

19-21 of November 2021

Three Personality Styles: A Liberal Perspective on Narratives

Pietro Perconti

Dept. of Cognitive Science, University of Messina, Italy

Abstract

In my talk I want to focus on the thesis of the ubiquity of narratives, that is, the thesis that narratives are everywhere, and their moral correlate, that is, the thesis that a non-narrative life is not worth living. I am not suggesting that stories are not an important way of making sense of our lives, nor that they are not one of the most common ways of representing what happens to us, both in the eyes of others and in our own eyes. However, I will argue for a more liberal view that life is not poorer in the absence of narratives, just different. In particular, I will propose three personality styles: in addition to the narrative style, there is also an episodic personality style, based on individual episodes rather than the overall meaning of biographies, and a sentimental personality style, based on non-conceptual experiences and non-linguistic resources for experiencing things in the world. Finally, some consequences of this liberal way of thinking about narratives are considered, especially in ethics and clinical psychology.

Keywords: narratives, non-conceptual experiences, personality