



Lone Wolf Theatre Company

HIGHLIGHTS

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Resources

More resources section will be added over time. Our archives will include links, PDF articles, photos, and more samples of Mr. Thorson's writing.

Lone Wolf Howl: WE'LL ALWAYS HAVE MONSTERS; AND HEROES

(Originally published in Cochrane Times: September 28, 2005)

Cochrane Times — Floods. Wars. Monsters.

It's what the great stories are about. We've told them & re-told them and continue to retell them year after year, from old to young, twisting them and bending them, fascinating and horrifying each other in the dark hours of the night or the bright hours of the day.

Stories like the lost city of Atlantis... the pinnacle of an advanced civilization – with an abundance of wealth, intelligence, & democracy – is swallowed up (as Plato tells us) 'in one night and one day' by the unforgiving Atlantic ocean.

Stories like The Iliad... ten years of warfare between two advanced, 'enlightened' societies chock full of enlightened citizens. It's one of the bloodiest books you're ever likely to read. And of course, a 24/7 network of tales about Gorgons, Cyclopes, three-headed dogs and riddle-telling Sphinxes... monsters terrorizing the nation with their impossible tricks and unquenchable thirst for power.

For every story of floods, wars, and monsters – for every catastrophe that befell the people – there were outstanding individuals coming to save the day. Heroes, they came to be called.

Of course, these outstanding folks were not branded heroic simply because they performed an act of bravery or selflessness in the course of their jobs. They were branded as heroes because the people talked about them for generations (songs were sung, stories told, truths bent and broken)... long after the brave and selfless deed was done and the flood, war, or monster was dealt with.

In other words, people became heroes not because of their actions, but because their actions were celebrated over and over again through an art form (paintings, dramas, songs, and dances).

Likewise these floods, wars, and monsters – although devastating – were not dubbed 'tragedies'. The tragedy only comes long after the calamity, when the event has subsided and the details of it are filtered through the poetry of action, structure, and word. People talked about it for generations (songs were sung, stories told, truths bent and broken) and then the poets put their pens to work.

In other words, events became tragic not because of their severity, but because they were lamented over and over again through an art form.

Three catastrophes have befallen the United States in the past four years (by way of flood, war, and monster), and all are on their way to becoming tragedies because songs are being sung and stories are being told.

New Orleans (and by extension the entire USA) was awfully close to becoming a modern day Atlantis. The situation in Iraq (and by extension the entire Middle East) is fast on its way to becoming a modern-day Trojan War.

The third catastrophe, quietly sandwiched between the other two, continues to unfold: George W. Bush was re-elected, and the mad-cowboy monster still has three more years in office.

The remarkable individuals who responded to (and continue to respond to) these events are on their way to becoming heroes. Simple, everyday people like firefighters, volunteers, and mothers camped outside the ranch in Crawford, Texas.

So, you might ask, what does this have to do with us? Consider the parallels. The USA is the richest country in the world and still floods, wars, and monsters run amuck.

We live in the richest province in Canada. The levees that hold back an ocean of failing healthcare, education, and the arts (and yes, the third is just as important as the other two) are on the breaking point, the have-nots are continually being pushed aside by the haves, and none of the one-eyed politicians can see what's going outside the glittering dome of their cave.

In the words of James Joyce: "History is a nightmare from which I am trying to awake." Stories of floods, wars, and monsters keep repeating because we haven't woken up yet. It's only a matter of time before we're telling them here.

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