Why Don't They…?

Using Narrative Economics to Better Understand People

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Fader & Associates

THE QUIRK'S EVENT

Who is Susan Fader? (It's Me)

- Qualitative Researcher, Moderator & Strategist
- Usual and unusual category and demographic experience
- Focus US
- Also designed & fielded in 20+ countries on 5 continents

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What's the Plan?

- Focus on **methodological innovation** **not just** technological innovation
- **Expand how you think** about grouping people
- Encourage using **storytelling** as input vs. output
- How to **integrate Narrative Economics** into research methodology

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Baseline Assumptions

You have to make them to get started

BUT what if you are off in how you think about the people you are going to talk with?

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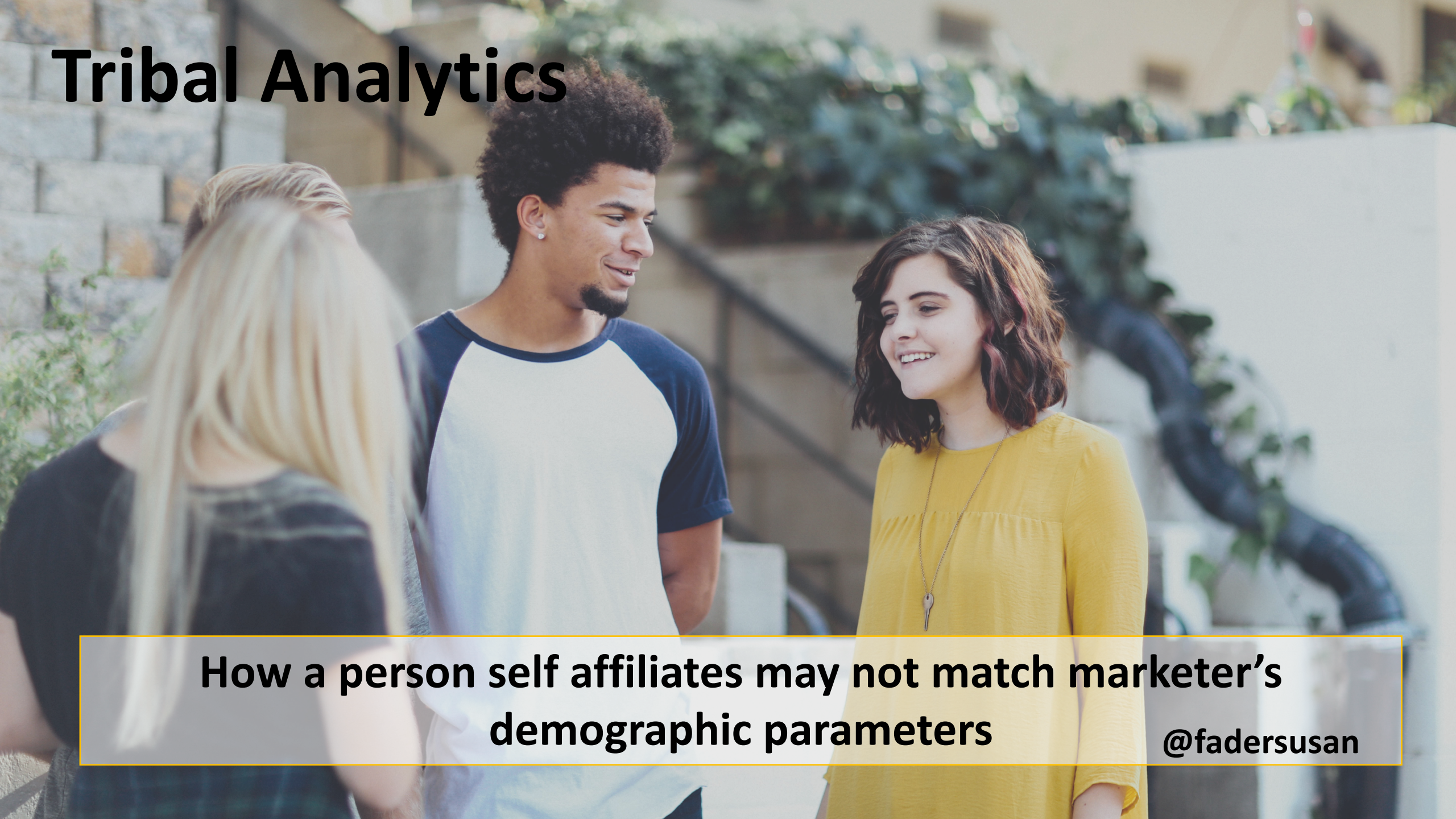
Tribal Analytics



How a person self affiliates may not match marketer's demographic parameters

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Categorization

How customers categorize may be different from …

how the company categorizes

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Narrative Economics Helps To Understand *'Why Don't They?'*

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It Started with Classical Economics

Behavioral Economics

People don't always make rational choices

External Perspective

Narrative Economics

The choice may be rational to them, but not to an outsider

Internal Perspective

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Classic Narrative Economics

- Richard Shiller
- Nobel Prize Winner in Economics 2013
- Coined Narrative Economics

Study and the spread and dynamics of popular narratives, the stories, particularly those of human interest and emotion, and how these change through time, to understand economic fluctuation.

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It’s All about the Narratives, Perspectives, Emotions & Rationalization

- Stories as background from the people you are interested in/talking with
- Narratives can be short snippets tied to specific events and provide justification for action or belief
- Can also be a long story describing many things over a long period of time

Why Did Crash of 1929 Turn Into the Great Depression?

World War I	1914-18
Spanish Influenza	1918
19th Amendment	1920
Roaring 20's	1920-29

U.S. Stock Market Crash Oct 1929

Religious leaders and conservative establishment narratives:

- Initial positive reactions to economic downturn
- Retribution for 'immoral' behavior
- Led to depressing peoples' interest in buying things
- Impacted business and economic downturn snowballed

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Just as Behavioral Economics was Adapted to Market Research So should Narrative Economics

Listen to the narratives as input

and

don't focus on data collecting of stories for output

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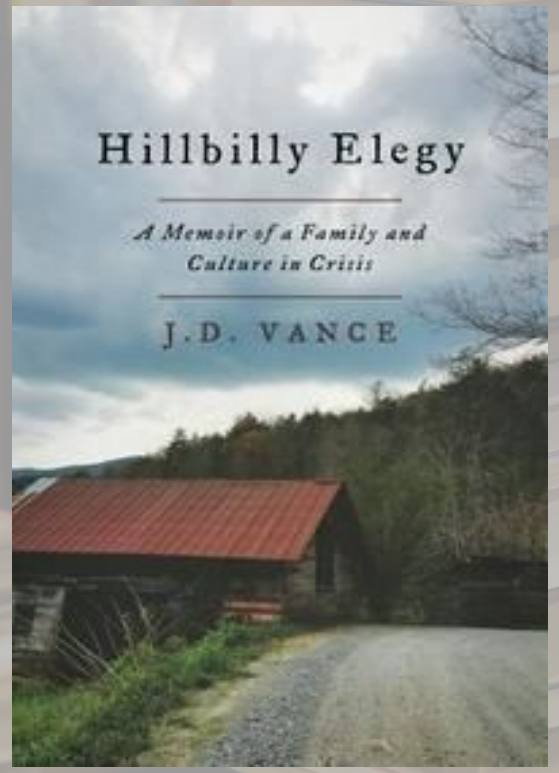
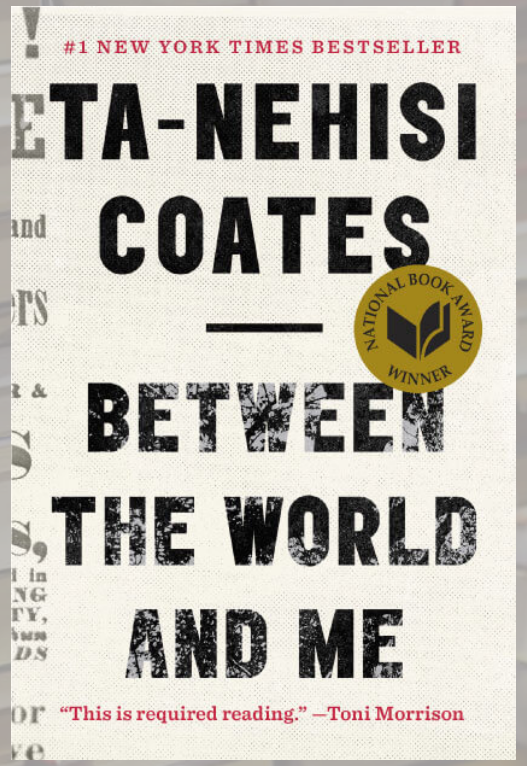
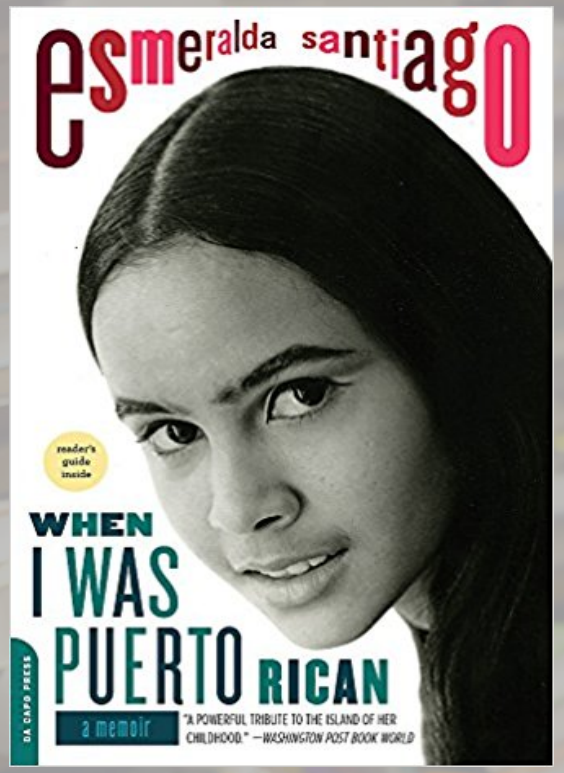
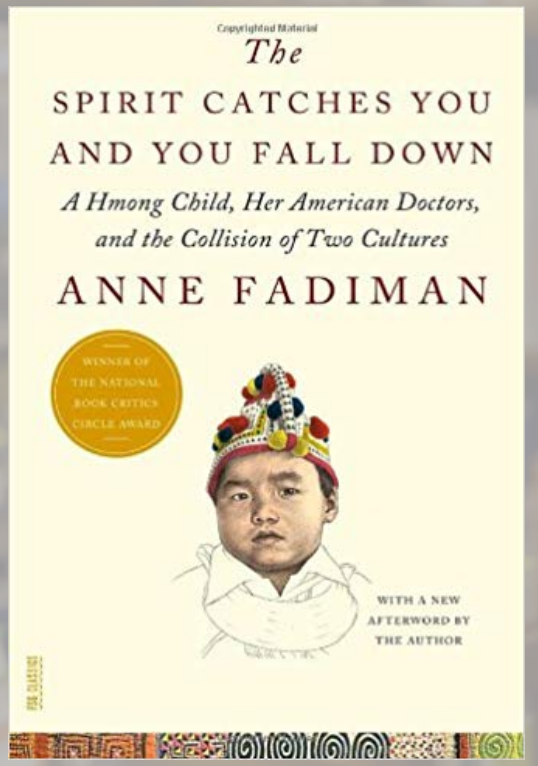
Read stories (and listen to podcasts) of people you are interested in

Helps you understand how they view themselves and the world









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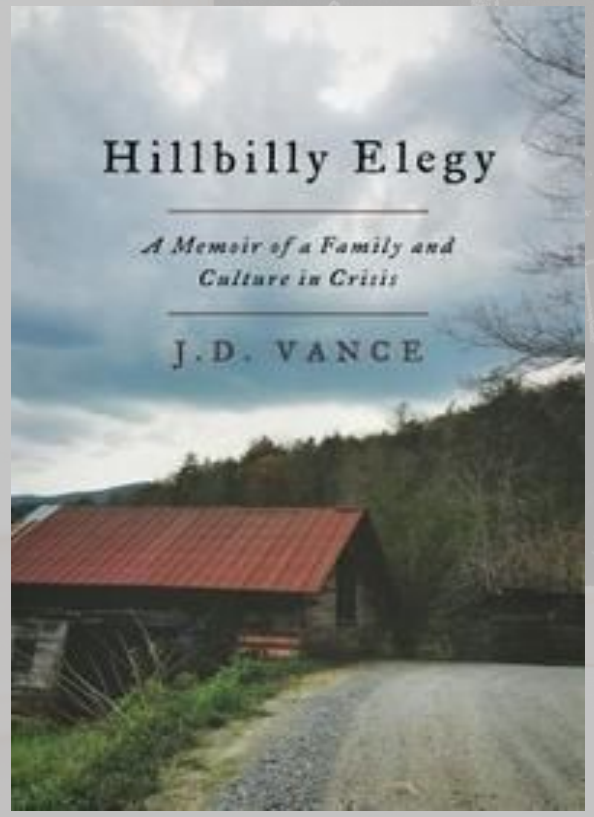
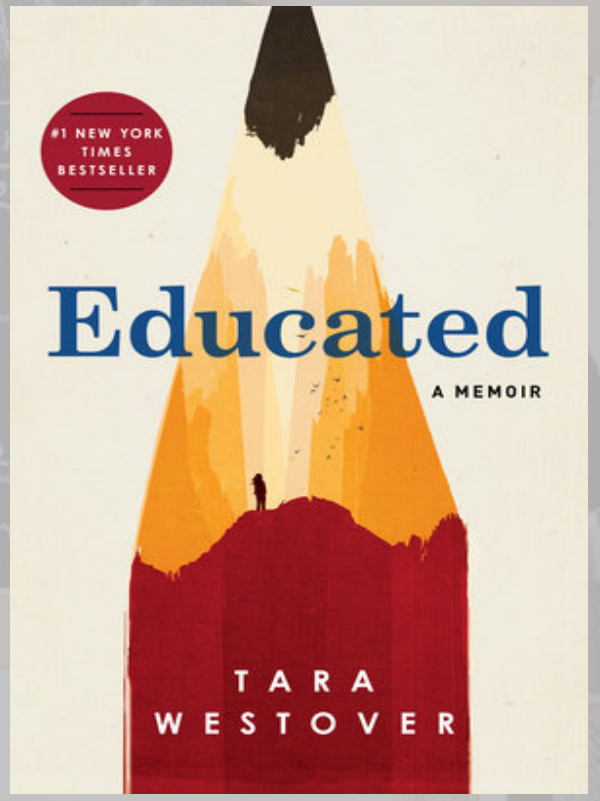
But be careful…to an outsider they can appear to be the same story and part of the same tribe…but they may not be





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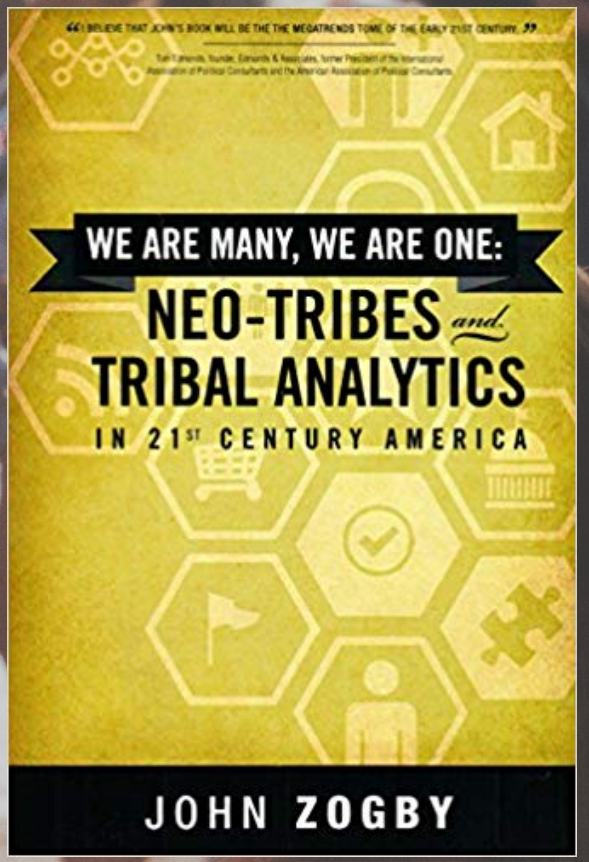
Recruiting: Integrate How People Self Define

Currently:

- **Default to traditional demographics**
- **Generic ‘attitudinal’ ?**
- **Don’t integrate how people self define**



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Hear Their Voices During Recruiting

- Mottos

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In session storytelling can be hard, so…
…you've got to help them.
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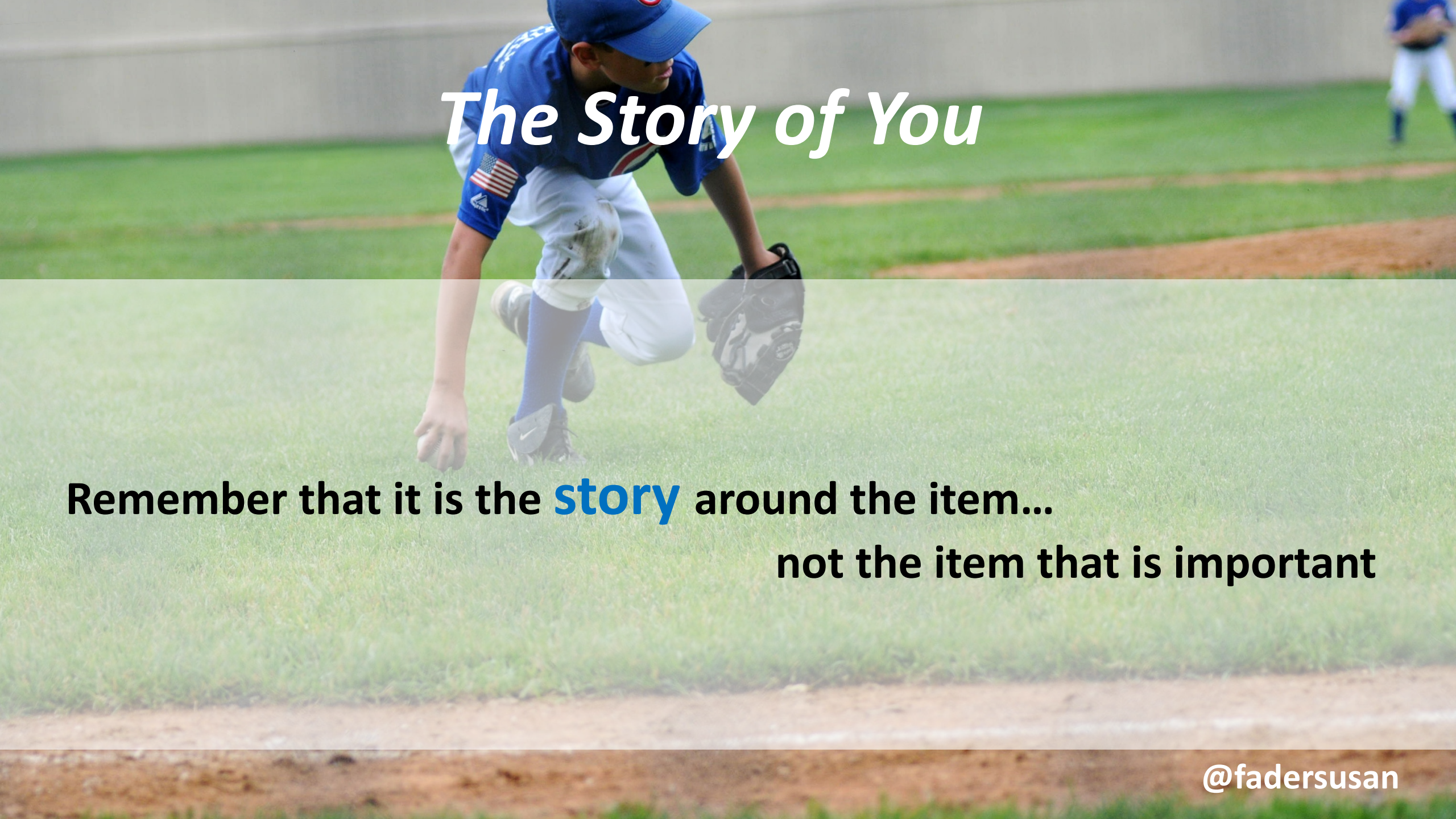
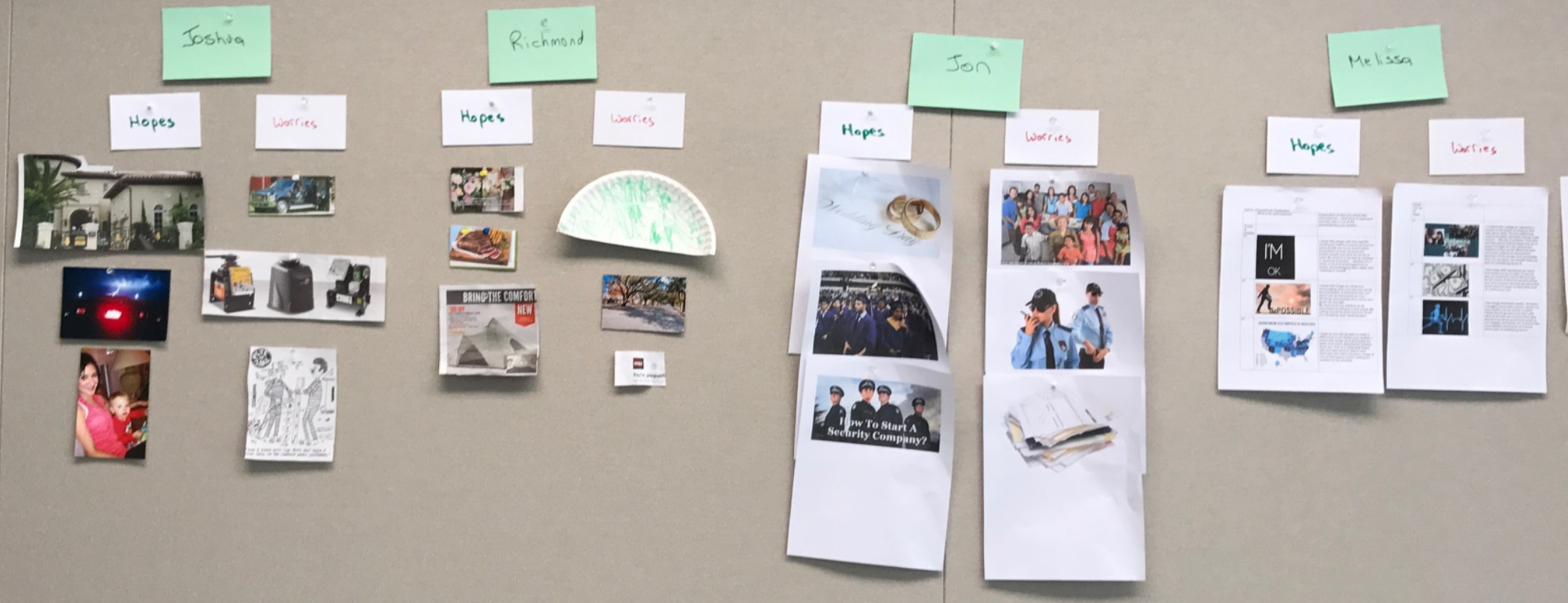


The Story of You

Remember that it is the story around the item…

not the item that is important

PRE-WORK: The Story of Their Hopes & Worries



Helps identify landmines and touchpoints

Narratives can uncover siloing

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IN SESSION: A picture is worth a thousand words if used metaphorically versus literally

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Listen to the Positioning of the Different Narratives

Question: Should there be a guaranteed minimum wage?

"People want to be paid enough to live. A living wage isn't a gift, it's a right."

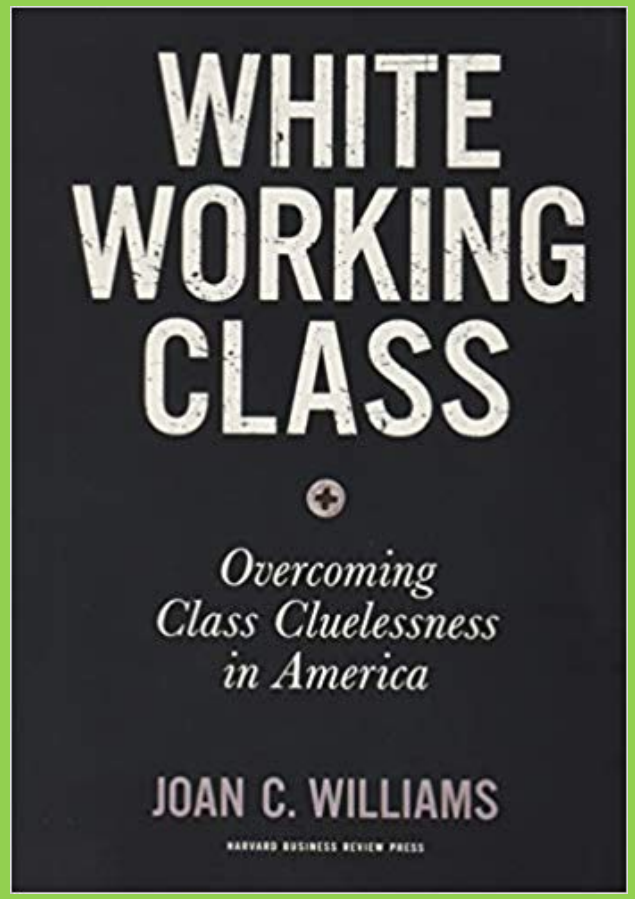
Translation: If you are working full time, you should be paid enough to live

"People want to work for what they get. So, I think this idea of a guaranteed minimum is not something most people want."

Translation: Minimum wage means (unearned) handouts will go to 'others' who haven't worked for it

Better understand the disconnects – *Why Don't They???*

- *Why don't the people who benefit the most from government help seem to appreciate it?*
- *Why does the working class resent the poor?*
- *Why doesn't the working class just move to where the jobs are?*
- *Why doesn't the working class get with it and go to college?*
- *Why don't working-class men just take 'pink-collar' jobs?*



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Narrative Economics will help give you a different perspective

- Do your homework
  - Read and listen people's stories
  - Read different narratives of events that are relevant
- Recruit differently
  - Overlay tribal analytics and self-perception into recruiting process
- Pre-work
  - Storytelling as an input to provide insight and perspectives versus a data collection tool
- In-session
  - Integrate narratives into methodology
- Listen Differently
  - To nuances in the narratives and rationalization for behavior and choice

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