense). In the ontological-existential sense, paying attention or paying no attention to mood is unveiled, in “Being-delivered-over to the ‘there’” (p. 174).

We are thrown into life-path, on a spiraling, twirling journey, where the whence, whither, and tither is somewhat or completely veiled, and we are being “delivered over” (p. 174). There is the present-at-hand of mood, the what-it-is, and ‘that-it-is’ and ontologically ante to that the Being-in-the-world in one’s “way of Being” (p. 174).

Epistemically, mood is feeling, an ‘inside’ consciousness, perception, sensemaking and even cognition and theoretical. Epistemic mood is often seen as irrational, and that just blinds one to mood.

Ontically, mood is present-at-hand, stared at in a heart of concernfulness, in relationships (p. 175, sections 134-5). Aristotle investigated the affects in the second book of Rhetoric (# 139, p. 178) and did the first systematic hermeneutic analysis of ontic, Being with one another, alongside, in the ‘they’ of mood, as an orator speaks to rouse the audience by rhetoric.

Ontologically mood, is a way of Being-in-the-world, a primordial spacetimemattering, that discloses the ‘there’ the environment in its potentiality (authentic or inauthentic) and understanding and interpretation of the worldhood of the world (p. 176). Before (ante) to feelings or staring at moods ontically (affection), there is the ontological moods, in clusters, never alone. The moods are about disclosing the environmentally ready-to-hand, in an attuning of one to one’s paths (chosen, not chosen, pending, approaching of a worldhood).

Below we will define moods one by one, but keep in mind they are always clustered.

**PART II: What is revolutionary in Quantum Storytelling?**

The ontological lifetime, the primordial path of the connectivity of life from birth to death is not divorced from Being-in-the-world of materiality (entities and bodies constituted by particles & waves), and as Karen Barad (12003, 2007) puts it there is an ‘intra-activity’ and ‘intra-penetration’ of quantum materiality with collective-discourse (including, of course, storytelling).

What is revolutionary about morphic and quantum fields is how storytelling is not only epistemic (narratives of retrospective sensemaking & cognitions of the past) and ontic (what is measured in actuality in the Now), storytelling can also be ontological (futural, and a deeper historicality than
what gets leveled off in epistemic-narrative-past articulations or living-story-ontic-relationality present-at-hand ones getting objectified).

People are attracted to morphic fields of the past, and develop identifications with their fast food, beauty products, luxury items, fundamentalist and other causes. They cannot see the quantum fields of energy because they get so mired down in the morphic fields. There are of course morphic fields that are quite positive, even concernful, such as save the whales, Mother’s Day, Christmas, Veteran’s Day, and most any holiday, but also many morphic fields invested in the past, that are not resonating anything by blame and vengeance consciousness energy.

Quantum storytelling is a different sort of energy. It is about making life-path choices by attaining authentic potentiality-for-Being-a-whole-Self. And this means disengaging ‘detaching’ from the ‘they-self’ which seems to permeate so many of the morphic fields. Pleasing one’s they-self covers up authentic potentiality-for-Being-in-the-world, its particular environmental realms. Some people spend their entire lives buffeted about by morphic field energies, in games of anger, blame, revenge, and following along the ‘they’ shaping the Self into a ‘they-self.’

Quantum storytelling is about cultivation a ‘heart of care’ in a ‘disavowal’ of morphic field energy attachments that are inauthentic ways of Being-in-the-world.

Quantum storytelling is about different types of antenarratives. The linear and cyclical antenarratives have vector energy, from point A directed to a target, point B. The initiators at point A lay out a linear or cyclic path of steps to effect changes in the recipient at point B. And in both linear and cyclic-antenarratives there is an expectation (a pre-supposition) that the past will recur and repeat itself exactly in the future.

Spiral and rhizomatic antenarratives, by contrast, are from the future to the present, multiple paths from the future that converge and diverge into the Present. We find authentic potentiality-for-Being-a-whole-Self with a heart of care.

Disney, McDonald’s, Nike, and Wal-Mart, to mention a few players, have built up the most amazing morphic fields, with vector energy, with linear and cyclic antenarratives, invested in recurrences of brands, entertainments, fast food, big box shopping, sporty shoes that convey luxury and celebrity affinities.

What have we really learned from decades of vector energy patterns in these morphic fields? We have been attracted to them, built our identity around them and lost all sense of authentic potentiality-for-Being-in-the-world. That is not to say we cannot find positive feelings in those morphic fields: happiness at a Magic Kingdom or in a Happy Meal, pride in one’s sneakers, frugality at a super-store, etc. But how authentic are these pathways through the course of one’s entire lifetime? Immersed in such morphic fields, can we find any authenticity at all?
Quantum storytelling is a way to shift and use morphic field energy, by going deeper into an ontological inquiry into Being-in-the-world around us, not just for a moment of happiness or savings, but for a life-time of existence.

Table 1 lists 10 D’s and 9 Moods that are prominent in Heidegger’s (1962) ontological inquiry into the relationship between authentic and inauthentic pathways through the course of a life of a person, an entity, a community, and it is applicable, I believer, to authentic leadership, authentic organization relations to the environmental realms they inhabit, exploit, and could care for, sometimes a bit more.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>10 D’s of Situation of each spiral-antenarrative twirl</th>
<th>9 Moods for sorting out what path the future bestows</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Directionality</td>
<td>1. Curiosity</td>
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<td>2. Disclosedness</td>
<td>2. Tranquility</td>
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<td>3. Dwelling</td>
<td>3. Ambiguity</td>
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<td>4. Deseverence</td>
<td>4. Turbulence</td>
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<td>5. Deployment</td>
<td>5. Anxiety</td>
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<td>6. Datability</td>
<td>6. Involvements</td>
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<td>7. Detaching</td>
<td>7. Alienation</td>
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<td>8. Disavowal</td>
<td>8. Nullity</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. De-Distraction</td>
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The first five I wrote about (Boje, 2012) and then in another submission (Boje, Sylors, and Helmuth, in review) developed the sixth one. But in recent work, I am developing four more D-concepts, from my studies of Heidegger (1962):

1. **Directionality** – instead of past to present, past-nows accumulating into present-now, and nows-not-yet, the directionality is not vectored in linear or cyclic ways, but in spiral and rhizomatic ways.
2. **Disclosedness** – of ‘there’ and ‘place’ and of inauthentic ways of Being-there. Authentic and inauthentic are inter-connected. You are sure that a life-path is authentic and it turns out to disclose more and more inauthentic ways one is Being.
4. **Deseverence** – connecting a near to a far time or place. The 1996 translation of *Being and Time*, calls it ‘de-distancing.’ Particles split and separated across a world, will resonate instantly (faster than the speed of light, without delay). Heidegger gives the example of radio as de-severing the near and far, collapsing distances, but now there is the Internet, the cell phone, and other sorts of equipment that deservers space, time, and matter.
5. **Deployment** – in-order-to, for-the-sake-of, etc. that are from a heart of care, a concernfulness for being-in-the-world, authentically, responsibly, ethically answerable (as Bakhtin, 1991, 1993 calls this last one).

6. **Datability** – There are dates along one’s life-path that are meaningful, not because they are calendared, or measurable in worldtime or clocktime. And it’s not about a linear sequence conception of time, or equal intervals. Rather, the datable spans that have meaning.

7. **Detaching** – from the ‘they’-ness of the Present.

8. **Disavowal** - a past repetition (be it linear or cyclical). The repetition of difference that comes from disavowal of sameness-recurrence.

9. **De-dispersal** – our energies get dispersed, and our Self becomes fragmented along paths of no account.

10. **De-Distraction** – in chasing the ‘they’-self, we please many stakeholders, but many projects are a distraction. Finding a life-path that is not mired in distraction takes ontological inquiry.

Step 4 – we reach the moods, but the moods were in the entire life-path, and life-time. Perhaps steps do not work at all here. There is no particular order to them.

**PART III: The Ontological Moods**

Moods are not in any particular order. They appear to cluster to be cumulative rather than sequential or additive. Ontological moods are not like feeling, ‘having a mood, being angry or happy. Rather these moods are states-of-mind emanating from Being-in-the-world wrestling with authentic potentiality—for-Being-a-whole-Self, and sensing the efficacy of the life-path one is on, and one’s being called to take, and answering or ignoring those calls. Heidegger (1962) asks, who is calling, who is the caller, and what is our answer?

1. **Curiosity** – we can be curious about emergence, and leap away from the path the future is calling us to. And we can leap a second time, and be even further away, with no way back.

2. **Tranquility** – one can become tranquilized on a path, get into repetition of a linear or cyclic-antenarrative, and not venture forth. More curiosity would help, or even more ambiguity to lure one off a path that is not leading anywhere.

3. **Ambiguity**

4. **Turbulence** – The ground moves is the familiar phrase Emery and Trist (1966) use to describe the environment of organizations, where recurrence of linear and cyclic
strategies to secure resources and legitimation no longer hold, the environment is in flux, and turbulent fields abound. What is a contributing that Heidegger makes is that other moods besides turbulence can be read, and moods in combination with turbulence, such as the ones that follow.

5. **Anxiety** – (aka angst). Angst tells one a great deal about a path being traveled, about the future ahead-of-itself, arriving at Present, making waves.

6. **Involvements** – Heidegger writes about the totality of involvements with the world, its environmental realms.

7. **Alienation** – We can be out-of-touch, out-of-sync with the world around us.

8. **Nullity** – The nullity is the paths not chosen and yet still existent, in a what-if sense. A null set of such paths unchosen and sometimes giving up on a path, backtracking to take one of the unchosen, now chosen pathways.

9. **Uncanniness** – there is something spiritual about this mood, an uncanny sense of something transcendent but not in a Hegelian or Kantian way, but in the spirit connectedness to Being-there-in-the-world.

Quantum fields are pure, raw, unadulterated potential energies of heart-of-care, scalar energy from the future to the Present, as well as from past to the Present, and back again in more power. Quantum energy fields are powerful and abundant, the energy of the life-world, the places ‘there’ and ‘here’ and Being-there, and Being-here in a connected way.

A blacksmith is an alchemist, preparing and using quantum material energy in relation with storytelling to change morphic resonances of the accumulating past-nows, by drawing upon future energy and life-world energy in a heart of care, a concernfulness of ones hammers, tongs, anvil, for moving metal, for finding an authentic path.

Reading the moods of curiosity in relation to tranquility, and each of the other moods is a way to sort out if one’s path is authentic or leveled out, covered over by morphic field resonances.

**Part V – Was Heidegger a blacksmith?**

In this ontological analysis, I will use two translations of *Being and Time* (Heidegger, 1962 & 1996). The 1996 translation was scanned to facilitate word searches, and then compared to the 1962 translation to check for differences. I will focus on Heidegger’s uses of the terms Hammer and Hammering. A hammer is not just an item of equipment, but in blacksmithing it is part of equipmentality, which is an ontological concept. Hammering is taking care of things encountered in the technology of the work-world of a blacksmith artist’s shop that is part of and also exploits Nature-world, and is a topic for Heidegger (1996, *Being & Time*) in sections 69-70.
As we shall explore hammer and hammering are also in sections 78, 83-84, 109, 154-155, 157, 360-361.

**What is the ontological character of a blacksmith’s hammer?** Hammers are certainly ‘things’ (*pragmata*, in Greek), and a blacksmith takes care of hammers in association (*praxis*). The “pragmatic” character of things, Heidegger (ibid) says “gets left in obscurity” when we reduce, for example, blacksmith’s hammers to “mere things.” The ontological character of a hammer “comes alive” in the ways blacksmiths concern themselves with pre-phenomenal and tacit character of its “substantiality, materiality, extendedness, side-by-side-ness, and so forth” (Heidegger, 1962, *Being & Time*, p 96, section 68). The hammer, for example, is side-by-side in the blacksmith-equipment-world with anvils, tongs, post-vice, forth, swedge-block, other hammers of many sorts, and so forth. For example, in my own blacksmith shop, here are three sorts of hammers, on an anvil, and beneath, are more hammers in their allotted places on the anvil stump.
On the anvil (Figure 12) are two cross-peen hammers and a ballpeen. I made the hammer in the center for use in leaf-making, and filed and sanded the heads on the other two which are for more general uses, concernfully, because store-bought hammers need reshaping of the faces before they are suitable for any smithing-work. Not only the faces, but for pushing hot metal, the handles need notching for better grip.

There is ‘techne’ stressed in the 1996 of Being and Time, a translation in a footnote, where techne, is said to come from an “artistic” interpretation, when morphe is not interpreted as eidos, idea (footnote, p. 96, section 68). The hammers I show, I am concerned with in the work environment. At right, in the sand, are cat-paw prints.
Morphe is Greek, and one meaning is a “bodily shape” but is also used as a synonym for idea (eidos). “According to Heidegger in his famous essay, "The Origin of the Work of Art", one of the most common understandings of a thing is, precisely, matter (hylē, Greek) that has form (morphe)” (Crogan, 2007).

For Aristotle, the form (bodily image) of a hammer analyzed also has basic elemental ‘matter’ its ‘material-cause’ that is not the same as its substantive-thing-material, for example, hammer is “already compositied” of metal (an Earth-element), yet in a Heideggerian ontological way is also given-from its equipmentality a place in the shop (Heidegger, form essay, a lecture first given in 1930s). Besides Earth-element the Pre-Socratic ontologists from the atomists (Democritus & Leppitus) to those who said what-is is (e.g. Parmenides), and even to the father of change and flux (Heraclitus) gave differing emphasis on the elements: Fire-element, Water-element, Air-element, and sometimes a fifth, the Ether-element (see Curd & Graham, The Oxford Handbook of Presocratic Philosophy). A blacksmith-artist, an alchemist, such as me, works with all four terrestrial elements, invokes the fifth, as well as the technical-equipmentality of each hammer’s place in the modern technology of blacksmithing.

In Chinese philosophy earth bears metal, fire softens and even melts the metal, while water cools hot metal, and the air blown through the fire and hot coals will super-heat the metal. In Buddhist philosophy of seven chakras have implications for smithing:

1. Sahasrara (Crown): Thought/Space
2. Ajña (Third Eye): Light/Dark
3. Vishuddhi (Throat): Ether/Sound in the of smithing
4. Anahata (Heart): Air of the forge
5. Manipura (Navel): Fire of the forge
6. Svadhisthana (Sacral): Water to cool the metal
7. Muladhara (Root): Earth where coal and metal come from

Here I will focus on the alchemy in relation to modernity. For example, as a blacksmith-artist, I participate with hammers, in doing the work in a work-environment, in a place (the shop, in New Mexico). Hammer, as such, occupies a place between equipment (matter-form-structure along-side ‘Other’ equipment), and the work, and along-side in this image, the nonequipmental-
being, our cat, ‘Tiger.’ The ontological Being of a hammer does not just come from its materiality-substantiality of its form, it is embedded in the technology, in the equipmentality of blacksmithing (see Heidegger essays, essays such as "Overcoming Metaphysics" and the "The Question Concerning Technology"). Each hammer is placed-in-order-to have its place in the environmentality of my blacksmith-artist shop. I am taking an ontological view which is counter to the modernist view where “everything, both natural, man-made things and even humanity itself” are “part of the potential resource pool for the systematic maximization of an ever-expanding technological exploitation of materials” (Crogan, 2007).
Figure 13 – The Equipmentality of Hammers in Context of Other Equipment – Photo by Boje November, 2011
On the anvil is a hammer (see Figure 13) that was in its place in Figure 1. It is a hammer I use rarely as it is very expensive, and obtained by me in a workshop by a master smith who makes hammers. A cheaper hammer lies alongside the anvil, its use for hammering when something delicate is not required. There is a very careful placement of the forge in relation to the anvil and a 70-year old post-vice, and to the water for cooling, with more hammers and tongs near-by within easy reach. The height of the anvil is constituted with particular care and concern, in relation to the height of the smith using it.

Heidegger (1996, p. 64, section 69 of Being & Time) refers to “beings encountered in taking care useful things.” There are many useful things in a blacksmith shop, things for forging, things for cooling, things for shaping usable metal material, measuring. The implication is in an ontological inquiry to “elucidate the kind of being of useful things” (ibid). There is no such thing as a useful ‘hammer-thing.’ Rather, what is useful “always belongs to the being of a useful thing” in a “totality of useful things in which” this useful hammer “thing can be what it is” (ibid). And this is defined as “something in order to …” (ibid). There are different kinds of in-order-to (“serviceability, helpfulness, usability, handiness”) that Heidegger lists as constituting “a totality of useful things” (ibid). In-order to analysis can give an ontological genesis to blacksmithing things, and usable materials, “in terms of their belonging to usable material, useful things always are in terms of their belonging to other useful things” (ibid). In blacksmithing this is in terms of smithing materials, coal, water, air, earth, hammer, tongs, forge, swedge-block, anvil, post-vice, chisels, fullers, layout table, windows, doors, rooms of the shop. Our ontological inquiry task is to bring the usable things and their materiality into view, and we cannot just show the hammer by itself, but must fill out the entire blacksmith shop “as a sum of real things” including “what we encounter as nearest to us, although we do not grasp it thematically” and not just what things are between the four-walls of the blacksmith shop, not the “geometrical, spatial sense” of the shop, “but rather as material for living” the life of a blacksmith (ibid). And this living the life of a smith is in the totality of equipmentality, and “is always already discovered before the individual useful thing” such as a hammer (ibid). So we must analyze ontologically the useful things and it is here in Being and Time (1996, ibid) that Heidegger speaks of hammers for the first time and how they:
“… show themselves genuinely only in this association, that is, hammering with the hammer, either grasps these beings thematically as occurring things nor does it even know of using or the structure of useful things as such. Association geared to useful things which show themselves genuinely only in this association, that is, hammering with the hammer, neither grasps these beings thematically as occurring things nor does it even know of using or the structure of useful things as such.” Section 70 (Heidegger, 1996, p. 65) provides still more Heideggerian interpretation and understanding of hammer and hammering:

Hammering does not just have a knowledge of the useful character of the hammer; rather, it has appropriated this useful thing in the most adequate way possible. When we take care of things, we are subordinate to the in-order-to constitutive for the actual useful thing in our association with it. The less we just stare at the thing called hammer, the more actively we use it, the more original our relation to it becomes and the more undisguisedly it is encountered as what it is, as a useful thing. The act of hammering itself discovers the specific "handiness" of the hammer.

**Was Heidegger a blacksmith?** I mean this ironically, for read that Heidegger seems to know his way around a blacksmith’s shop and the relation of its work-world to the power of Nature (ibid, p. 66, section 70):

Thus beings are accessible in the surrounding world which in themselves do not need to be produced and are always already at hand. Hammer, tongs, nails in themselves refer to—they consist of—steel, iron, metal, stone, wood. "Nature” is also discovered in the use of useful things, "nature” in the light of products of nature. But nature must not be understood here as what is merely objectively present, nor as the power of nature.

The blacksmith’s ‘work-world’ is a part of the “surrounding world” of Nature, and is thus discovered in encounters with it. A smith uses coal from Nature, water, air, earth, and fire.

In the context in 69-70 of eidos-morphe-hyle, and the techne, is an ‘artistic’ interpretation of hammer and hammering, that is neither an epistemic-idea (eidos), or an ontic (morphe), but (in their equipmentality) as much more ontological useful.
Figure 14 – Three approaches to inquiry

Section 79 (ibid, p. 73) makes the distinction with regard to smithing technology between the ontic and the ontological:

The useful thing "hammer" is also characterized by serviceability, but it does not thus become a sign. The "referral" of indicating is the ontic concretion of the what-for of serviceability, and determines a useful thing for that what-for. The referral "serviceability for," on the other hand, is an ontological, categorical determination of the useful thing as useful thing.

Continuing in Sections 83-84 (ibid, p. 78) Heidegger makes this distinction of hammering not being an ontical sign clearer: “The ‘indicating’ of signs, the ‘hammering’ of the hammer, however, are not qualities of beings. They are not qualities at all if this term is supposed to designate the ontological structure of a possible determination of things.”

Section 84 (ibid, p. 78) addresses serviceability, again using hammer and hammering: “The what-for of serviceability and the wherefore of usability prefigure the possible concretion of reference. The ‘indicating’ of signs, the ‘hammering’ of the hammer, however, are not qualities of beings. They are not qualities at all if this term is supposed to designate the
ontological structure of a possible determination of things.” And then on this same page and section (ibid) Heidegger ties blacksmithing to Da-sein itself:

For example, the thing at hand which we call a hammer has to do with hammering, the hammering has to do with fastening something, fastening something has to do with protection against bad weather. This protection "is" for the sake of providing shelter for Da-sein, that is, for the sake of a possibility of its being. Which relevance things at hand have is prefigured in terms of the total relevance. The total relevance which, for example, constitutes the things at hand in a workshop in their handiness is "earlier" than any single useful thing, as is the farmstead with all its utensils and neighboring lands.

The hammering! My own shop was built to protect against bad weather, the snow of winter, the blistering hot sun of an August day, and occasional rain. I provided shelter for the blacksmithing I was doing, not on a farmstead, but a ranch-stead in New Mexico.

Section 109 (ibid, p. 101) brings us into the connection Heidegger makes between the ontic (corporeal) and the ontological) through Da-sein:

The spatialization of Da-sein in its "corporeality," which contains a problematic of its own not to be discussed here, is also marked out in accordance with these directions. Thus things at hand and in use for the body, such as gloves, for example, that must go along with the hands’ movement, must be oriented in terms of right and left. Tools, however, which are held in the hand and moved with it, do not go along with the specifically "handlike" movement of the hand. Thus there are no right- and left-handed hammers, even though they are held with the hand as gloves are. But we must observe the fact that the directionality that belongs to de-distancing is grounded in Being-in-the-world. Left and right are not something "subjective" for which the subject has a feeling, but they are directions of orientation in a world which is always already at hand.

Heidegger (1962: section 109, P. 143) emphasizes that “left and right are not something ‘subjective’ for which the subject has a feeling” Rather in hammering there is one’s directedness (or directionality) in a world already taking in advance a direction towards a region of the metal being hammered on the anvil, which is de-severed (bring itself close) in a “circumspection of concern” (ibid).

With regard to gloves, I am not sure Heidegger is a blacksmith. I was taught not to wear gloves because one gets a false sense of security about the fire, the hot metal, and can get some
really severe burns grasping metals that is 900 to 1100 degrees, even though it looks quite cool. Yet he is sensitive to Being-in-the-world, to what it is to be left and right, not in the corporeal of a left or right-hand glove, but in the spatial sense of directionality and de-severances, where one discovers space circumspectively. A blacksmith moves the piece under the hammering, but maintains the hammer in the same spatial-arc in relation to the anvil, and the piece of iron or steel that is spatially encountered. The hammering maintains its directionality, which the smith moves the piece towards a region being de-severed with regard to its place: “Circumspective concern is de-severing which gives directionality” (Heidegger, 1962: section 109, p. 143). The blacksmith Being-in-the-world is guided beforehand in choosing a particular hammer with circumspection of concern for directionality and de-severance. It is out of this directionality that arises the directions of right and left, from Being-in-the-world, such as a blacksmith’s directedness within an equipment-world of a shop that already has ontological familiarity and an ontologically constitutive role that is is not merely a psychological or subjective (epistemic) memory or representation, but rather a directionality that is constitutive of Being-in spatiality, a spatiality of Being-in-the-world of the blacksmith formulation the ontological problem of which hammer, and what manner of hammering in the worldhood of smithing. This is for Heidegger (1996: section 109, p. 145) a concern, called “the circumspection of heedfulness.”

In blacksmithing, most hammers as Heidegger suggests, work for left handed and right handed smiths. There is one exception, the diagonal cross-peen hammer.

![Figure 15 – Left and Right Diagonal Peen Hammers](image)
With the diagonal peen hammer (at left in the figure), the left-handed smith has the ability to see where the hammer is hitting. The same for the diagonal peen hammer for right-handers (at right in the image). The cross-peen hammer (center of the figure) is suited for both left- and right-handers, but does not have the range of vision to see what one is hammering, as the other two.

Different translations of Being and Time, change the terminology. For example, in this next section on hammer and hammering, the 1996 edition uses the terms ‘statement’ and ‘mode of its being’ (section 154, p. 144):

1. Primarily, statement means **pointing out**. With this we adhere to the primordial meaning of logos as apophansis: to let being be seen from themselves. In the statement "the hammer is too heavy, what is discovered for sight is not a "meaning," but a being in the mode of its being at hand.

The 1962 translation uses the term ‘assertion’ instead of ‘statement’ and ‘ready-to-hand’ instead of being in the mode of its being at hand” (section 154, p. 196):

1. The primary signification of “assertion” is “pointing out” (Aufzeigen). In this we adhere to the primordial meaning of …. – letting an entity be seen for itself. In the assertion “The hammer is too heavy”, what is discovered for sight is not a ‘meaning’, but an entity in the way that it is ready-to-hand.

I prefer the terms ‘assertion’ and ‘ready-to-hand.

The second signification of the term “assertion” again uses the example of how “the hammer itself” has an antecedent (predicate) character of “too heavy” in an act of “pointing-out” of “what it is” (Heidegger, 1962: section 154-5, p. 196-7): “The second signification of ‘assertion; has its foundation in the first.” For example pointing-out the subject, the hammer is what it is (ontically), has an antecedent ‘it’s too heavy’ (its definite character) for this task. In articulating “the hammer that is too heavy” we have taken an antecedent step back and confront what is already “explicitly” manifest (ibid, p. 196):

2. “Assertion” means no less than “predication”.

In the third signification of ‘assertion’, “communication” understood in an ontological (existential) manner so “Others can ‘share’ with the person making the assertion” (ibid, p. 197):
3. “Assertion” means “communication” [Mitteilung], speaking forth [Heraussage].

We can now bring together the three significations of ‘assertion’ (Heidegger, 1962: section 156-7, p. 199): “‘assertion’ as ‘a pointing-out which gives something a definite character and which communicates’”. That is, I point-out the hammers, such as in the figures above, giving some definite character by an antecedent structure of interpretation (Being-in-the-world) already worked out, and by articulation communicate it with Others. And with the illustration of the hammer in its three sorts of assertion, Heidegger introduces fre0having, fore-sight, and fore-conception (ibid, p. 199):

“The hammer is heavy”, “Heaviness belongs to the hammer”, The hammer has the property of heaviness”. When an assertion is made, some fore-conception is always implied, but it remains for the most part inconspicuous, because the language already hides in itself a developed way of conceiving. Like any interpretation whatever, assertion necessarily has a fore-having, a fore-sight, and a fore-conceptin as its existential foundations.

And as Heidegger continues to develop these ontological fore-ways, he continues his illustration of the hammer to bring out what we will call fore-caring (ibid, p. 200):

“This Thing—a hammer—has the property of heaviness:/ In concernful circumspection there are no such assertions ‘at first’. But such circumspection has of course its specific ways of interpreting, and these, as compared with the ‘theoretical judgment’ just mentioned, may take some such fore as ‘The hammer is too heavy’, or rather just ‘Too heavy!’, ‘Hand me the other hammer!’ Interpretation is carried out primordially not in a theoretical statement but in the action of circumspective concern—laying aside the unsuitable tool, or exchanging it ‘without wasting words.’ … The entity which is held in our fore-having—for instance, the hammer—is proximally ready-to-hand as equipment.

Where as fore-having of a hammer ready-to-hand to perform some hammering task there can also be fore-sight aimed at some hammer present-at-hand covering up of readiness-to-hand, such as this hammer is too heavy, ‘pass me the other one there,’ for there is something about that other hammer in the totality of involvements that gives a new possibility that is constituted by the antecedent of its environmentality. And it is precisely this ontological-environmentality, antecedent to the ontic present-at-hand that “dwindles” or “levels” the primordial of the
“existential-hermeneutical” (1962, p. 201) by reducing it to an epistemic judgment or theoretical assertion.

Sections 361-2 of the 1962 translation (p. 412-3) explicate how the hammer that is ready-to-hand ontologically in the totality of involvements of equipmentality (other equipment relations) and environmentality (all the varied environments-at-hand) gets dwindled or leveled when treated ontically, as present-at-hand corporeal Thing:

When we are using a tool circumspectively, we can say, for instance, that the hammer is too heavy or too light. Even the proposition that the hammer is heavy can give expression to a concerned deliberation, and signify that the hammer is not an easy one – in other words, that it takes force to handle it, or that it will be hard to manipulate.

For example, in the next image is a photo of ‘Big Red’ a power hammer I built from recycled iron and steel. It weights over three thousand pounds, is powered by a swamp cooler motor, and is definitely a heavy hammer. I use it with concerned deliberation, because its force is too much for some jobs, and may not fit the delicate requirements of a job at hand.
To continue with Heidegger (section 361-2, p. 412-3):

“But this proposition can also mean that the entity before us, which we already know circumspectively as a hammer, has a weight – that is to say, it has the ‘property’ of heaviness: it exerts a pressure on what lies beneath it, and it falls if this is removed.

In my blacksmith shop Big Red is heavy, a mass of several thousand pounds, standing seven feet tall, and rests on a sheet of ½ inch steel, and that rests on the dessert floor instead of concrete because that concrete would crack and shatter with the persistent pounding of a heavy hammer. And Big Red is situation in its place in the shop, among that totality of ‘involvement-relationships’ within the equipment totality of the shop.

Why is it that what we are talking about – the heavy hammer – shows itself differently when our way of talking is thus modified?

It is because we are talking about how this heavy hammer from a distance of its equipment situation, ignoring its ready-to-hand in the work process, and instead just looking at what is
present-at-hand, its weight, gravity, mass. It is this change over from the ontological to the ontico that intrigues Heidegger. In the ontic, we can take a “scientific attitude” that reduces and limits, what is the ready-to-hand and renders only the theme, instead of looking around “someone’s environment – his milieu – in the context of a historiological biography” (ibid, p. 412-3). Big Red, for example has an historical emergence and utilization and role in the shop that would be what Heidegger calls “objects for the science of economics” (ibid, p. 413) if and only when a hammer such as Big Red does not lose its character as equipment in the work-world of a blacksmith shop. If we take an epistemic theoretical attitude it also modifies of changes-over, and reduces ontological understanding.

In the ‘physical’ assertion that ‘the hammer is heavy’ we overlook not only the tool-character of the entity we encounter, but also something that belongs to any ready-to-hand equipment: its place. Its place becomes a matter of indifference.

Placing each and every hammer in a blacksmith ship is a matter of circumspective concern and caring. “This does not mean that what is present-at-hand loses its ‘location’ altogether” (ibid, p. 413). Rather, Big Red’s place becomes a spatio-temporal position or “world-point” which ontically (present-at-hand) is not distinguished from any other point (ibid). However, in the ready-to-hand of equipment in a blacksmith shop, there is a multiplicity of places of hammers, each having its place in the work-environment, a realm that the present-at-hand ignores by its method of inquiry. It is with headful concern and care, that a smith decides where to locate hand-held and power hammers in the shop, so they are ready-to-hand. In setting up work to be forged, the hammer most necessary are set out, especially when forge-welding, where the delay of half a second can prevent the weld from taking hold.

**Storytelling and Ontology** - I will be using storytelling to in epistemic, ontical, and ontological ways. My research on storytelling (1991, 1995, 2001, 2008, & 2011) has been about the relationships between (epistemic) retrospective-narratives, (ontico) living stories unfolding in the immediate present, and a term I invented in 2001, called ‘antenarrative.’ In the initial definition, antenarrative was two meanings of the prefix, ‘ante’: (1) before-narrative, those little wow moments of experience that did not get incorporated into retrospective-narrative, and (2) bet-of-transformation, meaning predictions about future end-states. In 2011, I have developed two additional meanings of antenarrative, and these are the ones I want to test out in the field.
studies of blacksmith-art businesses. Antenarrative (3) defined as antecedent in ways that are pre-ontological in relation to the ontological (such as in Immanuel Kant’s work on the a priori in dialectic relation to universalizing forces), and antenarrative (4) the anteriority, which is defined following Heidegger’s (1962, *Being and Time*) work on a primordial approach to space, time, and matter. The third and fourth approaches to antenarrative take a pre-ontological and ontological approach, respectively.

**References**


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i The exact footnote wording (1996): “Why? eidos-morphe-hyle, after all, come from techne, thus from an ‘artistic’ interpretation! if morphe is not interpreted as eidos, idea.”

ii [http://www.answers.com/topic/classical-element#ixzz1g3KEINE1](http://www.answers.com/topic/classical-element#ixzz1g3KEINE1)