

Words Poorly Used #26 — Character

No people who ever lost their character kept their liberty. — Lawrence W. Reed

Nowadays we speak of character as a byproduct of negatives — we refer to a loss as character building, we refer to duress as character building. Authority figures, who are in fact bullies, often refer to the sadism that they inflict on their followers as character building. And one had better like it or the authoritarian will know the reason why. This is rather a situation in which indoctrination is being plastered with the euphemistic, nay misleading, label of character building. This is character eradication. Character is not a trait that is built by the collective. Character is a trait with which an individual is born. Character is the variation between individuals. Character is the set of traits that an individual voluntarily displays. The moment you adopt the character that someone else desires for you to have, involuntarily, forced and coerced, you begin to lose your liberty.

Kilgore