

The mimetic series of the body: Narrative, memory, and time in somatic psychology

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Narrative alters the narrator's experience of time by obliging the narrator to embody two temporalities: the time the tale takes to tell and the time the tale refers to. This double embodiment is particularly consequential in personal experience narratives, in which the two temporalities narrators bring together are their own past and their own present. The act of narration brings the temporal order of the taleworld into the temporal order of the storyrealm not only in words but also in gestures, postures, sensations, and emotions. By reconstituting one reality in another, narrative makes co-present in the body two temporal orders. The effect of this is to collapse time. Corporeally speaking, there is no past, just a pattern of sensations in the present. The capacity of the narrating body to inhabit its past as present gives somatic psychology a chance to change somatic experience by intervening in the body's repetition of its past.