

The Effectiveness of Video Storytelling in Conveying Indigenous Stories

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Traditional storytelling is a significant and essential aspect of many Indigenous societies, as it is more than just a form of entertainment, but rather helps in passing down historical events, and ensuring that the young generations learn the right values, while at the same time keeping them connected with the land and their ancestors (Iseke, 2013). Such stories are presented in different formats, and each format has its own advantages and disadvantages. Some of the most common formats are oral narratives, written text, and video narratives. Despite the importance of each format, I argue that video storytelling is the best approach to sharing Indigenous stories. This format incorporates the visual, auditory, and emotional aspects that have been found to provide the best representation of these stories, as well as appeal to today's society in ways that written and/or audio formats cannot.

Video is most effective in creating engaging content because it merges the art of storytelling with the visual, audio, and emotional aspects. Comparing Chris Bose's video performance of an Indigenous story (Unceded Voices, 2014) "The Raven and the First Men" (Reid, 1980) it can be concluded that video provides a deeper and more engaging emotional experience. While watching Bose's performance, the audience is not only presented with the plot and the characters but also the manner in which the protagonist and other characters feel and express themselves. This kind of engagement is even more effective than when it is done in writing or through an audio-visual presentation since it combines both sight and sound. For example, through facial expressions and intonations, Bose effectively portrays feelings of stress or happiness to make the story more realistic. While written text expects the reader to infer the tone and emotion or audio stories that employ only voice, video combines both components and hence provides a more holistic perception. This makes video storytelling especially useful

when it comes to retelling Indigenous stories as the connection between the storyteller and the story is essential in the process (Iseke, 2013).

The other advantage of video storytelling is its cultural relevance. It is essential to understand that indigenous storytelling is a collective and performative process that goes beyond mere words and employs gestures, facial expressions, and interactions (Iseke, 2013). In the case of Chris Bose's performance, it is easier to preserve the essence of this cultural performance due to the visual aspect of the medium (Unceded Voices, 2014). The sign language, the action, the positioning, and the utilization of the area are important aspects of Indigenous storytelling that cannot be seen in written or audio forms. The written narrative of Bill Reid's "The Raven and the First Men" is a significant text on its own but the reader's imagination is the only medium that can amplify the representation of these cultural artifacts without the performance. The text may contain information, but it does not reflect the feeling of watching a story being enacted in person or through a video.

Another factor is the ease of access to the information provided by the sources used in the research. Video storytelling can indeed help to reach a wider and more diverse audience when compared to traditional forms of oral storytelling, especially in the modern world or new media environment. Internet sites and applications like YouTube, streaming, and educational websites have enhanced the sharing of Indigenous stories across the globe. This global accessibility means that more people get to hear Indigenous stories in a way that is relatable to them (Iseke, 2013). While providing more information and being more versatile, written texts could be less comprehensible for people who have not read long texts before. As for the audio stories, they are also easy to follow but do not contain as many visuals that help the audience grasp the meaning of the story if they are not familiar with the culture depicted in the story.

Video storytelling, however, fills these gaps because it is a medium that can be understood by most people as well as being popular across all ages and literacy levels.

As for the clarity and the effectiveness of the message, video storytelling is a perfect tool to express emotions and themes much more vividly. With Chris Bose's performance, visuals and narrations complement each other in conveying not just the content of the story but also the atmosphere of the story (Unceded Voices, 2014). For instance, the gesture of his body or the way he looks at something can convey information that it would be challenging to express through writing or even speaking. This emotional depth is critical when telling Indigenous stories since the emphasis of the story itself is often in creating a bond with the land, the ancestors, and the spirit. Although works such as Bill Reid's "The Raven and the First Men" offer a creative and philosophical view of the Raven as a creator, it cannot be as captivating as watching the Raven come alive on stage through dance and vocal performance.

While narratives such as "The Raven and the First Men" can be read on various levels, they are rich with symbolism which makes it possible to contemplate on the message of the story at one's leisure. Audio storytelling also has its own advantages, especially when it comes to the ability to express the mood and emotions through the voice. However, neither format is as engaging as video storytelling where one gets to incorporate tone, expression, body language, and visual context. Video integrates all the aspects of oral tradition in one channel, which makes it more emotionally appealing than the other forms of passing down information. Lastly, video storytelling is the most appropriate means of transmitting Indigenous stories since it appeals to the audience through the use of visuals, sound, and emotions (Iseke, 2013). Analyzing Chris Bose's video performance and comparing it to Bill Reid's written text, it can be concluded that the video form allows for the preservation of cultural value and the emotional component of the story in a more efficient manner for passing it down through generations.

References

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