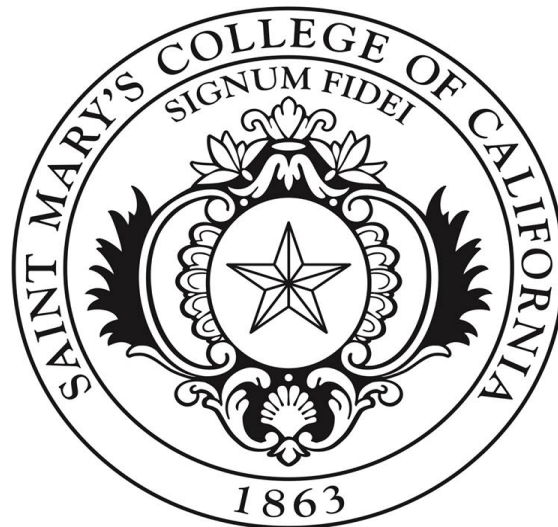


*Those Who Tell Stories Rule Society*

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A Senior Essay submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in the Integral Curriculum of Liberal Arts.

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Saint Mary's College of California

April 17, 2020

## Introduction

Stories shape our world, stories are passed down from generation to generation, they influence cultures and foster traditions. Storytelling is a powerful skill because those who tell stories are the ones that mold our society. The purpose of this thesis is to examine the importance of storytelling and to illustrate the influence storytelling has on our ethos and ethics. A brief analysis of Plato's *Republic* and Plutarch's *Lives* will exemplify how stories shape our souls. In addition, an analysis of Martin Luther King Jr's speech "I Have a Dream" and *Paradise Lost* written by John Milton will be done to demonstrate how these leaders utilize the art of storytelling to influence their supporters' ethos.

## Story

What is a story? Every story—good or bad—has five main elements: characters; setting; conflict; plot; and an overall theme. The two main characters are the protagonist and the antagonist. A story always has a setting; the setting is where and when the story takes place. Characters always face a conflict. The plot helps readers understand the theme of the story and illustrate series and events that help support character development. The theme is the meaning of the story. It is the message the author wants to share. In a story the authors have one goal: to influence their readers. Authors can influence their audience in two ways: the first way is by establishing their ethos<sup>1</sup> in the introductions or throughout the book and then proceeding to share their message, i.e., Plutarch. The second way is to make the readers sympathize with a character by creating a character in the story that needs to overcome obstacles, i.e, Odysseus in the *Odyssey*. The main difference between a

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<sup>1</sup> Appeal of the personality or character of the speaker

story and history is, a story has an artificially constructed plot that has an exposition, climax, and resolution. History on the other hand is erratic, the events happen naturally and are continuous, so it has no end. A story, on the other hand, has an exposition, a climax, and a resolution.

## **Character**

It is not true, as some writers assume in their treatises on rhetoric, that the personal goodness revealed by the speaker contributes nothing to his power of persuasion; on the contrary, his character may almost be called the most effective means of persuasion he possess. (Aristotl. Rh. 1.2.4)

Revealing your character to the audience is the most important element of persuasion. This is not an easy task because it means that the speaker must be authentic; being authentic means allowing yourself to be vulnerable to your audience. Aristotle defines ethos as the “personal character of the speaker”; ethos is what makes the speaker appear as trustworthy. In order to appear trustworthy, it is important to reveal your true self by being vulnerable to your audience. Vulnerability needs to be authentic similar to how credibility needs to be real.

Character is not the same thing as personality. A person’s character is constituted by their morals and the things they value. Personality on the other hand is someone’s visible traits. Character is someone’s ethos—their essence. Personality is malleable—it changes occasionally. The iceberg model is a great way to depict the difference between character and personality. The top of the iceberg represents a person’s personality because it depicts their visible traits. Our personality is the face we show the world. Character on the other hand, is the face we hide from the world because we fear we will be judged by the

world. We fear the judgment of our character because our character is the truest essence of who we are. It is easy to sense someone's personality but difficult to sense their character.

Personality and character do have one similarity, the similarity is they can change. Personality changes occasionally, but our character changes seldomly. A story is an example of a tool that can transform our character. Stories can only be influential if the storyteller is influential. In order to be influential the storyteller must establish trust with their audience by revealing their ethos, namely their true character. Plutarch is an example of an author who is able to reveal his ethos from his writings. Plutarch starts his stories stating that he is not a historian but instead a moralist. By confirming that he is a moralist instead of a historian it shows that the purpose of his writing is to examine the morals of his subject by writing about their lives instead of only writing about events that took place during their life. Since Plutarch has clearly established his purpose it is easier for the audience to trust him.

### **Plutarch**

Unlike histories, stories are focused on a person's character development and less about the development of the world. Plutarch was not a historian but rather a moralist, so he wrote stories that examined the moral character of various leaders of the past. He published two volumes of Plutarch's *Lives* expounding on the lives of notorious Greek and Roman leaders.

...if I should not by way of apology forewarn my reader that I have chosen rather to epitomise the most celebrated parts of their story, than to insist at large on every particular circumstance of it. It must be borne in mind that my design is not to write stories, but lives. And the most glorious exploits do not always furnish us with the clearest discoveries of virtue or vice in men; sometimes a matter of less moment, an expression or a jest, informs us better of their characters and inclinations, than the most famous sieges...(Plutarch, 139)

Plutarch is aware that great historical events do not necessarily reveal the ethos of leaders. That is why he embarks on the task to write about the stories of their lives, to focus on the little moments that history overlooks, and most importantly reveal their ethos. It is not through the grand historical moments that we can come to know the ethos of leaders from the past. It is through speculating and analyzing the lives of leaders that we come to understand their ethos. It is the things that happen behind closed doors, simple moments when the historians are not paying attention that are worth exploring.

We come to know the ethos of historical figures by reading about the story of their lives. Their ethos is revealed by the choices they make when these leaders are faced with challenges, and their behavior after the outcome of their choices. Alexander the Great is an example of a leader whose history did not fully reveal his ethos. The historical events we hear about him are only about his grand accomplishments, but it does not say anything about his character.

Plutarch is able to reveal Alexander's character by doing an analysis of his actions. Plutarch wrote about an instance where Alexander's character was revealed when he came across the famous Cynic<sup>2</sup> philosopher-Diogenes. Diogenes was a nontraditional man during his time, and chose to live a simple lifestyle. This simplicity is what attracted Alexander to Diogenes.

And now a general assembly of the Greeks was held at the Isthmus, where a vote was passed to make an expedition against Persia with Alexander, and he was proclaimed their leader. 2 Thereupon many statesmen and philosophers came to him with their congratulations, and he expected that Diogenes of Sinope also, who was tarrying in

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<sup>2</sup> School of thought of ancient Greek philosophy; Cynics believed the purpose of life is to live in virtue, in agreement with nature. Cynics reject desire for wealth, power, and fame. Instead they choose to live a simple life free from all possessions.

Corinth, would do likewise. 3 But since that philosopher took not the slightest notice of Alexander, and continued to enjoy his leisure in the suburb Craneion, Alexander went in person to see him; and he found him lying in the sun. 4 Diogenes raised himself up a little when he saw so many persons coming towards him, and fixed his eyes upon Alexander. And when that monarch addressed him with greetings, and asked if he wanted anything, "Yes," said Diogenes, "stand a little out of my sun." 5 It is said that Alexander was so struck by this, and admired so much the haughtiness and grandeur of the man who had nothing but scorn for him, that he said to his followers, who were laughing and jesting about the philosopher as they went away, "But verily, if I were not Alexander, I would be Diogenes." (Plut. Alex.14.1)

This scene is a small excerpt from Plutarch *Parallel Lives*, although it's a minute moment it tells us a lot about Alexander's humble character. This scene is focused more on Alexander's character and less on historical events.

Alexander had every right to act prideful if he wanted to because during his time it was the common opinion that he was born from the divine due to the great deeds he accomplished at a young age. "...it is apparent that Alexander in himself as not foolishly affected, or had the vanity to think himself really a god, but merely used his claims to divinity as a means of maintaining among other people of his superiority." (Plutarch 162)

Alexander did not allow this idea to make him arrogant by acting as if he is a god. Instead he always maintained his humility by acting as a noble warrior. When asked who he would be if he could choose, his response was Diogenes.

Sometimes these obscure moments that historians overlook are the significant moments that can orient our moral compass. Plutarch's goal is to have his readers understand the lives of these men and to reveal their virtues and vices. By focusing less on historical events, Plutarch allows the readers to enter their lives and be a fly on the wall. Plutarch focuses on how the leaders behave when they are faced with challenges. The

biographies that Plutarch wrote are a blueprint on how we should behave during moments of good fortune and moments of hardship.

Plato is another author who, like Plutarch, understood the importance of storytelling. Plato links the power of stories to the revelation of the storytellers' character. He emphasizes that in order for his ideal city to be full of virtuous citizens, the storytellers themselves must be virtuous, because their stories will mirror their ethos. As Aristotle stated, “character may almost be called the most effective means of; persuasion” once we understand someone's character, we are more open to being persuaded by them. Allowing yourself to be vulnerable to your audience shows that you trust your audience, once the audience sees that the speaker is vulnerable it is easier for the audience to trust the speaker.

## **Plato**

Book II of Plato's *Republic*, readers are introduced to Plato's ideal city. As Plato begins to construct his perfect city, complexity begins to unfold. The complexity comes from the fact that various roles and professions are needed to sustain Plato's ideal city. The role that Plato pays careful attention to is the guardianship role. It is necessary for the guardians of the city to have both adequate physical strength and devoted and gentle souls. “Philosophy, spirit, speed, and strength must all, then, be combined in the nature of anyone who is to be a fine and good guardian of our city” (376D) The guardians of the city can't be savages, they should also be strong enough to protect their citizens and fight their enemies. These are the traits that a perfect guardian must possess. Now how does one shape

someone's ethos to have those qualities? Plato proposes to educate their soul through stories.

Plato suggests that educating the soul is as important as physical training. The guardians' souls are more malleable at a young and tender age, consequently it will be easier to shape their ethos. It is not just any type of story that should be shared. Plato is very critical about what type of stories are told in his ideal city, so he must keep an eye on the storytellers.

Then we must first of all, it seems, supervise the storytellers. We'll select their stories whenever there are fine or beautiful and reject them when they aren't. And we'll persuade nurses and mothers to tell their children the ones we have selected, since they will shape their children's soul with stories much more than they shape their bodies by handling them. Many of the stories they tell now, however, must be thrown out. (Plato, Bk.2, 377C)

Stories are to the soul as physical training is to the body. Physical training transforms the body similar to how stories transform our souls. The type of stories we hear can transform our souls. If the intent is to motivate a soldier, tell them about the great heroic Odysseus from the *Odyssey*. If the intent is to lighten someone's mood, tell them about the silly tales from Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. If the intent is to empower them, advise them to read *A Room of One's Own* by Virginia Woolf. Plato emphasizes monitoring the storytellers because he is aware of how powerful stories are.

Why do stories have such a powerful effect on our ethos? The stories that the citizens read or listen to play an important role in shaping Plato's ideal city, because what they hear is what they are going to imitate:

If we're to persuade our people that no citizen has ever hated another and that it's impious to do so, then that's what should be told to children from the



beginning by old men and women; and as these children grow older, poets should be compelled to tell them the same sort of thing. (378D)

Imitation is a fundamental part of human development because we mostly learn by imitation. We assimilate in a new community by imitating the habits around us. The stories we come across act as blueprints for what we should imitate and what we should do. Plato implies that stories have two main powers: the first one is the power of persuasion and the second is the power to shape our values. Stories not only influence us, but they also make the impossible feel possible. If you want to cultivate a society where hatred does not exist, then the type of stories that are passed down from generation to generation should not be about war but rather about peacemaking. If you want to build a society that values equality and equity, then the storytellers should share stories to their society about fairness instead of greed. Storytellers should tell stories that have a virtuous theme.

Book II of Plato's *Republic* emphasizes the importance of stories and how they form our soul and orient our character. This is important to note because our ethics is a reflection of our ethos. The moral principles we have established in our communities is a reflection of what we value. In order to change our ethics our ethos must be altered. Our next storyteller is able to accomplish this.

### **Dr. King's Speech**

*I say to you today, my friends, so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream. (Dr. King I Have a Dream)*

The ethical power of storytelling was well understood by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., who used storytelling to urge Americans to support the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s.

In order to understand the influence Dr. King had on Americans, it is important to understand what Dr. King was fighting for. The purpose of the Civil Rights Movement was for Black Americans to be granted their social freedom and political freedom they were entitled to after a hundred years of being legally liberated from slavery. Dr. King's argument for civil rights was rooted in the fact that the Declaration of Independence stated that "all men are created equal" and promised everyone life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. By situating the history of the Civil Rights Movement within the history of America's founding ideals, King implicitly claimed that anyone who supported America's founding ideals should also support the Civil Rights Movement. King used the power of storytelling to influence Americans to support the Civil Rights Movement. A key metaphor in King's story was the image of a dream because it paints the idealised American dream and also paints the American nightmare of racial injustice.

Dr. King begins his speech by alluding to historical documents that the audience will understand and make King more credible. Dr. King begins his speech by setting a historical account of how America has continuously failed to free Black Americans. Not only free them from slavery but also give them their entitled rights as humans.

Five score years ago, a great American, in whose symbolic shadow we stand today, signed the Emancipation Proclamation. This momentous decree came as a great beacon light of hope to millions of Negro slaves who had been seared in the flames of withering injustice. It came as a joyous daybreak to end the long night of their captivity.

But one hundred years later, the Negro still is not free. One hundred years later, the life of the <sup>3</sup>Negrois still sadly crippled by the manacles of segregation and the chains of discrimination. One hundred years later, the Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity. One hundred years later,

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<sup>3</sup> Do not say the N word if you do not identify as Black

the Negro is still languished in the corners of American society and finds himself in exile in his own land. And so we've come here today to dramatize a shameful condition.

This part of the speech demonstrates a nightmare of racial injustice towards Black Americans. The reference to the Emancipation Proclamation is reminder to the audience that this document made slavery illegal. The Emancipation Proclamation liberated Black Americans from chattel servitude. This liberation was not enough to achieve equality and freedom but it set motion to the movement. Although slavery was abolished, Black Americans were not given the rights they were entitled to—this was the message Dr. King was trying to come across.

Another literary device Dr. King used in his speech to share his message are extended metaphors. An example of this is the 'cashing a check' metaphor.

In a sense we've come to our nation's capital to cash a check. When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was a promise that all men, yes, black men as well as white men, would be guaranteed the unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. It is obvious today that America has defaulted on this promissory note insofar as her citizens of color are concerned. Instead of honoring this sacred obligation, America has given the Negro people a bad check, a check which has come back marked insufficient funds.

Dr. King brings his audience back to the beginning of the American history, when the Constitution and Declaration of Independence was signed. These documents promised every American "the unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." King immediately points out that Black Americans do not hold these rights. At this point in history, Black Americans are not given suffrage, are hardly able to buy property, and are not allowed to participate in democracy.

But we refuse to believe that the bank of justice is bankrupt. We refuse to believe that there are insufficient funds in the great vaults of opportunity of this nation. And so we've come to cash this check, a check that will give us upon demand the riches of freedom and the security of justice. (Dr. King *I Have a Dream*)

King lets it be known that this time Black Americans will refuse to be exiled on the land they have shed blood, sweat, and tears on. This time Black Americans will be given the rights they are entitled to as American citizens. This time Black Americans will not give up until they are given what they have been promised for nearly a hundred years.

The purpose of Dr. King's speech is to inspire action, so he uses lucid details and vivid language to paint an image of a racially equal and integrated America. In order for this image to come to life, King expresses the actions that must be taken.

We have also come to this hallowed spot to remind America of the fierce urgency of now. This is no time to engage in the luxury of cooling off or to take the tranquilizing drug of gradualism. Now is the time to make real the promises of democracy. Now is the time to rise from the dark and desolate valley of segregation to the sunlit path of racial justice. Now is the time to lift our nation from the quicksands of racial injustice to the solid rock of brotherhood. Now is the time to make justice a reality for all of God's children. (*I Have a Dream*)

This is also an opportunity to remind the audience that America was supposed to be created on democratic ideals; where everyone is allowed to participate. As Americans are taking action it is important for them to conduct themselves.

But there is something that I must say to my people, who stand on the warm threshold which leads into the palace of justice: in the process of gaining our rightful place, we must not be guilty of wrongful deeds. Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred. We must forever conduct our struggle on the high plane of dignity and discipline. We must not allow our creative protest to degenerate into physical violence. Again and again, we must

rise to the majestic heights of meeting physical force with soul force. (Dr. King, *I Have a Dream*)

Dr. King did not want the Civil Right Movements to resort to violence. Instead our journey towards freedom and equality should not be fueled by hatred, otherwise we'll be consumed by hatred.

The marvelous new militancy which has engulfed the Negro community must not lead us to a distrust of all white people, for many of our white brothers, as evidenced by their presence here today, have come to realize that their destiny is tied up with our destiny, and they have come to realize that their freedom is inextricably bound to our freedom. We cannot walk alone. (Dr. King *I Have a Dream*)

In his speech, Dr. King also highlights the importance of trust. The relationship between Black and white Americans can't be built on distrust. It is evident that some white Americans are the cause of racism. But Dr. King highlights the fact that not all whites had the same racist mentality as the rest.

Another literary device Dr. King used in his speech is an anecdote. The anecdote was about his dream; a dream rooted in the American Dream. This part of his speech not only highlights what he is fighting for but also reveals Dr. King's character.

I say to you today, my friends [applause], so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream.

King informs the audience that he will be able to overcome difficulties by staying hopeful—as they should too. It shows that King has grit. It also shows that he shares the same idealised American dream like every white American. This dream will unify both White and Black Americans.

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal."

King hinted that a revolution is soon to begin, this revolution will make his dream become a reality. By alluding to important historical touchstones makes King's speech more credible and makes his holds more weight.

I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.

King used metaphorical language and imagery to create strong and memorable images. In addition King sharpens his ideas through contrast. Mississippi was one of the states that was perverted with racism, yet it will be transformed. King makes the impossible feel possible.

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

King made his speech more evocative and personal by referencing his children. If you don't want to change for us or for yourself, then do it for the future generation. By making it personal to himself the reference will also make it personal to the audience.

I have a dream that one day down in Alabama, with its vicious racists, with its governor having his lips dripping with the words of "interposition" and "nullification" one day right there in Alabama little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers. I have a dream today. (Dr. King *I Have a Dream*)

King's repetition of 'I have a dream' makes his speech more memorable and also more poetic. King dreamed of a unified America. An America where there was no segregation between the white community and black community, only an American community.

The last part of the speech forecasts what will happen after the Civil Rights Act is passed. Dr. King highlights the outcome of this movement, if American citizens choose wisely and act accordingly we will hear the bells of freedom ring sooner than later. The ending of his speech is full of aspiration by painting a picture of how things can be.

And when this happens, and when we allow freedom ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual: "Free at last! Free at last! Thank God Almighty, we are free at last!" (Dr. King *I Have a Dream*)

King's words were an instrument used to lead Black Americans to freedom, his words were a symbol of hope, his words paved the way for the Civil Rights Movement. King used his storytelling to shape the ethos of the American people and also to elucidate the core principles of the Civil Rights Movement. For a very long time America was pervaded with racism and inequality because it was led by people whose ethos were not aligned with equality. Dr. King was a new leader who was able to use the power of rhetoric to transform the ethos of these leaders. By transforming their ethos he was able to transform America.

Dr. King is able to make his speech more influential by including his narrative as an invitation for the listeners to reflect on their personal narratives and use his as a blueprint to imitate. Including these stories serves a few purposes. By including his narrative Dr. King is able to reveal his character (ethos) to his listeners. Revealing his ethos to his audience makes it easier for him to gain their trust—in parallel to Plutarch. Including the story of America sheds light on what can be improved. It also makes it easier for the audience to understand the purpose of his speech—which is to improve the condition of America.

## *Paradise Lost*

*“Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven.” (Milton, Paradise Lost)*

Every great rhetorician is a great storyteller. Rhetoricians understand the importance of incorporating a story in their speech because it makes their speech eternal(memorable), inspiring, but more importantly it permits the speaker to share their narrative. This is evident in Satan’s speech in Milton’s *Paradise Lost*. Satan’s speech is multipurpose. The most purpose of his speech is to attempt to alter his story as the infamous fallen angel to an equal of God. The second purpose is to mobilize the rest of the fallen angels. It is easy to mistake Satan as the epic hero because of his influential speech.

Satan utilizes rhetoric to persuade the army of fallen angels to start war with God. Book One is when readers first encounter Satan and his second in command Beelzebub. Satan begins his speech by immediately calling for action by telling Beelzebub to not be miserable because it only makes him more weak. His dialogue with Beelzebub reveals what his ultimate goal is, it is to be God’s equal.

Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,  
Our labour must be to pervert that end,  
And out of good still to find means of evil; 165  
Which oft times may succeed, so as perhaps  
Shall grieve him, if I fail not, and disturb  
His inmost counsels from their destined aim.  
(ln.158-169)

Satan will make himself equal to God by leading the fallen angels in pervating humanity with evil. They will challenge God’s good intentions turning them into malicious deeds. They will make good use of their time in isolation by fighting against God.



Milton uses Satan as the narrator because the purpose of *Paradise Lost* was to understand the Fall of Man from Satan's point of view, hence that is why Satan appears to be the protagonist in the book. In Satan's speech to the fallen angels, Satan is able to manipulate. The setting takes place in Hell after all of the angels who have rebelled have fallen from Heaven, in an effort to make sense of his new environment Satan says;

Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,  
Said then the lost archangel, 'this the seat  
That we must change for heav'n, this mournful gloom  
For that celestial light? Be it so

(lns. 241-245)

Satan is examining the conditions of his new home by adjusting the approach to his new state of being. The fallen angels have just fallen from Heaven and into hell, they are feeling defeated and are not too pleased with the condition of their new home. Their new home is different from what they have been accustomed to; instead of their homes being covered by "celestial light" it is covered by "mournful gloom.

Who now is sovran can dispose and bid  
What shall be right: furthest from him is best  
Whom reason hath equalled, force hath made supreme  
Above his equals. Farewell happy fields  
Where Joy for ever dwells: Hail horrors, hail  
Infernal world, and thou profoundest Hell

(lns. 245-251)

Satan has acknowledged that the state of their new environment is not favorable; hence he says goodbye to the happy fields and joys of heaven and hello to the horrors of the infernal world. Satan does not wallow in his sorrow but rather takes action and is determined to make a more favorable course for him and the rest of the fallen angels. By rising up and

taking action Satan has announced himself as a leader and made it appear as if he is the protagonist.

At first glance it appears to be that Satan is the protagonist of the poem because he is portrayed as the victim. He is the character that readers want to support because he is portrayed as someone who has been defeated and exiled but will be able to overcome this obstacle and lead the devils to victory.

Receive thy new Possessor: One who brings  
 A mind not to be chang'd by Place or Time.  
 The mind is its own place, and in it self  
 Can make a Heav'n of Hell, a Hell of Heav'n.  
 (lns.251-225)

Satan attempts to make him and Beelzhub feel better about being in hell by stating that Hell can be as good as Heaven if you set your mind to it. This reveals his ethos as someone who is stoic and values perseverance.

What matter where, if I be still the same,  
 And what I should be, all but less then hee  
 Whom Thunder hath made greater? Here at least  
 We shall be free; th' Almighty hath not built  
 (lns.256-259)

Another ethos of Satan that is revealed in his speech is that he values his pride. At this point Satan is already in content with his new environment and he has announced himself as ruler of Hell. If the fallen angels support Satan they will be free, but if they support God they will continue to remain enslaved to God. This highlights Satan's motive to pave a way for a new narrative, thus changing ethos.

Here for his envy, will not drive us hence:  
 Here we may reign secure, and in my choyce  
 To reign is worth ambition though in Hell:  
 Better to reign in Hell, then serve in Heav'n.  
 (ln.252-270)

Satan's ethos is revealed as someone who is ambitious, courageous, and most importantly full of pride. Satan is determined to be the ruler of Hell and he will accomplish this goal regardless of the conditions of this environment. Satan tells his audience that the mind is over matter, in other words the state of mind is more powerful than any external force. The external changes that the fallen angels have experienced should not stop them from thinking themselves as equal to God. This line of thinking persuades the fallen angel and Satan himself that it is "Better to reign in Hell, then serve in Heav'n." (ln. 255).

Similarly to a political leader, Satan is able to influence the fallen angels by being clever with his rhetoric. Satan addresses the fallen angels as: "Princes, Potentates, Warriors, the Flower of Heaven." (ln.315) This is an attempt to revive their defeated spirit by uplifting their ego. Satan gives the fallen angel a choice to either come together and rise out of their misfortunes or drown in their despair as fallen angels "Awake, arise, or be for ever fall'n" (ln.330). This is a tactic many rhetoricians utilize to have their audience take action. The tone of Satan's speech is authoritative and raging because he wants to establish seniority and awaken his army out of despair.

Satan triumphantly addresses the devils because he was able to mobilize and empower his army of devils, but more importantly he has gained their trust. Satan is able to empower his army of devils and reminds them that they are still powerful. Even though God has conquered them by force, they can do better by conquering by guile "To wage by force or guile eternal Warr" (ln. 122). Although Satan's speech is full of absurdities his message comes across due to his tone. The speech he presents is warlike, instead of fighting for peace he rather wants to fight for his pride. Peace is despaird,/For who can think

Submission? Warr then,/ Warr Open or understood must be resolv'd. (ln.660-662). Satan's ethos is full of evil doing, this is apparent in his speech. His evil ethos mirrors the evil ethics of Hell. At the end Satan may have lost the war but he was able to pervert goodness by persuading Adam to bite into the apple of knowledge.

Although Satan was not able to change his narrative from a fallen angel to an equal of God he was able to mobilize the rest of the devils and have them go to war against God. While storytelling can be used to influence people in a positive way, stories can also be used to lead people astray. Plato was cautious of the types of stories the storytellers were allowed to share in his ideal city because he was aware of the influence it has on our ethos.

### **Conclusion**

Our ethics are a reflection of our ethos, our ethics can not be easily transformed but our ethos can. But storytelling can aid in transforming our ethics, hence that is why it is a powerful tool. We have examined the ways in which stories have an influence on our souls, give us a better understanding of individuals, and shape our ethics. As Plato pointed out stories have the ability to shape our character the same way training shapes our body. Politicians use stories in their speech to be effective in mobilizing people. Martin Luther King Jr. for example was able to spark change in society by first changing the character of his audience and later on changing the ethics of America. If it was not for him it is hard to believe that our society would have progressed this far. The poem *Paradise Lost* is an example of why Plato is wary about the type of stories that are told in his city. The poem illustrates how Satan is able to wage war on God. The hero of the story is someone who is consumed by his pride and is manipulative. Satan uses those skills to rally up his army to go

challenge God. *Paradise Lost* is an example of a story about how it is possible to influence someone to do evil.

Like everything in life, storytelling has its extremities. It can either be used to do good deeds or it can be used to do evil deeds; that is what makes storytelling powerful. The moral principles we have established in our communities is a reflection of what we value. In order to change our ethics our ethos must be altered. Someone who is skilled at storytelling can use it to have a positive impact, but if it is in the wrong hand it can be used for negative impact. Storytelling is not a skill that should be mastered only by politicians, poets, or industry leaders. It is a skill everyone should practice, but use it cautiously. Tell your story. It might make a difference in someone's life. It might even change the world.

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