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Taylor R. HeineMr. MichaudEnglish 1115 January 2018TitleFor many years people have used storytelling to tell a story that isn't always 100% true. Storytelling has a big power to let you tell what you want the other to know without telling the truth. In the novel *The Things They Carried* By Tim O'Brien, he demonstrates the importance of storytelling.

He shows us when we listen to war stories we don't believe them, but once they become horrifying we are intrigued and interested. Storytelling has a way to make you believe what is being told, but by believing a story, especially a war story you must be careful because in many cases you will be made a fool. O'Brien uses storytelling to demonstrate how tragic war stories can be by telling lies. For example, " If at the end of a war story you feel uplifted, or if you feel that some small bit of rectitude has been salvaged from the larger waist, then you have been made the victim of a very old and terrible lie" (pg). O'Brien explains that people do not want to hear stories that have no message to them. War stories, if they are true, are depressing and don't give you any sense of happiness or interest.

Many people are used to stories having a resolution that when war stories don't it leaves them confused with many questions that will not have answers. Secondly, O'Brien uses tricks to make storytelling hard to tell if it's the truth or not. O'Brien states " In many cases a true war story cannot be believed. If you believe it, be skeptical" (pg). Typical stories are made up and have a beginning and end. O'Brien tells stories like that to show how bad the war was but it isn't the truth.

He makes you believe the stories are not true because if you heard the stories that are, you would not believe them because there is no happy ending, or moral to them. People don't understand the war or get the point if there is no moral, and they won't want to hear it. It is clear that believing a war story can make you look like a fool. War stories can be too much for some people to hear and that's why storytelling helps people better understand them. Tim O'Brien explains that telling the truth isn't always easy, or easy for one person to hear, so stories are made up to explain the story in a different way. For example, " I want to tell her exactly what happened, or what I remember happening, and then I want to say to her that as a little girl she was absolutely right.

This is why I keep writing war stories" (pg). The truth for everyone can be too much. The war is horrifying. It's not a happy or delightful place. O'Brien tells us what to look for in his stories so we know when his stories are truthful and when they are not.

He tells us by explaining the way a story sounds and what it should or shouldn't have. O'Brien tricks people into believing his stories that are all not true because people can't tell what's fake and what isn't. Furthermore, Tim O'Brien explains that the truth is not what people want to hear, so the story teller makes up lies to please the audience. O'Brien states "...

and a true war story will tell the truth about this, though the truth is ugly" (pg). Storytelling isn't always the truth and war stories that are true don't sound like real stories. O'Brien tries to tell us that he didn't kill anyone in the war and that he was bystander. He then explains that he wishes that was the

case, and that killing is what makes a war, a war. War stories aren't always easy to tell or easy to hear, and that's clearly stated through Tim O'Brien's stories. Tim O'Brien demonstrates the importance of telling war stories by lying to get his point across about terrifying and mind boggling times at war.

O'Brien shows us that when war stories are horrifying we listen because we become more intrigued and interested in something that isn't the truth. War stories are a way that people communicate, they give soldiers a way to get their pain out by lying about what happened or not telling the complete truth. This theme is important because every story that they tell may not be true but every story contains a lesson to show the audience about the war.