

# Organic Narrative

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“Who has fully realized that history is not contained in thick books but lives in our very blood?”

–Carl Jung

“Americans love to fight. All real Americans love the sting of battle.”

–George S. Patton

I’m fascinated by the ways people create and use stories in making sense of their lives. I’m especially interested in how these stories morph freely to meet the changing needs of those they serve. The result is often a disjointed hodgepodge of past and present symbols, characters and connections that might be perfectly functional to an insider, but quite bewildering to the uninitiated. For example, try explaining the grab bag of symbolism on US currency to someone who has never seen it. Nonetheless, it seems to work just fine for most Americans without explanation. From our own personal narratives to the grand mythologies of ancient civilizations, these stories are essential in providing context, order and direction in our lives.

People love stories and often consume them in the form of sport. Most sports seem to me thinly veiled dramas of struggle that are acted out to indulge our more base tendencies without being detrimental to society. As the actors execute the script (chasing whatever objective constrained by whatever rules) they and the invested spectator go for a wild emotional ride as the story unfolds. The fans’ bloodlust and basic tribal nature are satisfied in a fairly benign way. This is true for Roman gladiators as much as for 8 year old kids in a local youth soccer game. All the triumphs, failures, displays of bravery or ineptitude are much more than parts of a game – all these turns represent and reinforce our values and how we think the world works. This is why Babe Ruth stands next to George Washington in the pantheon of our national identity. I’m interested in imagery of knocked out or otherwise beleaguered fighters because I see in them a tragic but venerable sacrifice to this cause. 2 men enter an arena, each confident he will dominate the other. Only one succeeds. The other ends up possibly unconscious, helpless and humiliated. Provided the winner prevailed in an honorable way, every spectator, on some level, will identify with the victor, since identifying with the vanquished would be too upsetting. So I am interested in the image of the vanquished, without whom, there could be no victor.

My use of explosion imagery addresses another function of the story: to brace the individual against external forces in the world. Without narratives that explain the inherent unfairness and unpredictability of life and assure of us better times, people might not have many tools for dealing with life’s inevitable disappointments and losses. Explosions are sudden and devastating, often catching those in range by complete surprise. A well crafted narrative can be quite valuable when an explosion-like life event occurs.

## Bio

Daniel Allegrucci was born in Fayetteville, NC to a military family. As a child he moved frequently, living all over the US and in Italy. After several years in upstate New York, he relocated to Charlotte where he

received his BFA with a concentration in printmaking from UNC-Charlotte. He continued his studies at Wichita State University before returning to his present home, Charlotte, NC. His work has been shown throughout the Southeast and is included in collections in Germany and Hong Kong.