ED 369 122   CS 508 560

AUTHOR   Burke, Ken
TITLE   Mythical Structures in Community Vision.
PUB DATE   Apr 92
NOTE   19p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the
                Central States Communication Association (Cleveland,
                OH, April 9-12, 1992).
PUB TYPE   Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Viewpoints
                (Opinion/Position Papers, Essays, etc.) (120)

EDRS PRICE   MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS   *Communication (Thought Transfer); Communication
                Research; Egocentrism; Feminism; *Individual
                Development; *Individualism; Males; Models;
                *Mythology; *Problem Solving; Social Responsibility;
                Values
IDENTIFIERS   Archetypes; Communication Behavior; Educational
                Issues; *Heroes

ABSTRACT
            To negotiate a balance between an ideological concern
for society's historical-economic development and an understanding of
the individual's need for a sense of self-realization, social theory
researchers should look to B. Dervin's "gap theory model" of
communication. Adapted from Kenneth Burke, it offers a dynamic means
of understanding how society might move from a problem (individualism
leads to a competitive society that engenders fissures such as
violence and pornography), to a formulation of this problem
(individual rights vs. community responsibility), to possible
solutions (family and media role modeling structures that encourage
personal maturity in the context of social accountability). Drawing
on the mythological archetypes of C. G. Jung, social theorists argue
that the health of the individual should not be confused with the
cult of the individual. Proper ego development through challenges,
triumphs, and supportive hero-based media tales is necessary to the
maturation of community leaders. Society must develop methods of
forming community consensus about what sorts of social structures,
media contents, and governing principles are desirable. First,
however, the patriarchal, Eurocentric heritage must be confronted;
this history has left many alienated segments of society wanting some
form of identity enhancement before being able to fully participate
in a negotiated definition of mainstream Americanism. (The generic
communication model, based on Burke's model of multi-image
communication and Dervin's gap theory, is shown in Figure 1. (TB)

MYTHICAL STRUCTURES IN COMMUNITY VISION

Ken Burke, Assistant Professor
Department of Dramatic Arts and Communication
Mills College, Oakland, CA 94613

Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, in Feminism without Illusions (1991), makes a detailed argument for grounding the principle of women's rights in the stability of communities rather than in the tradition of individual liberty. She does not base this new political utopia in Marxism or any other particular program but instead concentrates on the dangers that accompany justifying female equality within the Western Enlightenment tradition of personal sanctity. She is confident that two of feminism's chief concerns, reproductive rights of women through abortion and safety of women and children from pornography, would best be served by a reliance on public, rather than private, rights. However, even if her policies would prove to be the best course for American women--with implications of changing men for the better as well--we still should question which principles might shape community philosophy. Especially in a nation that must balance local, metropolitan, state, and national standards, we virtually demand that value-based decisions be made by representative, but lobbied, leaders.

Ellen DuBois (1992), for one, has taken Fox-Genovese to task on this very point (p. 58), doubting seriously that communities will prove to be the natural or nurturing environments predicted in Feminism without Illusions. She further challenges the concept that communities can be relied on to purge themselves of the sexist attitudes that foster rape and domestic violence. She then charges Fox-Genovese with a contradictory attitude toward men, that at once trusts them to be active partners in a healthy

cooperative venture while admitting they have a history of needing to assert their physical superiority (pp. 58-59).

However, the idea that men are either biologically or socially aggressive (or both) is not unique to Fox-Genovese nor is the larger concept that men and women are inherently different in the many ways in which they conceive, perceive, and express themselves (Gilligan, 1982). Much of this expression is frequently seen as domineering on the part of males, manifested in such activities as controlling conversation for ego-defense (Tannen, 1990), establishing the "male gaze" in movies to cinematically turn women into non-threatening fetish images and psychologically induce all spectators to identify with the male point of view (Mulvey, 1985), and creating a violent "hypermasculinity" in television programs (such as "Miami Vice") to counteract TV's perceived passive, fragmented, "feminine" nature (Joyrich, 1990).

One author who has extensively studied violence is Myriam Miedzian, whose Boys Will Be Boys (1991) documents an American culture of male aggression, including a tendency of men to distance themselves from their actions by displacement strategies such as referring to war and defense technologies as if these were sporting events, especially football games (pp. 28-30). Ultimately, Miedzian asks for a reformatting of male identity in American society and, presumably, in other western societies as well, as she cites Nazi atrocities against Jews as another example of the dangers of an aggressive (male-dominated) world.

In doing this she may be inadvertently echoing McLuhan's (1962, 1964, 1967) idea of the difference between oral and electronic cultures on the one hand and written/print cultures on the other, with inherent conflicts occurring when the two perspectives meet. While McLuhan did not

attribute social organizations to gender, he described the Western post-medieval world in terms quite compatible with Fox-Genovese and Miedzian. McLuhan's Print Age (which effectively spans the Renaissance from the Western development of the printing press to the assembly-line hierarchies of the Industrial Revolution) is rife with the problems of individualism and territorial aggression noted above. Specifically, McLuhan (1968) felt that violence accompanied the loss of uniqueness, so hallowed as the Western norm, in a corporate world of collective culture: "When our identity is in danger, we feel certain that we have a mandate for war. The old image must be recovered at any cost" (p. 97). McLuhan's biographer Philip Marchand (1989) carried this further: "Because the new electronic technology was rapidly eroding American images of selfhood... it was not surprising that U. S. military adventures resulted. (The same process could be used to explain revolution and war in Third World countries.)" (p. 209).

- Fox-Genovese strives to rid potentially self-empowering communities of the limits of self-destructive individualism, yet her proposals seem doomed to face the violent resistance predicted by McLuhan and catalogued by Miedzian. How can this dilemma be resolved? One way may be to develop more fully the individual in our current strife-torn culture so that true community leaders will emerge, rather than just self-serving, self-satisfied isolationists who measure every personal freedom as a gain against potential competition. In other words, it might be more socially beneficial to reinterpret our models of individual rights to include a healthy dose of accompanying community responsibility.

Social Needs for Developing the Community-Conscious Individual

One of the great proponents of raising the individual to be a fully-invested adult member of the community was Joseph Campbell, who wrote and taught of the liberating, invigorating aspects of mythological literature throughout his career. Although Campbell's work was a standard in his field of study for decades, his greatest popularity, at least with a general audience, has come since his death in 1988, as the result of a well-viewed PBS series produced by Bill Moyers. However, Campbell's grounding in the depth psychology and archetypal analysis of C. J. Jung represents a line of thought generally out of favor in an intellectual arena currently more attuned to the perspectives of semiotics, ideology, and deconstruction.

Nevertheless, there have been attempts recently by Wehr (1987) to reconcile Jungianism and feminism and by Rushing and Frentz (1991) to reconsider the value of Jung and his followers, such as Campbell, in integrating "a concern for external, economic relations with internal, psychological realities" (p. 403). Working further with this premise they present the concept of "cultural individuation" (p. 392)--the maturation of a society of self-aware individuals who have confronted their separation from the collective human experience--which would seem to speak appropriately to the concerns raised by Fox-Genovese and Miedzian:

> We would posit that a culture moving toward individuation would
> struggle against oppression based upon economic class structure and
> other forms of hierarchic domination, and hence would progressively
> assimilate more and more of the cultural unconsciousness into
> awareness. Further, we suggest that the ego-consciousness of
> individuals would expand outward to encompass a social collectivity
> which includes others as part of the Self [the Jungian expression of the
> wholeness of existence which guides a specific ego beyond individual

consciousness]; individuals would retain, but re-contextualize, their
separate senses of self within this great whole. Finally, while still
maintaining their uniqueness, separate cultures would expand their
identities outward into a more global, even universal, consciousness.
(pp. 393-394)

Building upon their goal of supporting Jungian concepts of the
individual who achieves greatest maturity through an awakening to a more
inclusive, collective interaction with the human experience, we find that
many authors (Campbell, 1949, 1962, 1964, 1968, 1987; Raglan, 1949; Rank,
1964) have explored the purpose and structures of the hero myth as a tool
for self-examination and development in the context of a community.
Further, this theme, developed in its specific applicability to American film
as it reflects our society, has been elaborated both in mythological terms by
Burke (1990c, 1990d) and in structuralist terms by Schatz (1981), who
analyzed the evolution of film genres from the use of determinate spatial
conflicts--westerns, gangsters--to more indeterminate conflicts of social
integration--musicals, screwball comedies. Nevertheless, it would still be
useful here to repeat one of the foundations for much of the study listed
above, Campbell's (1949) basic conception of the hero myth:

> A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of
> supernatural wonders; fabulous forces are there encountered and a
> decisive victory is won; the hero comes back from the mysterious
> adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow [people].
> (p. 30)

Where this understanding of the heroic ideal falls short, though, is in
misapplications of the story to social reinforcement rather than to personal
development as related to social responsibility. So often we see heroes, no
matter what types of protagonists they are shaped into for various dramatic
and thematic purposes, only as role models for triumphing over conflict, for
dispelling adversity to protect home and hearth. As summarized by Jewett

and Lawrence (1977), the American version of this "monomyth" takes on a decidedly guardian angel nature:

> A community in harmonious paradise is threatened by evil; normal institutions fail to contend with this threat, a selfless superhero emerges to renounce temptations and carry out the redemptive task; aided by fate, his decisive victory restores the community to its paradisal condition; the superhero then recedes into obscurity. (p. xx)

From this premise, much American fiction, film, and television has developed into a cult of the adolescent individual (usually male), always coming of age but never facing the full challenge of ancient heroes that included community leadership, marriage, and death. Campbell's (1949) concept is that the hero's purpose is to "give direct battle to the nursery demons of his local culture" (p. 18) so that "once the individual has passed his initial test and can enter the mature phase of life, the hero myth loses its relevance" (Henderson, 1964, p. 112). However, American culture, with its role-modeling media images, has often given us an arrested adolescent who consistently avoids social responsibility and marital commitment (Burke, 1990b; Fiedler, 1960). Our popular mythologies and ideologies are fraught with contradictions (Wood, 1986) and lead to fictional structures that continually deny the necessity for choosing between individual and community priorities:

> In this story, the reluctant hero's ultimate willingness to help the community satisfied the official values. But by portraying this aid as demanding only a temporary involvement, the story preserved the values of individualism as well. (Ray, 1985, p. 65)

What we need are hero stories in film and other forms of fiction--from the newly revived interest in spatially-determinate westerns (Dances with Wolves) to the perennial acceptance of spatially-indeterminate domestic comedies (Fried Green Tomatoes)--to nurture the psychological development

of the individual as a responsible member of the community, not just a defensive warrior who feels some obligation to fight other people's battles. However, just as media images might provide role models that would lead us away from the Rambo type so despised by Miedzian, there are concerns by others that total pro-social content, TV programming for example, will rob children of a necessary stage of the individuation process. Karp (1984) wrote before Miedzian, but he cited her same concerns with stories that would focus on "peaceful, unselfish, cooperative behavior" (p. 42), such as those proposed by the ACT Guide to Children's Television. However, Karp did not promote these goals as his main concern; rather, he countered with Bettleheim's (1976) contention that in the process of maturation children benefit when stories introduce terror that can be vanquished. Karp supported the idea that a fictional, lone struggle to victory and the concept of happy endings give a child incentive to conquer life's challenges:

> What children urgently need from children's stories are not lessons in cooperative living but the life-saving "assurance that one can succeed" --that monsters can be slain, injustice remedied, and all obstacles overcome on the road to adulthood. (p. 43)

Karp went on to say that the bland pro-social programming of the 1980s:

> teaches the children of a free people (whose ignorance then menaces their liberty) to look to the group for their opinions and to despise those who do not do the same. Out of a pretended fear of "aggressiveness," it would deprive a free people of the very inner force and self-assurance they need to stand up and fight for their rights. (p. 47)

Miedzian counters with her own reactions to Bettleheim's idea that boys need to experience conflict play as a means of developing moral attitudes toward aggression:

> Bettleheim description of boys' development through war play toward

objectivity, rationality, and virtue reads to me like a blueprint for training future soldiers. Instead of turning boys into mature, empathetic men, childhood involvement in war toys and war play contributes to adult men acting like insensitive, immature, egocentric boys [emphasis hers]. (p. 276)

Although these contrary opinions offer little room for compromise, there does seem to be a middle road of interpretation that could accommodate both the need for individual development and the emphasis on communal values. This is the aforementioned concept that group action and community leadership can effectively come only from self-aware, inner-motivated individuals who understand that only hermits can live by a code of answering to personal needs and even then there are few hermits who are completely self-sustaining. Thus, Jung's goal of individuation can be addressed in terms of communal benefits, as suggested by Rushing and Frentz, recognizing that each person faces specific needs and challenges in every ego-developing and communicating situation.

. Now, let us examine the communal visions offered by the Jungians, building on their model of ego development through myths of struggle and personal triumph. These writers could easily be seen as simply supporting individualism in opposition to Fox-Genovese, but they offer more than just private victory tales to consider.

First, there is the concern by Campbell (1988) that older myths have lost their meaning in the modern world where we have become too fixated on the legends of specific cultures to see the grander human experience that underlies all stories:

> The only myth that is going to be worth thinking about in the immediate future is one that is talking about the planet, not the city, not these people, but the planet and everyone on it. . . . And what it will have to deal with will be exactly what all myths have dealt with--the maturation of the individual, from dependency through adulthood,

through maturity, and then to the exit; and then how to relate this society to the world of nature and the cosmos. (pp. 8, 32)

Karp, echoing Bettleheim, still finds value in traditional fairy tales for children but only because they encourage a personal path, enabling adults to develop something of substance to offer a more centered community than the one we now experience:

> Like wise and loving parents, these ancient, universal tales serve the true interests of children as distinct from the interests of society which cares nothing about the inner strength of its members, but only about their outward conformity. The fairy tales are not pro-social. What they are is pro-child. They stand guard against the adulteration of childhood by society's overzealous agents. (p. 44)

Similarly, Rushing and Frentz end their argument for cultural individuation with a call for the balance provided by both an ideological concern for society's historical-economical development and an understanding of the individual's need for a sense of self-realization:

> Indeed, if the ideological approach is allowed, through the default of alternative voices, to coopt the moral territory as exclusively its own, rhetorical criticism will be impoverished by what it ignores--namely, the role of the interior world of the psyche in the visualization of a cultural ideal. The liberation of the material person becomes the oppression of the soul. (p. 403).

Similar to these positions for maintaining (but, where necessary, modifying) a hero-based media mythology are a number of authors who seek to provide guidance for non-aggressive masculinity as envisioned by Miedzian and implicitly desired by Fox-Genovese. Some (Bly, 1990) seek to reawaken a healthy male persona in a society frustrated by guilt and confusion, essentially reclaiming a nurturing father figure who has been lost in an age of Freudian sexual tension. Some (Keen, 1991) advocate a more multi-dimensional man who explores emotions and responsibilities beyond rage and power. Others (Moore & Gillette, 1990) detail the need to move

past boyhood archetypes--the Divine Child, the Precocious Child, the Oedipal Child, and the Hero (who merely seeks adventure, as noted above in terms of the American monomyth)--into more mature, socially responsible roles--the King, the Magician, the Lover, and the Warrior (pp. 13-45).
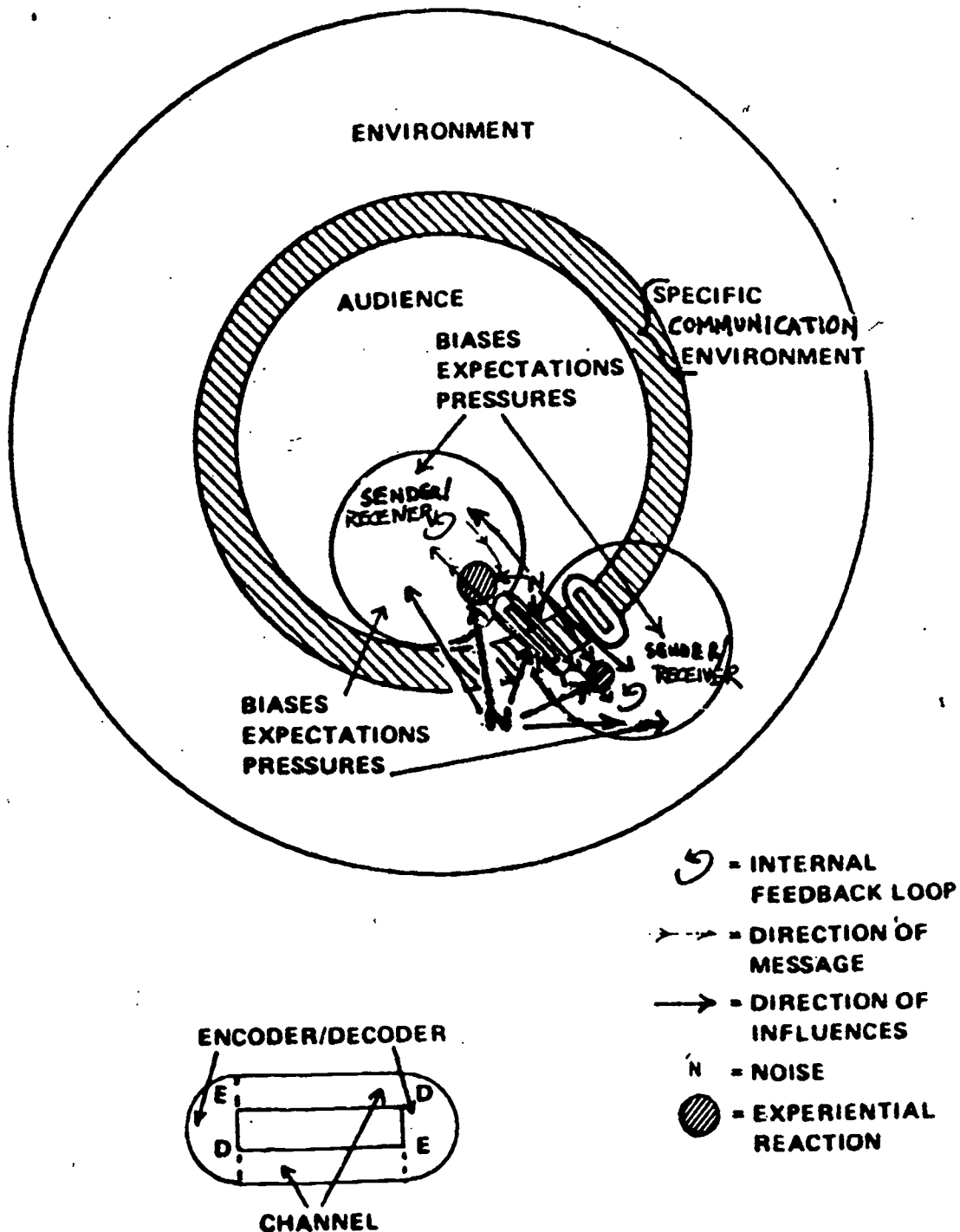
Beyond this, Pearson (1989) offers a six-stage concept of human archetypes--the Innocent, the Orphan, the Martyr, the Warrior, the Wanderer, and the Magician--meant as role models for either sex. Specifically, she sees the hero concept in terms of Jungian individuation but advocates the journey through the five stages beyond the Innocent as aspects of becoming a fully-balanced hero, not just a crusader:

> Ironically, just as women, working-class men, and minority men are embracing the Warrior archetype, many white middle- and upper-class men are expressing great alienation from it....The problem is that focusing on only this heroic archetype limits everyone's options. Many white men, for example, feel ennui because they need to grow beyond the Warrior modality, yet they find themselves stuck there because it not only is defined as the heroic ideal but is also equated with masculinity. Men consciously or unconsciously believe they cannot give up that definition of themselves without also giving up their sense of superiority to others--especially to women [emphases hers]. (pp. 2-3)

All of these commentators seem to be asking for results similar to those of Fox-Genovese and Miedzian, yet their assumptions and methods are not easily reconcilable. What seems to be missing is some theoretical grounding in social problem solving that encourages a wide variety of beneficial outcomes while acknowledging the diversity of needs in a pluralistic society. The gap-bridging concepts of Dervin would seem to provide this missing element, even though she is not writing directly to the individual-community question under examination here. Her extensive literature review of communication systems (1989b) points out the problems

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Figure 1

A generic model of communication, based on Burke's (1977) model of multi-image communication and Dervin's (1989a, 1989b) gap theory.

ENVIRONMENT

AUDIENCE

SPECIFIC
COMMUNICATION
ENVIRONMENT

BIASES
EXPECTATIONS
PRESSURES

SENDER/
RECEIVER

SENDER/
RECEIVER

BIASES
EXPECTATIONS
PRESSURES

$\mathcal{D}$ = INTERNAL
FEEDBACK LOOP

➤--➤ = DIRECTION OF
MESSAGE

⟶ = DIRECTION OF
INFLUENCES

N = NOISE

⬤ = EXPERIENTIAL
REACTION

ENCODER/DECODER

E   D
D   E

CHANNEL

with traditional frameworks that create and reinforce "disparities between the have and the have-nots" (p. 217), which results in a "large proportion of U. S citizens [being] conceptualized as information-poor" (p. 221). She encourages, instead, a conception of communication as sense-making or gap-bridging (1989a) in which dialogue is emphasized over transmission (p. 72).

Although Figure 1 (which was adapted from Burke, 1977) was not originally conceived with an understanding of gap theory, it is presented here as one attempt to illustrate this concept as it might generally be applied to the communication situation, especially regarding the question of personal rights vs. the needs of the community. Initially the model in Figure 1 was used to diagram the exchange between producers ("sender") and critics ("receiver")--clients, supervisors, teachers, etc.--of multi-image slide-tape programs, demonstrating an aspect of adapting phenomenological aesthetics to these hybrid communication structures in order to establish a consistent method of critical inquiry. However, when the terms in this model are changed to sender and receiver, with the understanding of Dervin's active gap-bridger seen as filling either role interchangeably, it seems plausible that this model will offer some relevance not only to gap theory but also to the discussion at hand.

Whether a seeker initiates an information-gathering message (as sender) or is open to gathering one (as receiver), she or he will always simultaneously be part of a specific context (an "audience") and a general context (the "environment"--our American society in our current discussion). Each sense-making situation provides a gap to be bridged between these contexts, optimally allowing the person (and possibly the whole audience group) to become more securely situated within the larger structure, through the various processes of formulating, encoding, generating, decoding, and

sharing messages in a variety of channels or media. Accordingly, the focus may be on the sender or the receiver, with the gap-bridger actively exchanging these roles as circumstances warrant.

When applied to the identity-community problem, this attitude toward gap-bridging provides a means for analyzing the problems (individualism leads to a competitive society that engenders fissures such as violence and pornography), the gap (individual rights vs. community responsibility), and the options to be considered as solutions (family and media role modeling structures that encourage personal maturity in the context of social accountability). Certainly this issue is a complex one that would ultimately require our entire society to see itself as audience in context of a global environment, but at least some consistent framework toward a common goal might stay in focus with the use of Dervin's methodology.

Conclusion

Fox-Genovese's controversial ideas about the limited perspective of individualism are relevant to our culture, where certain aspects of our social structure have allowed competition, power, and hegemony to contribute to various social evils such as sexism, racism, and other forms of identity-inspired violence. Media content in the areas of aggressive male and subservient female role modeling, from inane situation comedies to sadomasochistic pornography, has fueled these concerns, raising again the question of preeminent individual rights in a world so intricately interconnected--socially, economically, politically. Shifting global trends are favoring certain types of communal priority already, but largely these are massive corporate cultures that are largely extensions of the financial

priorities of their executive directors. The eventual result of this type of community model could simply be the soulless corporation rejected by Mander (1991).

Jungian psychologists and social theorists remind us that the health of the individual should not be confused with the cult of the individual, that proper ego development through challenges, triumphs and supportive hero-based media tales is necessary to the maturation of the community leaders called for by various authors noted above. Their goals should not be misinterpreted as praising the elusive adolescent warriors chronicled by Fiedler and Ray and chastised by Miedzian. But to prevent this, we as a society need to develop methods of forming community consensus about what sorts of social structures, media contents, and governing principles are desirable. First, however, we must confront our patriarchal, Eurocentric heritage; this history has left many alienated segments of our society wanting some form of identity enhancement before being able to fully participate in a negotiated definition of mainstream Americanism.

For example, the Miller v. California definition of pornography as being prurient, valueless obscenity, as defined by community standards, proves useless in confronting a potential social ill when there is so little common ground for defining a sense of community itself. Is the current erotic murder mystery film Basic Instinct to be protected as an adult thriller; reclassified from an R-rating because it pushes explicit sexuality too far into accessible, virtually unregulated channels of media consumption; condemned because it is homophobic or misogynistic (or both); or simply ignored because it has received largely mediocre reviews? Fox-Genovese would certainly have an answer, but are we a society ready to accept the reasoning

behind her radical conclusions or would we reject her position despite the relevancy of the questions she raises?

Perhaps before embracing or repudiating the identity and community arguments of the authors cited here, it would be best to ground our responses in methodologies such as Dervin's that force us to recognize what a communication system (and its larger society) should be able to offer its participants. Only when we have recognized all members of a group as equally-invested, self-aware, active seekers of the common good can we truly enter into constructive debates about the priorities of specific rights in the context of collaborative needs. Fox-Genovese has provided many provocative questions; it will require a concerted process of mature debate to adequately arrive at acceptable answers.

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