

Ideas become thoughts, thoughts become stories, and stories become the narrative of our existence. This is a process where our abstract ideas are shaped into the conscious thoughts that drive our perceptions. These thoughts are then structured into the personal and collective stories that form our understanding of the world, ultimately creating the framework for our reality and identity.

In the Encyclopedia of Philosophy Urmson (1967) defines the word Idea as "...a transliteration of a Greek word of which the root meaning is 'see'."

Rio and Alessandrini (2017) state "In everyday speech, an idea is a product of the mind, a mental representation—idea as a synonym of thought. But what is thought? For Plato, the idea is a universal reality which comes before thought: Without the idea, there cannot be thought."

Smith (2025) notes that "An *idea* is a mode of thinking. In being a mode of thinking, an idea is understood as a way of being (an instance of) thinking, or an idea is way in which an instance of thinking is manifested. ...Insofar as ideas are modes, they occupy the lowest rung on Descartes' ontological ladder. This can be contrasted to Plato's theory, for example, which casts ideas as substances, occupying the upper-most rung of the ontological ladder. So, whereas for Plato ideas are the most real things in the cosmos, for Descartes ideas are among the least real." Sole (1988) points to John Locke's statement that "Words in their primary or immediate signification, stand for nothing, but the Ideas in the mind of him that uses them". Armstrong (1969) finds that Locke suggests that ideas serve as a bridge between the two worlds of mind and matter. Ideas are caused by external matter and constitute the content of the mind itself. The reality of ideas comes from external causes, but their essential nature is that of the mind.

Thoughts are subjective mental events incorporating memories, images, along with ideas, which are integrated by the complex interactions of neurons in the brain. Thoughts make sense of experiences, generate new concepts, process information and influence emotions and behaviors.

Vosgerau (2010) write that thoughts relate "... to cognition. ...and proposes a strong and direct link between perception and action. ... each thought has inferential relations to other thoughts, they build up a network of thoughts. Thus, it is often impossible to investigate single thoughts without considering the network behind them: to understand one thought, we have to propose a whole set of background beliefs."

Thoughts then become personal stories for the individual as the brain melds present experiences with memories to create a current meaning. Such current meaning builds a narrative for the individual. Humans are fundamentally narrative beings because they are hardwired for story, using it to make sense of the world.

Baker (2006) notes "everything we know is the result of numerous crosscutting story-lines in which social actors locate themselves.' ...these are public and personal stories that we subscribe to and that guide our behavior. They are the stories we tell ourselves about the world(s) in which we live" Hunt (2023) writes "narratives function at different levels. We have personal narratives, interpersonal narratives, sub-cultural narratives and, at the top level, master narratives. These are the narratives that govern how a society or culture thinks, the general rules by which everyone, or nearly everyone abides." It is these narratives that define our identity and purpose.

Such narratives build a world view or that define our beliefs or reality or expectations for the future. A world view according to Alessiato (2022) "...is not only an intellectual order, it has the power to shape the world of the subject, providing them with grounds for life that make them the person they actually are. The individuals are their worldviews. The involvement of the individual in their worldview is explained by the fact that the worldview works as a source of meaning for them" "we are wired for storing beliefs and using them to navigate the world around us " Mifsud (2023). And world views create explanations for why things happened, what they mean, and what might happen next so a world view forms "enduring, unquestioned ontological representations of the world"(Connors, 2015).

Another perspective in considering ideation is the spinning of master narratives into ideologies. The word ideology points to a black box as Sartori (1969) writes "...ideology signifies at the same time truth and error, universality and particularity, wisdom and ignorance." Sartori goes on to note that ideology can be about "ideology in knowledge and/or ideology in politics". Furthermore, he posits that the relationship between ideology and *idea*, conceptual thinking, shapes the origins of ideological doctrines, influencing how they emerge and develop. Minar (1961) indicates that "...ideology constitutes a particularly effective tool for dealing with phenomena and relationships at certain levels of political behavior...". Minar notes that ideology contains conscious or subconscious ideas that can rationalize action. Choma (2024) reports "...research offers evidence for the inclusion of ideology in theory and research on collective action, and for the notion that people from many political stripes can be inspired to act collectively. Ideology - and other motivational underpinnings - appear to spur interest in collective action when the content of the issue symbolizes cherished values." Find (1993) concludes "The crux of ideology is its potential for use - the translation of an affective and cognitive domain into human action."

The power of ideas lies in their ability to inspire, to shape beliefs, and to change the course of history, while the power of action is in its ability to transform those ideas into tangible reality, bridging vision to achievement.

Mickie Roonie “I got an idea”



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