Ricky,

I couldn’t agree more with you and Barker & Gower. (Barker & Gower, 2010) Their story about stories is true! It was a good read. Thank you! Narratives and storytelling have stood the test of time as cross-cultural methods of sharing information and influence. They do, however, need tending, lest they get misinterpreted and stood on their heads to mean the opposite of their intent.

The most prominent story teller I can think of, vis-à-vis his parables, is Yeshua the Nazerite whom you may know as Jesus. The Yahudite (Judahite) city of Yerushalayim (Jerusalem) *[There is no J in Hebrew, nor in Aramaic, spoken in the area during the 1st Century. As a matter of fact, there was no J until some 500 years ago in modern English. So Jesus is a mistransliteration to modern English of the Latin, Iesus (the reference below is a 1611 KJV showing the Latin variant), which is a mistransliteration from the Greek/Aramaic, Iesuous (from which comes the Q’uran’s Issa), which is a mistransliteration of the Aramaic Yeshua, which is a slur of the Paleo-Hebrew Yahushua – same as the son of Nun, Moses’ successor of the Yeriho (Jericho), and a certain High Priest of the same name in Jeremiah, which translates literally as “Yahweh is Salvation”. Was this done to replace the notion of his name being “Yahweh is Salvation” with the nonsensical (and non-Hebrew) Jesus? This is another narrative for another time… (EliYah)]* at the western end of The Silk Road, was the crossroads of the four points of the compass, and his parables had a deep and lasting effect on those who heard him speak, changing individuals’ lives and the world to this day. (The Holy Bible, 2011)

Joel Chandler Harris’ collection and publication of “Uncle Remus Tales” is another group of stories that crosses cultural lines, imparting ageless wisdom that is evident regardless of the culture of the hearer. (Harris, 2006) Depending on who one listens to, Harris is a saint for having preserved a documented account of this collection of wisdom from African and other cultures, preserved and passed down in the best of oral traditions across boundaries and oceans and through the hardship of slavery; or he is a despicable exploiter, stealing the stories and writing in a vernacular that was outside his own culture. I applaud his having gotten this work published, preserving faithfully this meaningful look at world history, and value the wisdom I gained from both the context and the vernacular language of these stories.

A litany of Progressives and other collectivists (socialists, communists, fascists – believers in the primacy of government solutions over individual interests) from Theodore Roosevelt to Woodrow Wilson and John Dewey to Joseph Stalin and Vladimir Lenin to Benito Mussolini to Adolph Hitler and Joseph Goebbels to Franklin Delano Roosevelt to Saul Alinsky to Lindon B. Johnson to John F. Kennedy to both Bush presidents to Barack Obama (and a host of fellow travelers around them) have understood the importance of “the story” in the human animal’s natural attraction to a good tale, however farcical; and our weird proclivity to develop ideologies about how the story might be, or be made to be true. For clarity that story or narrative, in the case of the personalities listed above, some intending benevolence and some not so much; is how people are not fit to govern themselves, but need government to rule and provide for them – even to provide things like narratives about their own existence. (Goldberg , 2007)

I personally enjoy the work I alluded to earlier, *Utopia.* In it, the great satirist, Thomas More, plays “Yes, and…” (DuBrin, 2013) with collectivists. He uses narrative to demonstrate the natural outcomes and totalitarian nightmare that result from collectivist, oligarchic democratic rule. (More, 1516) The book, far from declaring the equality of all individuals (More was a monarchist and had servants he condescended about, demonstrating his personal dissociation with the book’s Utopian principles.) walks through the mechanics of managing an ideal society, showing how that plays out to degrade individuals and subject them to the over-lording of an oligarchy – all in the name of democracy.

The narrative about what Utopia means has been usurped, as has understanding of democracy in the 20th century, by Progressives. This is not a cohesive conspiracy, but a collaborative of fellow travelers who alike disdain the US Constitution and the individual dignities and freedoms it guarantees preferring to disavow natural law and the author of such. They continue to spread their narrative (their opposite version) of Utopia and democracy as something desirable and benevolent, and continue their drive to force their democratic Utopianism on all humans (except themselves as the few oligarchic controllers of the rest of us as the masses) in spite of the inherent failures and destructiveness of either or both. (Goldberg, 2007) It is a good thing I don’t get bitter…

So I agree deeply that narrative and storytelling are at once cross-culturally instructive and compelling. But to what end? Do you feel it is the purpose of leadership to drive narratives and re-write or re-purpose them? Do truth, justice, and the American Way require it of us? Are there more benign applications of directing narrative that are easier to pass judgment upon?

Have a great day,

David

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