

Quantum Storytelling: Theory, Method, Practice, and the Analysis of AI Corporations

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Abstract

Quantum storytelling is an emerging transdisciplinary framework that applies core concepts from quantum physics—indeterminacy, superposition, entanglement, wave–particle duality, and non-locality—to the analysis of organizational storytelling, change management, and ontological inquiry. This essay presents quantum storytelling's theoretical framework, a complete methodology, and four original analyses applying the framework to AI corporations and their leaders. The theoretical contribution is a triadic model relating grand narratives, living stories, and antenarratives through quantum-physical processes of collapse, superposition, and entanglement. The methodology elaborates six phases of quantum storytelling research, including observer positioning, living story collection, seven-antenarrative process mapping, fractal pattern analysis, quantum dialogue, and reflexive reporting. The four analyses are presented as standalone applications: (1) Quantum storytelling and AI corporations—superposition, entanglement, and wave function collapse in AI corporate narrative; (2) AI leaders and the seven antenarrative processes—applying Boje's seven-B framework to Sam Altman, Dario Amodei, Elon Musk, Sundar Pichai, and Mark Zuckerberg; (3) The AI corporation ecosystem as Tamara-land—mapping the simultaneous, polyphonic storytelling rooms of the AI industry; and (4) The tesseract model of AI corporate narrative—Walker's four-dimensional antenarrative structure applied to the competing story dimensions of AI corporations. Together these analyses constitute a quantum storytelling research program for the critical study of AI corporate power, narrative manipulation, and the suppressed living stories of AI's hidden labor force.

Keywords: quantum storytelling, antenarrative, Tamara-land, tesseract, AI corporations, AI leaders, living story, fractal change management, seven antenarrative processes, organizational storytelling

PART I: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Quantum Storytelling: Theory, Method, Practice, and the Analysis of AI Corporations

Introduction: The Main Contribution

Organizational storytelling has long operated within a fundamentally Newtonian paradigm. The dominant frameworks—from Weick's (1995) sensemaking theory to Czarniawska's (1997) institutional narrative approach—treat stories as retrospective, determinate objects: coherent accounts constructed after events have occurred, rendering ambiguous experience into plausible meaning. These are Newtonian assumptions: determinism, linearity, the sovereignty of retrospective observation, and the separability of stories from the contexts that produce them.

Quantum storytelling (Boje, 2011a, 2012a, 2014a) proposes a fundamental paradigm shift. Drawing on quantum physics—indeterminacy, superposition, entanglement, wave-particle duality, and non-locality—quantum storytelling argues that organizational stories are not determinate objects awaiting retrospective recovery but indeterminate, entangled, and prospective phenomena constituted in the very act of their telling, listening, and enactment. Like quantum systems, organizational stories exist in states of superposition until observed: they are simultaneously multiple possible stories, none fully actual, until a context collapses the wave function into a particular narrative configuration.

This essay has four parts. Part I presents the theoretical core of quantum storytelling, including the triadic model of Empiric Stories, Epistemic Narratives, and Ontological Living Stories, and five key theoretical points: superposition and indeterminacy, entanglement, fractal self-similarity, ontological forecaring, and the observer effect. Part II presents a complete methodology for quantum storytelling research in six phases. Part III presents four standalone analyses applying quantum storytelling, antenarrative, Tamara-land, and the tesseract to AI corporations and their leaders. Part IV offers discussion and conclusion. A complete APA reference list is provided.

The Herbert Test: Eight Quantum Realities and the Legitimacy of Quantum Storytelling

Nick Herbert's *Quantum Reality: Beyond the New Physics* (1985) poses a challenge that quantum storytelling cannot afford to ignore. Herbert documents eight competing interpretations of quantum mechanics—eight distinct pictures of what reality fundamentally IS—and notes that physicists cannot yet determine experimentally which, if any, is correct. What is not in dispute is that each of these eight quantum realities describes a genuinely different world with genuinely different ontological commitments. The same demand must apply to quantum storytelling: putting the word 'quantum' ahead of 'storytelling' is viable if and only if there is a genuine interaction—a substantive transformation in what storytelling IS, not merely what we call it. Without that interaction, we engage in quantum woo woo: the ignorant attachment of quantum vocabulary to storytelling that produces nonsense instead of sense. Herbert's eight quantum realities provide the test. They are organized here as Herbert organizes them—four in Chapter 9,

four in Chapter 10—with each reality followed by its specific implication for storytelling ontology.

The test has three parts. For any quantum concept deployed in quantum storytelling, the researcher must be able to specify: (a) which of Herbert's eight quantum realities grounds it; (b) how that quantum reality changes what organizational story IS—not merely what we call it; and (c) what genuinely different research questions or findings result from that ontological commitment. Where this three-part test cannot be passed, the quantum qualifier is unearned.

Chapter 9: Four Quantum Realities

Quantum Reality #1 — Copenhagen Interpretation, Part I: There Is No Deep Reality (Bohr/Heisenberg)

Niels Bohr's claim, summarized by Herbert, is among the most radical in the history of science: there is no quantum world—there is only an abstract quantum description. The phenomena we observe are real enough, but they do not rest on a deeper layer of reality that exists independently of observation. Werner Heisenberg confirmed: 'The hope that new experiments will lead us back to objective events in time and space is about as well founded as the hope of discovering the end of the world in the unexplored regions of the Antarctic.' Physicist N. David Mermin summarized the anti-realist position in terms that leave little room for misunderstanding: 'We now know that the moon is demonstrably not there when nobody looks.'

Applied to storytelling, Copenhagen I means there is no deep story beneath the stories organizations tell. Classical narrative theory—from Weick's (1995) sensemaking to Czarniawska's (1997) institutional narrative approach—assumes that stories represent pre-existing organizational events: something happened, and the story is its account. Copenhagen I forecloses this assumption entirely. There is no 'what really happened' waiting beneath the narrative to be recovered by better research methods. The organizational narrative does not represent reality; it constitutes it. This is not woo woo because it produces a specific methodological consequence different from classical narrative analysis: researchers cannot treat story as data about pre-narrative organizational facts. Every interview response and organizational account is constitutive, not representational. The research question shifts from 'what actually happened?' to 'how is organizational reality being constituted through this telling?'

Quantum Reality #2 — Copenhagen Interpretation, Part II: Reality Is Created by Observation (Wheeler)

John Wheeler's maxim states: 'No elementary phenomenon is a real phenomenon until it is an observed phenomenon.' Observation does not reveal pre-existing facts—it creates them. The act of measurement is not a private act of discovery but a constitutive public event. This is the second plank of the Copenhagen interpretation, which Herbert presents as distinct from the first: not only is there no deep reality, but the phenomenal reality that does exist is produced by the act of observation. 'You create your own reality,' as Herbert puts it, summarizing Wheeler's position.

Applied to storytelling, Copenhagen II means no organizational story-event is real until it is witnessed—told, heard, enacted, documented. The researcher who enters an organization to

study its stories does not find stories already there waiting to be collected; the researcher's act of inquiry co-constitutes the story-events that emerge in response. The manager who asks employees 'what is the story here?' creates the story they receive as an answer, not merely elicits one. This is categorically different from classical ethnography's acknowledgment of observer effects as distortions to minimize. In quantum storytelling, observation IS constitution: the observer does not disturb a pre-existing story—the observer's attention is what makes the story event real. This is the quantum ontological ground for the quantum reflexivity requirement in the methodology of Part II.

Quantum Reality #3 — Reality Is an Undivided Wholeness (Bohm/Heitler)

David Bohm argued that quantum physics reveals 'unbroken wholeness which denies the classical analyzability of the world into separately and independently existing parts.' Herbert is careful to distinguish this from ordinary connectivity: gravity and other ordinary connections fall off with distance. Quantum wholeness is fundamentally different—it is non-local, undiminished by spatial or temporal separation, 'a true mingling of distant beings that reaches across the galaxy as forcefully as it reaches across the garden.' Walter Heitler added that the act of observation dissolves the boundary between observer and observed: 'Object and subject have become inseparable from each other.'

Applied to storytelling, undivided wholeness means organizational stories cannot be meaningfully analyzed as separable units without destroying what is most essential about them. The dominant methodology of narrative analysis—identifying, coding, and categorizing discrete story elements—imposes separability on what is inherently non-separable. The meaning of a story told in a boardroom cannot be fully understood in isolation from stories told simultaneously on the factory floor, in external media, and in the living stories of workers whose voices never reach official accounts—not because these causally influence each other through known channels (that would be ordinary connectivity), but because they exist as aspects of an undivided narrative whole. This is the quantum ground for the Tamara-land model: the simultaneous storytelling happening in different organizational rooms constitutes one undivided story-reality that no single observer, following any single storyline, can fully map.

Quantum Reality #4 — The Many-Worlds Interpretation: Reality Consists of Proliferating Parallel Universes (Everett)

Hugh Everett's 1957 proposal, which Herbert describes as among 'the most outrageous' of quantum claims, holds that for every situation in which several outcomes are possible, all outcomes actually occur—each in a distinct universe that branches off at the moment of quantum measurement. Rather than one outcome being selected and the rest annihilated, the universe splits. Each branch is equally real. Herbert notes that despite its 'bizarre conclusion,' Everett's proposal 'has gained considerable support among quantum theorists' because it resolves the quantum measurement problem without requiring any special role for observation.

Applied to storytelling, the many-worlds interpretation means every organizational narrative decision—which story prevails, which account is suppressed—creates branching story-worlds in which the suppressed alternatives actually occur. The organizational stories that are

excluded from official accounts—worker safety complaints that were overridden, dissenting strategic visions that were voted down, whistleblower accounts that were discredited—are not false or merely hypothetical. They are real in their own branches of organizational story-reality. This is the quantum ontological ground for Boje's antenarrative methodology: collecting suppressed, marginalized, and pre-emergent stories is not merely recovering interesting alternatives—it is accessing real branches of organizational story-reality that the collapse into official grand narrative has foreclosed. The many-worlds interpretation grants ontological seriousness, not just methodological interest, to the living stories that grand narratives exclude.

Chapter 10: Quantum Realities—Four More

Quantum Reality #5 — Quantum Logic: The World Obeys a Non-Human Kind of Reasoning (Finkelstein/Birkhoff/von Neumann)

Herbert presents quantum logic as among the deepest implications of quantum physics. Garrett Birkhoff and John von Neumann showed that quantum propositions do not obey the classical distributive law of Boolean algebra. David Finkelstein argued: 'Einstein threw out the classical concept of time; Bohr throws out the classical concept of truth... Our classical ideas of logic are simply wrong in a basic practical way.' The analogy Herbert draws to Einstein's use of non-Euclidean geometry is instructive: just as the geometry of real space had to be discovered empirically rather than assumed from common sense, the logic appropriate to quantum and organizational story-reality may have to be discovered rather than assumed.

Applied to storytelling, quantum logic means antenarratives exist in a logical state that classical narrative analysis cannot represent. Before an antenarrative crystallizes into a coherent narrative, it is neither simply true nor simply false; it exists in a genuinely non-distributive logical state. Classical qualitative research codes story elements as true, false, credible, or uncertain. Quantum logic reveals this coding to be a category error: it forces Boolean categories onto non-Boolean story-states, destroying the essential nature of the antenarrative in the act of analysis. The methodological implication is that antenarrative analysis requires a logic that can hold contradictory possibilities simultaneously without resolving them prematurely—a logic of superposition rather than exclusion.

Quantum Reality #6 — Neorealism: The World Is Made of Ordinary Objects—But They Are Non-Local (Einstein/de Broglie/Bohm)

Herbert presents neorealism—the position of Einstein, de Broglie, and Bohm—as the most common-sense of the eight quantum realities: the world is made of ordinary objects with definite attributes whether observed or not. But Bell's theorem, as Herbert explains at length, proves that any such realistic account must incorporate non-locality. As Herbert summarizes Bell's conclusion: when a quantum system is measured, its attributes are 'determined not just by events happening at the actual measurement site but by events arbitrarily distant.' Measurement 'is not a private act, but a public event in whose details large portions of the universe instantly participate.' Bell's theorem is a mathematical proof, not a conjecture: it does not merely suggest non-locality; it proves it.

Applied to storytelling, neorealism with non-locality means: if organizational stories have real meanings—meanings that exist whether anyone is currently observing them or not—then Bell's theorem implies those meanings are non-locally correlated. A story's meaning in one organizational context is instantaneously affected by what meanings are being created in distant contexts, not through any causal chain but through quantum-style non-local entanglement. The AI corporations whose storytelling is analyzed in Part III are not merely influencing each other's narratives through competitive pressure and media cycles—they are non-locally entangled in a shared narrative field whose total meaning no single organization controls or fully comprehends. This is a specific empirical claim, not a metaphor.

Quantum Reality #7 — Consciousness Creates Reality (Von Neumann/Wigner/Stapp)

Von Neumann's mathematical analysis of quantum measurement led him to a conclusion Herbert documents as among the most philosophically demanding in physics: physical attributes do not exist without a conscious observer to constitute them. Eugene Wigner stated: 'It is not possible to formulate the laws of quantum mechanics in a fully consistent way without reference to the consciousness... the very study of the external world led to the conclusion that the content of the consciousness is an ultimate reality.' Henry Stapp, Walter Heitler, and Fritz London each developed the view that only a conscious observer genuinely collapses the quantum wave function—not merely a measuring instrument.

Applied to storytelling, consciousness-created reality means stories do not exist—even as potentials—without conscious witnesses. Written documents, recorded speeches, archived organizational communications, and digital databases are not stories; they are story-materials. The story itself comes into existence only when a conscious reader, listener, or participant engages it. For AI corporations—which generate vast archives of documentation, algorithmic outputs, and AI-generated communications—this has acute implications. The exponential growth of AI-generated content does not produce an exponentially growing stock of organizational stories: it produces an exponentially growing stock of story-material awaiting conscious constitution. This quantum reality grounds the irreducibly first-person, witness-centered dimension of quantum storytelling fieldwork that no computational text analysis can replace.

Quantum Reality #8 — Heisenberg's Duplex World: Potentials and Actualities

Werner Heisenberg proposed, as Herbert recounts, that the world is fundamentally twofold: a realm of potentia—quantum possibilities, tendencies, and urges—and a realm of actual phenomena. Heisenberg wrote: 'The atoms and the elementary particles themselves are not as real; they form a world of potentialities or possibilities rather than one of things or facts.' The probability wave 'means a tendency for something. It is a quantitative version of the old concept of potentia in Aristotle's philosophy. It introduces something standing in the middle between the idea of an event and the actual event, a strange kind of physical reality just in the middle between possibility and reality.' The measurement act bridges the two realms: one quantum possibility is singled out and surfaces in the actual world as a determinate event. Herbert notes that 'the foundation of our everyday world, according to Heisenberg, is no more substantial than a promise.'

This is the most direct and specific quantum grounding for Boje's antenarrative framework—and its most important implication for answering the quantum woo woo question. The antenarrative IS Heisenberg's potentia: the field of organizational story-possibilities that exists before any particular narrative is actualized. Living stories are the actualizing events—the moments when one possibility surfaces from the potentia into the actual. Grand narratives are the sedimented, fully actual results of repeated wave-function collapse: the official story that has crystallized out of the field of possibilities. The difference from classical narrative theory is categorical and consequential. Classical theory treats the pre-narrative stage as merely incomplete narrative—fragments awaiting assembly into a coherent whole. Heisenberg's duplex world says the antenarrative stage is ontologically richer than the grand narrative that follows it: it contains coexistent, contradictory possibilities that actuality must foreclose. When an AI corporation's official story crystallizes into investor relations copy, strategic vision documents, and public relations campaigns, it is not more complete than the antenarratives that preceded it—it is less complete, because it has foreclosed the full field of potentia. Boje's antenarrative methodology is the practice of listening back into that foreclosed potentia: recovering what the wave-function collapse of official narrative has excluded from actuality.

The Quantum Woo Woo Test: A Summary

Herbert's eight quantum realities, taken together, establish that the difference quantum physics makes to storytelling is not a difference in vocabulary but a difference in ontology. Each of the eight realities identifies a specific way in which the quantum world differs from the classical Newtonian world, and each—when applied consistently to organizational storytelling—transforms what a story IS: from representation to constitution (QR #1); from discovery to creation (QR #2); from separable unit to aspect of undivided wholeness (QR #3); from sole survivor of competing possibilities to one branch among many real branches (QR #4); from Boolean proposition to non-distributive quantum logical state (QR #5); from locally-determined meaning to non-locally correlated meaning (QR #6); from document-stored content to consciously-constituted event (QR #7); and from incomplete fragment to ontologically richer potentia (QR #8).

None of these transformations is a metaphor. Each is a specific ontological claim about the nature of organizational story that produces specific methodological consequences different from those of classical narrative analysis. Where these differences do not obtain—where 'quantum' functions as an intensifier for 'complex,' 'uncertain,' or 'holistic' without grounding in any of the eight specific quantum realities Herbert catalogs—we are in the territory of quantum woo woo: the ignorant attachment of quantum prestige to storytelling that produces nonsense instead of sense. The essay that follows is committed to passing Herbert's test at every point.

Theoretical Framework

From Newtonian to Quantum Organization Theory

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Classical organization theory shares a cluster of Newtonian assumptions that quantum storytelling brings into question: *determinism* (organizational events have determinate causes that narrative can recover), *linearity* (processes unfold sequentially), *retrospective sovereignty* (sensemaking is the primary relationship to story; Weick, 1995), and *separability* (stories, actors, and contexts can be analytically isolated). Quantum physics challenged each of these assumptions at the level of physical description: Heisenberg's uncertainty principle established ontological indeterminacy; Bohr's complementarity principle established wave–particle duality; Aspect et al.'s (1982) experimental confirmation of quantum entanglement established non-local correlation as a physical reality.

Boje (2011a, 2012a) proposed that this quantum-physical vocabulary—indeterminacy, superposition, entanglement, the observer effect—provides a richer set of conceptual tools for understanding the complex, prospective nature of organizational story than the Newtonian framework that has implicitly governed the field. As Henderson (2021) noted in her independent scholarly assessment, quantum storytelling represents "a fully post-Newtonian framework for organizational inquiry" (p. 246).

Table 1. Newtonian Organization Theory versus Quantum Organization Theory (adapted from Boje, 2011a, 2012a; Herbert, 1985). Synthesis: Stories do not represent pre-existing organizational reality; they constitute it upon observation.

Dimension	Newtonian Organization Theory	Quantum Organization Theory
Causality	Determinism: organizational events have linear, traceable causes and effects	Indeterminacy: multiple narrative states coexist simultaneously until an observational context collapses them
Narrative status	Single authoritative narrative; retrospective sensemaking displaces alternatives	Living narrative: multiple possible stories in real-time becoming; superposition of accounts until observed
Temporal orientation	Retrospective: meaning is derived from settled past events	Prospective: antenarrative attention to possible futures not yet determined
Inter-organizational	Stories are produced and bounded independently within organizational units	Entanglement: one organization's narrative is non-locally correlated with others across the field

Ontological foundation	Generativity: stories reflect and report a stable, pre-existing organizational reality	Constellation: observation constitutes rather than reflects organizational reality; stories bring their referent into being
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Figure 1: Illustration of the Key Concepts of Quantum Storytelling: Indeterminacy: Antenarrative Bs, Narrative Wave Function Collapse, Navigating Tamara-Land, Revealing Suppressed Living Stories, and Quantum Storytelling Triad.

Figure 1 maps the conceptual architecture of quantum storytelling across five interlocking dimensions. Indeterminacy — the foundational quantum commitment — establishes that organizational stories exist in superposition: multiple possible narrative configurations held simultaneously until an observational act forces collapse into a dominant form (Boje, 2012a; Herbert, 1985). The seven antenarrative processes — the Bs of Beneath, Before, Between, Bet, Becoming, Beyond, and Being — constitute the structural field through which narrative indeterminacy is organized at the organizational level, mapping the pre-narrative architecture from which both dominant and suppressed stories emerge (Boje, 2001, 2014a; Boje & Saylors, 2023). Narrative wave function collapse designates the ontological event through which one story-state achieves dominance while alternative configurations are suppressed — visible in moments such as earnings calls, executive keynotes, and regulatory testimonies that enforce a single narrative reading on a previously indeterminate field (Boje, 2011a, 2012a). Navigating Tamara-Land captures the irreducibly multi-perspectival spatial structure of organizational storytelling: a single institutional house in which multiple, simultaneous, non-identical story performances unfold across separate rooms, with no single observer positioned to witness the

whole (Boje, 1995, 2011a). The quantum storytelling triad of Epistemic Narratives, Empiric Stories, and Ontological Living Stories identifies the three ontological levels at which meaning is produced and contested in organizations — from the institutionally authorized to the systematically suppressed (Boje & Saylor, 2014; Boje, 2001). Together, these five dimensions reframe storytelling not as the representation of pre-existing facts but as ontological participation in the constitution of organizational reality.

The Quantum Storytelling Triad

The theoretical core of quantum storytelling is a triadic model distinguishing three ontological levels (Boje & Saylor, 2014). *Empiric Stories* are observable story performances in meetings, reports, and conversations—the collapsed wave function, the determinate outcomes of narrative selection that have already suppressed alternative possibilities. *Epistemic Narratives* are the institutionally authorized knowledge-stories—strategic plans, annual reports, official histories—that claim to represent organizational reality as a whole while suppressing competing accounts. *Ontological Living Stories* are the most fundamental level: immediate, embodied, pre-reflective story experiences—the stories that are lived rather than told, existing in superposition as multiple possible stories simultaneously present in the web of organizational experience.

These three levels are connected through *antenarrative* processes—the fragmented, prospective story bets Boje (2001) introduced as a challenge to retrospective sensemaking theory. Antenarrative is the wave function of organizational story: the indeterminate, superposed state of multiple possible stories that precedes and exceeds any particular narrative collapse. Svane (2019) extended this framework, arguing that organizational storytelling in the quantum age operates as a "living medium" of entangled, heteroglossic voices shaping emergent organizational futures.

Table 2. *The Quantum Storytelling Triad: Three Ontological Levels of Organizational Narrative (Boje & Saylor, 2014; Boje, 2001).*

Level	Story Type	Characteristics	Organizational Examples
Surface	Epistemic	Institutional, authorized knowledge-	Annual reports; regulatory
	Narratives	stories that organize official accounts	filings; official AI mission
		of mission, vision, and values;	statements; authorized
		"organizing the world's information";	corporate histories; strategic
Middle	Stories	formally documented and sanctioned	communications
		Observable story performances —	Earnings calls; executive
		the "collapsed wave functions" of the	keynotes; press releases;
		narrative field; measurable,	

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		documentable story events anchored in time and place	tweets; product launches; conference presentations
Foundation	Ontological	Fragmented, personal, embodied	Worker testimony; content
	Living Stories	human experiences; multiple possible stories in a web of lived reality; the subterranean layer that grand institutional narratives systematically suppress	moderation trauma; suppressed internal dissent; embodied organizational knowledge that never reaches the documented record

Key Theoretical Points

Superposition and Indeterminacy

Before a story is told in a particular context, it exists in superposition—as multiple possible stories, none yet actualized. The act of telling, like quantum measurement, collapses this superposition into a particular story, suppressing other possibilities. Boje (2012a) argued in the *Journal of Change Management* that this means organizational change cannot be modeled as implementing a determinate plan but must be understood as the ongoing collapse and recomposition of story superpositions—a process fundamentally prospective and uncertain rather than retrospective and determinate.

Entanglement and Non-Locality

Stories told in one department, time period, or organizational context are non-locally correlated with stories told elsewhere in ways that cannot be fully explained by direct causal chains. This challenges the separability assumption of mainstream organizational narrative research. Svane (2019) extended the entanglement point through Bakhtin's heteroglossia, arguing that organizational storytelling in the quantum age is a living medium of entangled, heteroglossic voices—a multiplicity of simultaneously present, mutually constitutive narrative strands.

Fractal Self-Similarity Across Organizational Scales

Boje (2014a, 2015, 2018a) developed fractal storytelling analysis to map the self-similar patterns that exist "before and beneath" dominant institutional narratives. The same narrative pattern—dominance, suppression, resistance, emergence—repeats across different scales of organizational life, from individual conversations to departmental stories to grand narratives to industry-wide epistemic frameworks, but is invisible from within any single level of analysis.

Ontological Forecaring

Boje (2011a) introduced *forecaring* (*Vor-sorge*—Heideggerian care-in-advance) as the central ontological concept: the prospective, care-ful attunement to possible futures that characterizes organizational life at its most fundamental level. Where Weick's (1995) retrospective sensemaking describes how organizations make sense of what has happened, quantum storytelling describes how organizations care for what might happen—how living stories and antenarratives are already oriented toward possible futures that official accounts cannot yet see.

The Quantum Observer Effect

Measuring a quantum system necessarily disturbs it—there is no "view from nowhere." Boje (2012a, 2018b) proposed that organizational fieldwork operates analogously: the researcher who enters an organization to study its stories co-constitutes particular configurations of organizational story through the act of inquiry itself. Quantum storytelling fieldwork therefore embraces "quantum reflexivity": explicit attention to the ways the researcher's presence, questions, and theoretical commitments co-constitute the stories produced in inquiry.

PART II: COMPLETE QUANTUM STORYTELLING METHODOLOGY

A Complete Methodology for Quantum Storytelling Research

Quantum storytelling methodology (QSM) is not a single technique but an integrated research design comprising six phases, each derived from the theoretical commitments elaborated in Part I. QSM is applicable to any organizational context but is presented here with primary reference to the study of AI corporations as a demonstration site. It departs from conventional qualitative methodology in three fundamental ways: (1) it treats the researcher as a co-constitutive participant in the quantum storytelling field, not an external observer; (2) it operates simultaneously across multiple ontological levels of story (empiric, epistemic, and ontological living story); and (3) it applies fractal analysis across organizational scales rather than focusing on any single level of analysis.

Table 3. The Six-Phase Quantum Storytelling Methodology (Boje, 2011a, 2014a; Boje & Saylor, 2023). Center: the Entangled Observer — the researcher positioned within the field, not above it.

Phase	Name	Core Operation	Research Output
1	Observer	Position the researcher reflexively as	Written reflexive observer
	Positioning	entangled participant, not external observer; disclose institutional affiliations, theoretical commitments, and relation to the storytelling field	statement identifying communities, institutions, and narrative investments shaping the researcher's observational position
2	Multi-Level	Simultaneously gather Epistemic Narratives,	Multi-level story archive
	Collection	Empiric Stories, and Ontological Living Stories across all three triadic levels; Living Stories require facilitated contact, not direct interview	spanning all three ontological layers of organizational narrative
3	Antenarrative	Trace the seven Bs — Beneath, Before,	Seven-antenarrative map
	Mapping	Between, Bet, Becoming, Beyond, Being — in each narrative layer; produce a structural map of the organization's pre-narrative architecture	identifying foundational assumptions, historical constructions, relational

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			entanglements, prospective bets, and suppressed possibilities
4	Fractal Pattern	Identify self-similar narrative structures	Fractal pattern report
	Analysis	repeating across micro, meso, and macro organizational scales; trace patterns from institutional press releases to Living Story fragments	documenting cross-scale narrative reproduction and the structural logic connecting surface and suppressed accounts
5	Quantum Dialogue	Excavate suppressed Ontological Living Stories through facilitated critique and story surfacing; bring the Living Story level into active dialogue with Epistemic and Empiric levels	Story excavation findings; suppressed Living Stories placed in structural relation to the dominant epistemic and empiric narrative field
6	Reflexive Reporting	Acknowledge that the researcher's observational position has collapsed particular wave functions; make the observer effect visible as a methodological and ethical commitment	Quantum reflexive research account that explicitly attends to the co-constitutive role of the researcher in producing the story configuration analyzed

Phase 1: Quantum Observer Positioning

Before any data collection begins, the researcher must establish their quantum observer position. This requires explicit reflection on the theoretical commitments, institutional affiliations, personal histories, and power relations that will shape which story configurations are produced in the course of inquiry. Observer positioning is not a bias to be minimized but an ontological condition to be mapped: the researcher is entangled with the storytelling field before they arrive.

Operationally, observer positioning requires the researcher to produce a written account of their position relative to the storytelling field, identifying the communities, institutions, and power structures with which they are affiliated or opposed; the antenarrative bets they are implicitly making about what they expect to find; and the living stories from their own experience that are shaping their orientation toward the field. This account becomes a methodological document that is revisited and revised throughout the research process as the observer's entanglement with the field evolves.

For the study of AI corporations, observer positioning requires reflection on the researcher's relationship to AI systems, AI corporations, and the technological imaginary of the

contemporary period. A researcher who uses AI tools is already entangled with the storytelling field they are studying—a fact that quantum reflexivity makes visible rather than suppressing.

Phase 2: Multi-Level Story Collection

Quantum storytelling research collects stories across all three ontological levels simultaneously. At the *empiric story* level, the researcher gathers the observable story performances of organizational actors: speeches, press releases, earnings calls, congressional testimony, published interviews, social media posts, and official reports. These are the surface-level, collapsed-wave-function stories that official organizational accounts produce for particular audiences. At the *epistemic narrative* level, the researcher analyzes the institutionally authorized knowledge-stories: strategic plans, mission statements, annual reports, governance documents, regulatory filings, and the media representations through which organizations present themselves as coherent and legitimate actors.

At the *ontological living story* level—the most challenging and most important—the researcher seeks the immediate, embodied, pre-reflective story experiences of organizational actors that are not yet narrated into coherent accounts. Living story collection methods include: extended ethnographic observation of routine organizational practices; informal conversation and "story-catching" in non-interview settings; analysis of the micro-stories and anecdotes that circulate in organizational life outside official channels; attention to somatic and affective dimensions of organizational experience (what Boje (2018b) calls "body-knowing"); and analysis of the counter-narratives, rumors, leaks, and whistleblower accounts that represent living stories breaking through epistemic narrative surfaces.

Boje's (2001, 2018b) fieldwork protocols emphasize that living stories are rarely produced in direct response to interview questions—which tend to elicit empiric stories—but emerge in the in-between spaces of organizational life: in hallway conversations, in the emotional register of responses, in what is not said, in the body language and affect that accompany official story performances. Living story fieldwork is therefore more observational than interview-based, more attentive to context than to content, and more interested in the prospective orientation of actors toward possible futures than in their retrospective accounts of what has happened.

Phase 3: Seven Antenarrative Process Mapping

The third phase applies Boje's framework of seven antenarrative processes—the "seven B's"—to map the pre-narrative story structure of the organization under study (Boje, 2001, 2014a; Boje's Antenarrative Blog, n.d.). The seven processes are:

Beneath: The foundational, pre-reflective values, assumptions, and commitments that underlie the organization's storytelling—the ground on which all subsequent story construction rests. In quantum storytelling terms, "Beneath" is the implicate order (Bohm, 1980) of organizational narrative: the enfolded potential from which particular story configurations are unfolded.

Before: The contextual and historical conditions that precede and shape the organization's current storytelling—the past that is being re-storied in the present. "Before" analysis examines how organizations select and suppress particular historical narratives to construct particular presents.

Between: The story processes occurring in the relational spaces between organizational actors, groups, and institutions—the entangled, heteroglossic space where stories are negotiated, contested, and co-constituted. "Between" analysis is particularly attentive to the micro-storytelling that occurs in the interactions between organizational stakeholders.

Bet: The prospective antenarrative wagers being placed on possible futures—the story bets that organizational actors are making about what will happen, what should happen, and what futures are worth caring for. "Bet" analysis maps the competing antenarrative futures being wagered in the organizational storytelling field.

Becoming: The processual, transformative dimension of organizational storytelling—the ways in which stories are not fixed objects but ongoing processes of becoming, continuously reconstituted in the act of telling. "Becoming" analysis examines the temporal dynamics of story transformation across the research period.

Beyond: The dimension of organizational storytelling that exceeds current knowing—the fore-grasping of futures that are not yet within the cognitive reach of existing narrative frameworks. Boje (2001, 2014a) connects "Beyond" to Indigenous ways of knowing and to intuitive abduction: the sixth-sense awareness of possibilities that conventional sensemaking cannot reach.

Being: The ontological dimension of organizational storytelling—the ways in which stories constitute rather than merely represent the being of organizational actors, communities, and ecosystems. "Being" analysis attends to the ontological claims being made and contested in organizational narrative, including claims about what kinds of entities organizations are, what kinds of futures are possible, and what kinds of care are owed to human and non-human others.

Seven-antenarrative process mapping produces a structured analysis of the organization's narrative architecture: the foundational assumptions (Beneath), the historical construction (Before), the relational negotiation (Between), the prospective bets (Bet), the processual transformation (Becoming), the fore-grasped possibilities (Beyond), and the ontological claims (Being) that together constitute the organization's quantum storytelling field.

Table 4. The Seven Antenarrative Processes and Their Application to AI Corporate Narratives (Boje, 2001, 2014a; Boje & Saylor, 2023).

Process	Function in Organizational Storytelling	Application to AI Corporate Narratives
Beneath	The foundational, pre-reflective values, assumptions, and ontological commitments underwriting the organization's storytelling — the	Sam Altman's founding assumption of AI as "tech religion" versus Dario Amodei's "effective altruism" — competing

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	ground on which all subsequent story construction rests	foundational commitments for what the technology is ultimately for
Before	The historical and contextual conditions that precede and shape current storytelling — the past that is actively being re-storied, contested, and selectively invoked in the present	Elon Musk's principled exit from OpenAI as the founding narrative of xAI — positioning the new company as "truth-seeking" against what he frames as "safety capture"
Between	The story processes unfolding in relational spaces between actors, groups, and institutions — the entangled, heteroglossic field where stories are negotiated across organizational boundaries	Narrative entanglement among AI corporations in the "jobs apocalypse" versus "human abundance" debate; no single actor's narrative is self-determining — each shifts in response to others
Bet	The prospective antenarrative wagers being placed on possible futures — the story bets organizational actors are making about what will happen, what should happen, and what must be prevented	Competing AGI timeline wagers: "superintelligence by 2027" versus existential safety warnings; each bet shapes investment decisions, regulatory framing, and public narrative regardless of outcome
Becoming	The processual, transformative dimension — stories understood not as fixed objects but as ongoing processes of becoming, continuously re-enacted and renegotiated across time	AI corporations' continuous narrative repositioning following safety controversies, funding rounds, and regulatory hearings; no stable story-state holds across time
Beyond	The dimension that exceeds current knowing — the fore-grasping of futures that remain outside existing narrative frames; what current epistemic narratives actively exclude from view	Long-term distributional consequences of AI-driven labor displacement — suppressed in all current grand narratives but present as an antenarrative undercurrent in the Living Stories of displaced workers
Being	The ontological dimension — stories that constitute rather than merely represent the being of organizational actors, communities, and	How AI leaders' self-narratives (as "beneficial," "existentially concerned," "truth-seeking") constitute their ontological identity

institutions; how storytelling makes organizational worlds and the moral framework within which their decisions become intelligible

Phase 4: Fractal Pattern Analysis

The fourth phase applies fractal analysis across multiple organizational scales to identify the self-similar narrative patterns that repeat at different levels. The researcher first identifies the basic narrative pattern at the scale of individual story performances: the elemental structural unit that repeats. This might be a pattern of promise-followed-by-suppression, or dominance-resistance-co-optation, or safety-claim-undermined-by-practice. The researcher then traces this pattern upward through organizational scales—from individual story performances to departmental narratives to organizational grand narratives to industry-wide epistemic frameworks to global governance structures—documenting the ways in which the basic pattern reproduces itself at each scale with local variation.

Fractal pattern analysis also operates downward, tracing the pattern from its most visible, institutionalized manifestations into the living story level where it exists in fragmented, pre-narrative form. This downward fractal analysis is particularly important for revealing the living stories and antenarratives that are suppressed at each scale by the dominant narrative: the stories that the fractal pattern of dominance renders invisible.

Phase 5: Quantum Dialogue and Story Excavation

The fifth phase moves from analysis to practice through quantum dialogue and story excavation: facilitated processes in which the researcher works with organizational actors to surface, examine, and transform the quantum storytelling field. Quantum dialogue differs from conventional organizational dialogue (Isaacs, 1999) in its explicit attention to the ontological level of living story: it seeks not merely to improve the quality of communication but to bring into visibility the living stories and antenarratives that official organizational narratives suppress.

Story excavation combines the results of the previous phases—observer positioning, multi-level story collection, seven-antenarrative mapping, and fractal pattern analysis—into facilitated conversations in which organizational actors encounter the suppressed living stories that constitute the underground of their organizational narrative field. These encounters are often disorienting and affectively charged, because they bring into visibility what the dominant narrative has rendered invisible, including the living stories of those whose voices are systematically excluded from official accounts.

Quantum storytelling consulting (QSC; Boje, Ed., 2018c) is the practice-oriented application of quantum dialogue and story excavation in organizational change contexts. QSC attends to the estimated 90% of organizational reality constituted by living stories and antenarratives that official narratives and management practices typically ignore (Boje et al., forthcoming). The consulting practice involves story excavation, quantum dialogue, and fractal re-storying: the collaborative development of new narrative configurations at multiple organizational scales.

Phase 6: Quantum Reflexive Reporting

The sixth phase is quantum reflexive reporting: the production of research accounts that explicitly attend to the co-constitutive role of the researcher in producing the story configurations that are analyzed. Quantum reflexive reports do not claim to recover pre-existing organizational stories but acknowledge that the researcher's inquiry has collapsed particular wave functions—produced particular story actualizations out of the superposition of possibilities—and that different researchers, with different observer positions, would have produced different collapses.

Quantum reflexive reporting also attends to the fractal structure of the research account itself: the ways in which the research report reproduces, at the scale of academic prose, the same narrative patterns it identifies in the organizational field. This fractal self-reflexivity is demanding but essential to the methodological integrity of quantum storytelling research: it prevents the research account from becoming yet another epistemic narrative that suppresses the living stories it set out to reveal.

Ethically, quantum storytelling methodology is committed to what Boje (2018d) calls "world ecological care": an orientation of the research process toward the wellbeing of human and non-human others, including the data workers, displaced employees, and ecologically impacted communities whose living stories are most systematically suppressed by the AI corporate grand narratives analyzed in Part III. Quantum storytelling research is therefore not a neutral analytical exercise but an act of ontological care—a form of forecaring for the futures that are still possible if the suppressed living stories are brought to voice.

PART III: FOUR ANALYSES

These analyses are presented as standalone applications of the framework elaborated in Parts I and II. They are not integrated into the theoretical discussion above; they stand as independent applications, each with its own scope, focus, and conclusions.

Analysis I: Quantum Storytelling and AI Corporations

Overview

This analysis applies the quantum storytelling framework—specifically superposition and indeterminacy, entanglement, fractal pattern, and wave function collapse—to the narrative strategies of the major AI corporations: OpenAI, Anthropic, Google DeepMind, Meta AI, xAI, Microsoft, and DeepSeek. The central argument is that AI corporations are exemplary quantum storytelling organizations: they routinely maintain multiple incompatible story states simultaneously, collapsing particular narratives into actuality only when financial, regulatory, or geopolitical contexts force a particular observation. The ACM FAccT (2025) paper "AI Narrative Breakdown: A Critical Assessment of Power and Promise" provides independent scholarly confirmation that AI corporate narratives operate through a set of structurally analyzed themes—agency, autonomy, democratization, neutrality, sustainability, and utopia/dystopia—each of which represents a superposed story position that AI corporations activate selectively depending on audience and context.

Superposition: The AI Corporate Story-State

Each major AI corporation simultaneously occupies multiple narrative positions that are, in classical logic, mutually contradictory. OpenAI is simultaneously the "safety company" (its stated mission: ensuring AI benefits all of humanity) and an "AI acceleration company" (deploying increasingly powerful models at commercial speed). Anthropic publicly emphasizes safety research and existential risk mitigation while pursuing a valuation of \$47 billion and planning a 2026 IPO at approximately \$1 trillion. Google DeepMind is simultaneously "organizing the world's information" (its historical mission) and disrupting that organization through AI systems that replace the search-based information economy it built. xAI presents itself as a "truth-seeking" AI company while operating through Elon Musk's X platform, which independent research (NBC News) has documented as a major vector for misinformation.

In quantum storytelling terms, each of these corporations exists in a narrative superposition—simultaneously occupying multiple story states—until a particular observational context (a regulatory hearing, an investor call, a congressional subpoena, a media interview, a leaked internal document) forces a collapse into a particular narrative actualization. The corporation does not choose its narrative in advance; it maintains a superposition of possible narratives and collapses into whichever configuration is most advantageous given the specific observational context.

The most empirically striking recent demonstration of wave function collapse under financial pressure is the simultaneous narrative reversal by both Sam Altman and Dario Amodei in May–June 2026. Both leaders had spent years publicly narrating AI as potentially catastrophic for employment: Altman had stated that AI "will probably replace most of the jobs people do today" and that entire job categories would be "totally, totally gone." Amodei had emphasized existential risk and the imperative for strict guardrails. In the weeks before their respective planned

2026 IPOs at approximately \$1 trillion valuations, both reversed these narratives: Altman said he was "pretty wrong" about AI's economic impact and that the AI "jobs apocalypse probably won't happen"; Amodei reframed AI as a productivity tool (Fortune, 2026; Time, 2026). The wave function—which had held the safety/risk and progress/disruption stories in superposition—collapsed under the gravitational pull of the IPO financial context, actualizing the growth-and-progress story and suppressing the risk-and-disruption story.

Entanglement: Non-Local Correlations in the AI Narrative Field

Quantum storytelling's entanglement concept illuminates the non-local correlations between AI corporate narratives that cannot be explained by direct causal chains. When Dario Amodei's internal Slack memo calling OpenAI's messaging "straight up lies" and "safety theater" was leaked in 2026, the effects were immediately non-local: ChatGPT uninstalls surged 295% that week; Claude hit number one in the U.S. App Store; the entire AI safety discourse shifted. The narrative states of OpenAI and Anthropic were entangled—measuring (observing publicly) the state of one system instantaneously affected the state of the other.

Similarly, the narrative entanglement between xAI and Tesla is structurally precise in quantum storytelling terms. Musk founded xAI despite Tesla's own AI efforts, then convinced Tesla's board—which he effectively controls—to invest \$2 billion of shareholder money into xAI (Electrek, 2026). The financial entanglement produced narrative entanglement: Tesla's story of autonomous vehicle leadership and xAI's story of frontier AI development became mutually constitutive and mutually dependent. The "SpaceXAI identity crisis" (Bloomberg, 2026) documented the consequence of this entanglement: an organization whose narrative is constituted by its entanglement with multiple other organizations and their stories, such that no single authoritative account of "what xAI is" can be stabilized.

Fractal Pattern: The Self-Similar Structure of AI Corporate Dominance

Quantum storytelling's fractal analysis reveals a self-similar pattern repeating at every scale of AI corporate storytelling: (1) *Grand narrative production*—a compelling, forward-looking epistemic narrative about AI's transformative potential is produced for public consumption; (2) *Living story suppression*—the immediate, embodied experiences of those harmed or excluded by AI are rendered invisible by the grand narrative; (3) *Antenarrative fracturing*—counter-narratives emerge through leaks, labor organizing, academic critique, and regulatory action; (4) *Narrative re-consolidation*—the corporation absorbs or deflects the counter-narratives and reconsolidates its grand narrative, often by incorporating some elements of the critique as evidence of its commitment to responsible development.

This four-beat fractal pattern is visible at the scale of individual corporate communications (a single press release cycling through all four beats), at the scale of quarterly earnings cycles, at the scale of annual strategic communications, and at the scale of the multi-year arc of each corporation's public identity construction. The pattern is not unique to any one AI corporation—it repeats across OpenAI, Anthropic, Google, Meta, and xAI with local variation but recognizable

structural similarity. Fractal storytelling analysis makes this cross-scale, cross-corporation pattern visible in a way that single-case, single-scale narrative analysis cannot.

The Suppressed Living Stories: AI's Hidden Labor Force

The most important analytical product of applying quantum storytelling to AI corporations is the revelation of the living stories that AI corporate grand narratives systematically suppress. These are not marginal stories: they constitute the material substrate of AI development—the human labor, ecological resources, and social relations upon which the AI epistemic narrative of progress is built.

Content moderators in Kenya, the Philippines, and Nigeria—many employed by Sama, Majorel, and similar AI services contractors for corporations including Meta, OpenAI, and others—earn as little as \$1.50 per hour while experiencing punishing work conditions including repeated exposure to video content containing extreme violence, resulting in documented psychological harm including PTSD, anxiety, and depression (IHRB, n.d.; Data Workers in AI, Medium, n.d.). In May 2024, 97 data labelers, content moderators, and AI workers in Kenya wrote an open letter to President Biden stating: "U.S. Big Tech companies are systematically abusing and exploiting African workers." In March 2025, a Nigerian content moderator, Ladi Anzaki Olubunmi, was found dead in her apartment in Nairobi, Kenya—a living story of the most irreversible kind, beneath and before all the grand narratives of AI progress.

The quantum storytelling analysis of these suppressed living stories is not merely a matter of adding "labor concerns" to the AI policy discussion. It is an ontological claim: the living stories of AI's data workers are not supplementary to the quantum storytelling field of AI corporations—they are constitutive of it. The AI corporate epistemic narratives of progress, democratization, and ecological sustainability are produced by and dependent upon the suppression of these living stories. Bringing them to voice—through quantum storytelling's living story fieldwork methodology—is an act of ontological care for the possible futures that the current AI grand narrative actively forecloses.

Analysis II: AI Leaders and the Seven Antenarrative Processes

Overview

This analysis applies Boje's (2001, 2014a) framework of seven antenarrative processes—Beneath, Before, Between, Bet, Becoming, Beyond, Being—to the five most publicly visible leaders of AI corporations: Sam Altman (OpenAI), Dario Amodei (Anthropic), Elon Musk (xAI), Sundar Pichai (Google DeepMind), and Mark Zuckerberg (Meta AI). The analysis does not treat these leaders as coherent, unified narrative agents but as organizational storytelling positions—sites at which the seven antenarrative processes of their respective corporations are concentrated, performed, and contested.

Beneath: The Foundational Assumptions of AI Leadership Narrative

Each AI leader's public narrative rests on a set of foundational assumptions—the "Beneath" of their storytelling—that are rarely made explicit but that structure everything that follows. For Sam Altman, the foundational "Beneath" appears to be a conviction that technological development is both inevitable and ultimately beneficial: "the most successful people build religions," as his 2013 blog post put it, and AGI is the religion Altman has built OpenAI to host. This foundational assumption licenses the simultaneous holding of contradictory surface-level positions—risk and progress, safety and acceleration—because the underlying conviction in technological beneficence provides a resolution that transcends the apparent contradiction.

For Dario Amodei, the "Beneath" is an effective altruist epistemology: a commitment to reasoning from expected values across possible futures, including low-probability, high-magnitude catastrophic outcomes. This foundational assumption explains why Anthropic's public narrative has oscillated between dramatic risk framing and commercial confidence: both are consistent with an EA framework that takes existential risk seriously while also believing that the best way to mitigate it is to be at the frontier of AI development.

For Elon Musk, the "Beneath" is a narrative of civilizational rescue through technological entrepreneurship: Musk as the singular visionary whose combined corporations (Tesla, SpaceX, xAI, Neuralink, The Boring Company) constitute an integrated project of saving humanity from its own self-destructive tendencies. This foundational narrative authorizes a mode of operation in which conflicts of interest, narrative contradictions, and broken promises are absorbed as the necessary costs of civilizational-scale ambition. Jim Cramer's observation that "Tesla trades on Elon Musk's storytelling" is a market-level confirmation of the quantum storytelling principle that living stories can substitute for empiric performance when the "Beneath" is powerful enough.

For Sundar Pichai and Mark Zuckerberg, the "Beneath" is more corporate than visionary: both operate from a foundational assumption of product-market fit and incremental value creation that makes their AI leadership narratives more measured and institutional than those of Altman or Musk. This foundational difference is reflected in their surface-level narratives—Pichai framing AI as "an extension of existing products," Zuckerberg emphasizing open-source AI and metaverse convergence—which are quantum storytelling positions adequate to their "Beneath" assumptions.

Before: Historical Construction in AI Leadership Storytelling

The "Before" dimension of AI leadership narrative concerns the historical accounts each leader constructs to legitimize their current position. Altman's historical construction centers on the OpenAI founding narrative—a non-profit dedicated to ensuring AI benefits all of humanity, established in explicit opposition to the perceived inadequacy of corporate AI development at Google and elsewhere—which is invoked to legitimize OpenAI's current commercial orientation as a necessary evolution rather than a betrayal of founding principles.

Amodei's "Before" construction centers on the Anthropic founding myth as an exodus from OpenAI by researchers with safety concerns—a narrative that positions Anthropic as the "responsible" alternative to OpenAI's perceived recklessness. This historical construction was significantly complicated by the leaked Slack memo in which Amodei himself called OpenAI's safety messaging "straight up lies," implying that Anthropic's differentiation from OpenAI is itself partly a narrative construction rather than a substantive difference in practice.

Musk's "Before" construction is perhaps the most elaborate of any AI leader: it includes his own early investment in and departure from OpenAI (which he has narrated as a principled break with an organization that lost its way), his founding of xAI as a corrective to what he characterizes as ideologically biased AI development by Google and Anthropic, and a broader historical narrative in which Musk's various technological ventures constitute a continuous arc of civilizational intervention.

Between: Relational Negotiation in AI Leadership Narrative

The "Between" dimension captures the relational spaces between AI leaders and their various stakeholders—investors, regulators, employees, the public, competitors, and (increasingly) the AI systems themselves—in which their narratives are continuously negotiated and contested. The most revealing "Between" space in current AI leadership is the regulatory context: the simultaneous negotiations that AI leaders are conducting with the U.S. Congress, the EU AI Act implementation process, and multiple national regulatory bodies, each of which observes a different face of the AI corporate narrative superposition.

The Altman–Pichai–Amodei "Between" is particularly complex: as the Axios (2026) analysis documents, the three leaders are simultaneously competitors, occasional collaborators, and mutual narrative foils. Each positions themselves relative to the others in ways that constitute their own narrative through the "Between" relationship: Altman as the bold innovator, Amodei as the responsible safety researcher, Pichai as the measured corporate integrator. These positions are mutually constitutive—they would not be legible without the others—and they are contested and renegotiated continuously as the competitive landscape shifts.

Bet, Becoming, Beyond, and Being: The Prospective Dimensions

The "Bet" dimension—the antenarrative wagers on possible futures—is perhaps the most visible dimension of AI leadership narrative. AGI by 2027 (Altman), superintelligence within the

decade (multiple), AI will eliminate 40% of jobs, AI will create abundant new jobs, AI will solve climate change, AI will cure cancer: these are the competing antenarrative bets that AI leaders are simultaneously placing on possible futures. The simultaneous existence of these incompatible bets is not a failure of coherence but a quantum storytelling feature: the bets constitute a superposition of possible futures from which particular actualizations can be drawn as contexts demand.

The "Becoming" dimension captures how these bets are continuously revised as the storytelling context evolves. The pre-IPO narrative reversals of 2026—both Altman and Amodei walking back their AI apocalypse predictions—are paradigmatic instances of "Becoming" in AI leadership narrative: the bet structure shifts as the quantum storytelling field changes, and the leaders' narrative positions become something other than what they were, without acknowledgment of the discontinuity.

The "Beyond" dimension—fore-grasping of futures not yet within the reach of current narrative frameworks—is the most philosophically significant and the most systematically underdeveloped in AI corporate leadership narrative. The living stories of data workers, the ecological impacts of AI compute infrastructure, and the long-term distributional consequences of AI-driven labor displacement are all "Beyond" the current AI leadership narrative field: they are present in the quantum storytelling field as suppressed living stories, but they are not yet within the grasp of the epistemic narratives that AI leaders produce for public consumption.

The "Being" dimension—the ontological claims made and contested in AI leadership narrative—concerns what kinds of entities AI corporations claim to be, what kinds of futures they claim to be creating, and what kinds of care they claim to owe to human and non-human others. The AI leadership "Being" narrative is fundamentally contested: between the "we are building tools" (Pichai) and the "we are building minds" (Altman) positions; between the "AI is a product" and the "AI is a civilizational project" framings; between the responsibility-to-shareholders and the responsibility-to-humanity claims. These "Being" contests are not merely rhetorical; they have direct legal, regulatory, and ethical consequences for how AI corporations are governed and what they are held accountable for.

Analysis III: The AI Corporation Ecosystem as Tamara-Land

Overview

This analysis applies Boje's (1995) Tamara-land concept to the AI corporation ecosystem, arguing that the contemporary AI industry constitutes the most complex Tamara-land yet analyzed in organizational storytelling research. Recall the core metaphor: in John Krizanc's (1981) immersive theatrical work *Tamara*, audiences move through a mansion in which simultaneous scenes unfold in multiple rooms; each audience member follows different characters and constructs an entirely different version of events, and no single person sees the complete picture. Boje and Pelly's (2025) *International Journal of Business Communication* article "Return to Tamara-Land" developed the "tableau vivant" methodology for analyzing the antenarratives of corporate raiders—applied to Nelson Peltz's hostile takeovers—which is applied here to the AI corporation ecosystem.

The Rooms of the AI Tamara-Land

The AI corporation ecosystem comprises at minimum the following simultaneously active storytelling rooms, each in full operation at any given moment, each producing story performances invisible from all the other rooms:

Room 1 — Congressional and regulatory hearings: AI leaders testifying before the U.S. Senate AI Subcommittee, the EU AI Act implementation bodies, the UK AI Safety Institute, and national regulatory bodies worldwide. The story performed in this room emphasizes safety, governance commitment, and public benefit—the wave function collapsed by the regulatory observation context.

Room 2 — Investor relations and IPO roadshows: AI leaders presenting to institutional investors, hedge funds, and retail investor communities through earnings calls, investor days, and IPO roadshow presentations. The story performed in this room emphasizes growth, revenue, TAM (total addressable market), competitive advantage, and the inevitability of AI dominance—the wave function collapsed by the financial observation context.

Room 3 — Technical and research publication: The story performed through academic papers, model cards, technical blog posts, and conference presentations. This room privileges claims about capability, safety evaluations, benchmark performance, and research methodology—a story with a distinct vocabulary and audience from rooms 1 and 2.

Room 4 — Internal organizational storytelling: The stories performed in internal Slack channels, all-hands meetings, leadership communications, and employee discussions. The Amodei Slack memo leak—in which he called OpenAI's public safety messaging "straight up lies"—provided a rare window into this room and demonstrated the degree to which the internal story differs from the stories performed in rooms 1, 2, and 3.

Room 5 — Social media and public discourse: The stories performed through X/Twitter (many of them by Musk himself, as both CEO of xAI and owner of the platform), LinkedIn, YouTube, and other social media channels. This room is characterized by speed, informality, and

the direct address of mass audiences—a storytelling mode that produces rapid wave function collapses, often without the careful management that characterizes rooms 1, 2, and 3.

Room 6 — Labor organizing and worker advocacy: The stories performed by data workers, content moderators, AI researchers, and employee organizing committees. The open letter of 97 AI workers to President Biden, the lawsuits of Kenyan content moderators against Meta, and the walkouts of Google employees over AI contracts constitute living stories that break into the Tamara-land from its suppressed interior.

Room 7 — Geopolitical and national security storytelling: The stories performed in the context of the U.S.-China AI competition, national security reviews of AI systems, export control debates, and the framing of AI development as a matter of national strategic interest. DeepSeek's emergence as a competitive frontier model at a fraction of the training cost of U.S. models (CNBC, 2026) produced a massive wave function collapse in the geopolitical storytelling room that immediately entangled all other rooms.

Room 8 — Ecological and environmental storytelling: The stories performed about AI's energy consumption, water usage, carbon footprint, and contribution to or mitigation of climate change. These stories are performed in corporate sustainability reports, environmental NGO advocacy, media investigations, and scientific publications—and they are systematically at odds with the progress and democratization narratives of rooms 1 and 2.

Factorial Complexity and the Impossibility of Master Narrative

Boje et al. (2022) calculated that in an organization with 12 simultaneous storytelling venues, the number of possible narrative pathways an individual could follow is 12 factorial—479,011,600 combinations—rendering any single coherent account of organizational life a radical simplification. The AI corporation Tamara-land has at least eight major storytelling rooms enumerated above, plus numerous sub-rooms and inter-room corridors. The factorial complexity is astronomical: no single actor—not even the CEO of OpenAI or the investigative journalist covering AI for the *New York Times*—can follow the simultaneous storytelling happening across all these rooms.

The implication for the study of AI corporate narrative is methodological as well as theoretical: any single-case, single-source, single-room account of what AI corporations are doing is, by definition, a radical simplification that suppresses the polyphony of simultaneously circulating stories. The quantum storytelling Tamara-land methodology—collecting stories across all rooms simultaneously and applying fractal analysis to identify the self-similar patterns connecting them—is the only adequate approach to the complexity of the AI corporate storytelling field.

The Tableau Vivant Applied: AI Leaders as Tamara-Land Directors

Boje and Pelly's (2025) tableau vivant methodology for analyzing the antenarratives of corporate raiders is applied here to three AI leaders whose Tamara-land navigation is particularly visible: Musk, Altman, and Amodai.

Elon Musk is the most complex Tamara-land director in the contemporary AI corporate ecosystem. He simultaneously occupies roles in Room 1 (as a vocal critic of AI regulation and government AI policy through DOGE), Room 2 (as founder and CEO of xAI with a valuation narrative dependent on Grok's frontier capabilities), Room 3 (through xAI's technical publications and Grok model releases), Room 4 (through his direct, unmediated communication with xAI employees via X), Room 5 (as owner of X/Twitter and its most powerful single user, directly shaping the social media storytelling environment in which all AI narratives circulate), and Room 7 (through his simultaneous possession of SpaceX, which holds critical national security contracts, and his political relationship with the Trump administration through DOGE). No other AI leader simultaneously directs the storytelling of so many rooms—and this multi-room directorship creates the Tamara-land conditions in which, as Bloomberg (2026) reported, a "SpaceXAI identity crisis" renders the question "what is xAI?" genuinely unanswerable from any single observational position.

Sam Altman navigates the Tamara-land through a strategy of controlled narrative superposition: maintaining incompatible story states (safety/acceleration, risk/progress, non-profit mission/trillion-dollar valuation) across different rooms while preventing the internal story (Room 4) from leaking into the other rooms. The 2023 OpenAI board crisis—in which Altman was briefly fired by the board, then reinstated after employee revolt—constituted a massive Room 4 leak: the internal story of organizational governance and leadership conflict burst into all the other rooms simultaneously, collapsing narrative superpositions in ways that Altman could not control. The subsequent restructuring of OpenAI from a capped-profit to a for-profit corporation, and the departure of multiple safety researchers, are best understood as attempts to re-stabilize the narrative superposition after that forced collapse.

Dario Amodei navigates the Tamara-land through a strategy of calculated safety differentiation: positioning Anthropic as the responsible alternative in Room 1 (regulatory hearings), Room 3 (safety research publications), and Room 5 (public communications), while pursuing commercial growth and IPO preparation in Room 2. The Slack memo leak constituted a Room 4 intrusion that collapsed the safety differentiation narrative in Rooms 1 and 5, demonstrating that the internal story of Anthropic's relationship to OpenAI—competitive, critical, and commercially motivated—was incompatible with the public narrative of principled safety-first differentiation.

Analysis IV: The Tesseract Model of AI Corporate Narrative

Overview

This analysis applies Walker's (2011) Tesseract Antenarrative Model—developed in Boje's *Storytelling and the Future of Organizations* handbook—to the analysis of AI corporate narrative. A tesseract is a four-dimensional hypercube: the extension of a cube into a fourth spatial dimension, analogous to the extension of a square into the third dimension to produce a cube. Walker (2011) proposed the tesseract as a mathematical model for the multi-dimensional structure of organizational antenarratives: by mapping organizational stories onto a four-dimensional factor lattice, the tesseract illustrates the stories *within* stories, *around* stories, and *between* stories—the multi-dimensional narrative architecture that a two- or three-dimensional analytical model cannot capture.

Applied to AI corporations, the tesseract maps four simultaneously active story dimensions that constitute the complete narrative space of AI corporate storytelling. Each face of the tesseract, when projected into two-dimensional space, corresponds to a different story configuration—the story that a particular audience observes when they look at the AI corporation from a particular angle. The full four-dimensional object is never directly observable; only its two-dimensional projections are visible from within any particular observational context. The tesseract model's contribution is to make the full four-dimensional structure analytically accessible—to show how the different projections are related and to reveal what is present in the interior of the tesseract that is visible from no single face.

The Four Narrative Dimensions of AI Corporate Storytelling

Dimension 1 — Technical Narrative: What AI systems can do—capabilities, benchmark performance, model architecture, scalability, and the trajectory of improvement over time. The technical narrative is told to researchers and engineers through model cards, technical reports, academic papers, and benchmark competitions. It is the story that the research community uses to evaluate AI corporations' actual progress and that regulatory bodies increasingly demand as evidence of safety evaluation. The technical narrative exists in its most elaborate form in Room 3 of the Tamara-land (research publication) and in the inter-organizational space between AI laboratories competing for technical frontier status.

Dimension 2 — Safety Narrative: What risks AI systems pose and how those risks are being managed. The safety narrative is told to regulators, policymakers, safety researchers, and concerned public audiences through regulatory testimony, responsible AI frameworks, Constitutional AI documents, model safety evaluations, and safety team structures. For Anthropic, the safety narrative is the primary public identity of the organization; for OpenAI, it is a necessary supplement to the capability narrative; for xAI, it is largely absent from public communications. The safety narrative exists in its most elaborate form in Room 1 (regulatory hearings) and Room 3 (safety research publication).

Dimension 3 — Commercial Narrative: What value AI systems create and for whom—revenue, user growth, enterprise adoption, market share, competitive positioning, and the returns to investors. The commercial narrative is told to investors, enterprise clients, and financial analysts through earnings calls, investor days, IPO filings, and enterprise case studies. It is the story that connects AI corporate activity to the financial systems that resource it, and it is the narrative that exerts the strongest gravitational pull on the other dimensions—as the 2026 IPO narrative reversals demonstrate. The commercial narrative exists in its most elaborate form in Room 2 (investor relations).

Dimension 4 — Civilizational/Governance Narrative: How AI relates to human futures, democratic governance, ecological sustainability, and planetary survival. The civilizational narrative is told in TED talks, congressional testimony, published thought leadership, and the kind of long-form interviews in which AI leaders speak about their vision for the future of humanity. It includes both utopian constructions ("AI will cure cancer, end poverty, and unlock abundance") and dystopian warnings ("AI could be the last invention we ever make"). The civilizational narrative exists in its most elaborated form in Room 1 (congressional testimony) and Room 5 (public discourse), and it provides the moral architecture that licenses the commercial and technical activities of the other three dimensions.

Tesseract Rotation: Projecting Different Faces for Different Audiences

The analytical power of the tesseract model lies in its capacity to describe how AI corporations *rotate* the tesseract to project different two-dimensional story configurations for different audiences—and how these rotations produce the appearance of narrative contradiction that is, at the tesseract level, a coherent four-dimensional structure.

When Sam Altman appears before the U.S. Senate AI Subcommittee, he rotates the tesseract to project a face that foregrounds Dimensions 2 (Safety) and 4 (Civilizational): he speaks about the risks of AI, the importance of regulation, and the civilizational stakes of getting AI development right. When he appears on an investor roadshow for OpenAI's IPO, he rotates the tesseract to project a face that foregrounds Dimensions 1 (Technical) and 3 (Commercial): he speaks about model capability improvements, user growth, revenue trajectories, and competitive advantages. The audience in each room observes a different two-dimensional projection of the same four-dimensional object and perceives a different story—not because Altman is being dishonest (though he may be), but because the tesseract structure of AI corporate narrative makes different projections available and contextually appropriate for different observational contexts.

The same tesseract rotation analysis applies to Amodeli's navigation of the safety/commercial tension, to Pichai's navigation of the search-disruption/AI-integration tension, and to Musk's navigation of the truth-seeking/misinformation platform tension at xAI and X. Each represents a different strategy of tesseract rotation—a different preferred face for the public, with the other faces turned toward less visible audiences.

The Interior of the Tesseract: Stories Within, Around, and Between

Walker's (2011) original formulation emphasized the tesseract's capacity to illuminate the stories *within* stories, *around* stories, and *between* stories—the multi-dimensional narrative architecture that exists in the interior of the four-dimensional object, inaccessible from any of its outer faces. In the context of AI corporate storytelling, the interior of the tesseract is populated by the suppressed living stories that the four visible dimensions of technical, safety, commercial, and civilizational narrative actively conceal.

The stories *within* the AI corporate tesseract are the internal organizational stories—the Room 4 narratives of employee experience, internal governance conflicts, and the lived reality of working inside AI corporations—that occasionally leak through the outer faces but are systematically kept interior. The Amodai Slack memo is a paradigmatic example of a story-within forcing its way out through the face of the tesseract that was projected toward the public, temporarily revealing the interior before the outer face was re-stabilized.

The stories *around* the AI corporate tesseract are the stories of the communities, workers, and ecosystems that are affected by AI corporate activities but are not themselves actors within the four-dimensional narrative space. The living stories of data workers in Kenya, the Philippines, and Nigeria exist *around* the tesseract—in the space surrounding the four-dimensional object—affected by its rotation but not visible in any of its projected faces. These are the stories that quantum storytelling methodology seeks to excavate and bring into visibility.

The stories *between* the AI corporate tesseracts are the entangled narrative connections between the different corporations—the way in which OpenAI's story is constituted by its relationship to Anthropic, Google, Meta, xAI, and the broader AI governance ecosystem. The tesseract model reveals these inter-corporate narrative entanglements as structural features of the AI corporate storytelling field rather than contingent competitive dynamics: each corporation's tesseract is partially constituted by the tesseracts of the others, in a complex multi-body quantum storytelling field that no single-corporation analysis can adequately capture.

Seven Antenarrative Processes Within the Tesseract

The tesseract model and the seven antenarrative processes framework (Analysis II) are complementary rather than competing analytical tools. The seven antenarrative processes map the temporal structure of AI corporate narrative (Before, Beneath, Between, Bet, Becoming, Beyond, Being), while the tesseract maps its dimensional structure (Technical, Safety, Commercial, Civilizational). Together they constitute a complete quantum storytelling analysis: the seven processes map the *temporal* wave function of AI corporate story (the superposition of possible story states across time), while the tesseract maps the *dimensional* wave function (the superposition of possible story projections across audience contexts). Both collapse under observational pressure—both are subject to the quantum observer effect that forces particular actualizations from the superposition of possibilities—and both conceal, in their respective interiors, the suppressed living stories that constitute the ontological foundation of AI corporate storytelling.

PART IV: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Discussion

The four analyses in Part III, taken together, constitute a quantum storytelling research program for the critical study of AI corporations. They are not merely applications of a pre-existing framework to a new empirical domain: they extend and develop the framework in ways that the original theoretical articulation did not anticipate. Several implications for both quantum storytelling theory and AI studies deserve extended discussion.

First, the AI corporation ecosystem represents the first empirical domain in which the quantum storytelling framework can be tested at scale against a rich and well-documented public record. The Newtonian limitations of conventional organizational narrative research are not hypothetical in this domain—they are demonstrably inadequate. Single-case, single-source, single-moment analyses of AI corporate narrative routinely produce accounts that are contradicted by simultaneous story performances in other rooms of the Tamara-land, or by the internal stories that leak through the tesseract faces, or by the living stories of data workers that the epistemic narratives of progress actively suppress. Quantum storytelling's multi-level, multi-scale, multi-dimensional approach is not a theoretical preference in this domain; it is an empirical necessity.

Second, the pre-IPO narrative reversals of 2026—both Altman and Amodעי walking back their AI apocalypse predictions under financial pressure—constitute a remarkable natural experiment in the quantum storytelling concept of wave function collapse. The theoretical prediction of quantum storytelling—that narrative superpositions collapse under observational pressure, producing particular story actualizations that suppress the alternatives—is confirmed with unusual clarity in this case. The financial context of the IPO served as the measurement apparatus that forced a particular collapse of the safety/risk superposition into the growth/progress actuality. Future quantum storytelling research in the AI domain should track subsequent wave function collapses as the IPO context evolves and as regulatory, labor, and ecological observational contexts increasingly demand their own narrative collapses.

Third, the tesseract model and the seven antenarrative processes framework together constitute a more powerful analytical apparatus for AI corporate narrative than either provides alone. The tesseract maps the dimensional structure of narrative superposition; the seven processes map the temporal structure. Together they provide both a spatial and a temporal account of how AI corporate leaders maintain narrative superpositions, rotate particular projections toward particular audiences, and manage the inevitable collapses and leaks that the complexity of the Tamara-land makes unavoidable. The development of software tools for tracking tesseract rotations across the documentary record of AI corporate storytelling—mapping which dimensions are projected in which rooms at which times—represents a promising direction for future methodological development.

Fourth and most urgently, the quantum storytelling analysis of the suppressed living stories of AI's data workers constitutes a moral as well as a methodological contribution. Meredith Whittaker's observation—"The real danger is not in the future; it is in the present, and it is already

in the hands of a few companies"—names the ontological claim that the living stories of AI's data workers make against the epistemic narratives of AI progress. Quantum storytelling's commitment to ontological care—to forecaring for the possible futures that the suppressed living stories are already caring for in advance—requires that research in this domain not stop at description and analysis but extend into the quantum dialogue and story excavation practices that can bring these living stories to voice within the Tamara-land rooms from which they are currently excluded.

Conclusion

This essay has elaborated the quantum storytelling framework in four parts: theoretical foundation, complete methodology, and four standalone analyses applying the framework to AI corporations and their leaders through the lenses of quantum storytelling, the seven antenarrative processes, Tamara-land, and the tesseract model. The theoretical contribution is a fully prospective organizational narrative theory adequate to the genuine complexity, indeterminacy, and entanglement of contemporary organizational life. The methodological contribution is a six-phase research design that operationalizes this theoretical commitment in a rigorous and teachable form. The analytical contributions are four original applications that together constitute a quantum storytelling research program for the critical study of AI corporations—the most consequential organizational form of the present moment.

The invitation of quantum storytelling to organizational researchers and practitioners working in the AI domain is clear: to attend, with care, to the living stories and antenarratives that are already caring for the futures that AI development either enables or forecloses. The melody of living story that keeps people afloat in the AI corporate Tamara-land is not audible in the Congressional testimony, investor roadshows, or TED talks through which AI leaders perform their rotating tesseract projections. It is present in the Slack memos that leak, in the open letters from data workers, in the lawsuits filed by content moderators in Nairobi, and in the forecaring of communities and ecosystems that the AI epistemic narrative of progress has not yet learned to hear. Quantum storytelling's task is to make that melody audible—and to care, in advance, for the futures it points toward.

As Henderson (2021) observed, Boje's quantum storytelling represents "a storyteller for the post-Newtonian era" (p. 246). In the age of AI corporations and their leaders, that post-Newtonian framework is not merely a theoretical preference; it is an ethical and practical necessity for anyone committed to understanding—and transforming—the quantum storytelling field that AI is constructing around and within us.

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