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Articles

Cultural Shock and Adaptation
Michael Winkelman

Multicultural domestic and international relations create cultural shock for both immigrant and resident groups. This article addresses the nature, stages, and causes of cultural shock to provide broad guidelines for managing cultural shock experiences in a variety of circumstances. Cultural shock is described from psychophysiological and sociocultural perspectives. The nature of cultural shock experiences suggests that resolution be addressed through cognitive orientation and behavioral adjustment involving recognition of cultural shock characteristics and implementation of strategies for its resolution. Adaptive strategies for guiding constructive interventions are summarized from an integration of literature on cultural shock adaptation, cross-cultural training effectiveness, and intercultural effectiveness.

Cultural (or culture) shock is a multifaced experience resulting from numerous stressors occurring in contact with a different culture. Cultural shock occurs for immigrant groups (e.g., foreign students and refugees [Dodge, 1990]; businessmen on overseas assignments [Walton, 1990]) as well as for Euro-Americans in their own culture and society (e.g., business institutions undergoing reorganization [Knobel, 1988]; populations undergoing massive technological and social change [Tofler, 1970]; and staff, clients, and public in schools, hospitals, and other institutions). The multicultural nature of society in the United States creates daily cross-cultural conflict and immersion, making cultural shock an important source of interpersonal stress and conflict for many. Cultural shock reactions may provoke psychological crises or social dysfunctions when reactions to cultural differences impede performance. Because our society is becoming increasingly multicultural (Schwartz & Exter, 1989), we all experience varying degrees of cultural shock in unfamiliar cultural or subcultural settings (Merta, Stringham, & Ponterotto, 1988). “If we all may be in need of cultural shock counseling as we attempt to deal with these new perspectives on life in American society” (Rhinesmith, 1985, p. 133).

The circumstances provoking cultural shock and the individual reactions depend on a variety of factors, including previous experience with other cultures and cross-cultural adaptation; the degree of difference in one’s own and the host culture; the degree of preparation; social support networks; and individual psychological characteristics (Furnham & Bochner, 1986). The multivariate nature of cultural shock requires the development of “programmes of preparation, orientation and the acquisition of culturally appropriate social skills” (Furnham & Bochner, 1986, p. 13). My experience with programs for helping people manage cultural shock experiences comes primarily from my role as director of the Arizona State University Ethnographic Field School in Ensenada, Baja California Mexico. These experiences have shown me that helping students manage their cultural shock experiences is fundamental to their success.

My approach emphasizes that cultural shock is normal in a foreign culture environment, although those experiencing it may not recognize it or respond effectively to the problems. Effectively dealing with cultural shock requires recognition of cultural shock occurrences and implementing behaviors to overcome cultural shock with stable adaptations. Awareness of the nature of cultural shock and the typical reactions fosters constructive intervention by providing the basis for recognizing one’s own ongoing cultural shock experiences and for reframing the situations with adaptive responses and problem-solving strategies. Students in my foreign programs have reported that in the midst of cultural shock crises, they suddenly recalled that “Dr. Winkelman said it would be like this!” Frequently, that awareness was sufficient for them to normalize their experience, to reappraise their situation, and to respond in a more productive and less stressful manner.

The effectiveness of a combined cognitive and behavioral approach in managing cultural shock experiences is supported by a number of factors, including the nature of the conditions that cause cultural shock, the strategies that have been shown to improve intercultural adaptation and communication, and the effectiveness of cross-cultural training programs that are based on the social learning principles combining cognitive and behavioral approaches (Black & Mendenhall, 1990). That is, because cultural shock is caused in part by cognitive overload and behavioral inadequacies, and because intercultural effectiveness is based on understanding and behavioral adaptation, cultural shock is best resolved by a social learning approach in which new attitudes and cognitive information are integrated into behavioral transformations.

This article provides guidelines for managing cultural shock more effectively with strategies that foster awareness, learning, and adaptation. Two approaches are taken: (a) understanding the characteristics, phases, and causes of cultural shock; and (b) developing knowledge and attitudinal and behavioral strategies for overcoming cultural shock.

ASPECTS OF CULTURAL SHOCK
Cultural shock was initially conceptualized (Oberg, 1954,1960) as the consequence of strain and anxiety resulting from contact with a new culture and the feelings of loss, confusion, and impotence resulting from loss of accustomed cultural cues and social rules. Taft (1977) reviewed a range of definitions of cultural shock and provided a summary—a feeling of impotence from the inability to deal with the environment because of unfamiliarity with cognitive aspects and role-playing skills.
Although the clinical model of cultural shock as a psychological and cognitive reaction has been dominant, the implications of cultural shock are more extensive. Cultural shock derives from both the challenge of new cultural surroundings and from the loss of a familiar cultural environment (Rhinesmith, 1985). Cultural shock stress responses cause both psychological and physiological reactions. Psychological reactions include physiological, emotional, interpersonal, cognitive, and social components, as well as the effects resulting from changes in sociocultural relations, cognitive fatigue, role stress, and identity loss. These interrelated aspects of cultural shock are considered in the following section after a summary of the phases of cultural shock.

Phases or Stages of Cultural Shock

The stages of cultural shock and its resolution have been differentiated in a variety of ways, typically emphasizing four phases or stages (Ferraro, 1990; Kohls, 1984; Oberg, 1954; Preston, 1985; but see Adler's [1975] five-stage transitional experience view and Rhinesmith's [1985] eight-stage intercultural adjustment cycle). Underlying the different labels, the four primary phases of cultural shock are typically considered to involve the following:

1. The honeymoon or tourist phase
2. The crises or cultural shock phase
3. The adjustment, reorientation, and gradual recovery phase
4. The adaptation, resolution, or acculturation phase

The phases are both sequential and cyclical. The shift from crises to adjustment and adaptation can repeat as one encounters new crises, requiring additional adjustments. One may become effectively bicultural, and then the adaptation phase is a permanent stage.

The honeymoon or tourist phase. The first phase is the typical experience of people who enter other cultures for honeymoons, vacations, or brief business trips. It is characterized by interest, excitement, euphoria, sleeplessness, positive expectations, and idealizations about the new culture. The differences are exciting and interesting. Although there may be anxiety and stress, these tend to be interpreted positively. This is the opposite of what we think of as cultural shock. This is because honeymooners, vacationers, and business people have experiences largely limited to institutions (hotels, resorts, business, airports) that isolate them from having to deal with the local culture in a substantial way and on its own terms.

The crises phase. When the honeymoon phase gives way to crises depends on individual characteristics, preparation, and many other factors (Furnham & Bochner, 1986). The crises phase may emerge immediately upon arrival or be delayed but generally emerges within a few weeks to a month. It may start with a full-blown crisis or as a series of escalating problems, negative experiences, and reactions. Cultural shock may start immediately for some individuals; for example, when they enter the enormity of JFK Airport or New York City, or the blazing Arizona heat in August. Although individual reactions vary, there are typical features of cultural shock. Things start to go wrong, minor issues become major problems, and cultural differences become irritating. Excessive preoccupation with cleanliness of food, drinking water, bedding, and surroundings begins. One experiences increasing disappointments, frustrations, impatience, and tension. Life does not make sense and one may feel helpless, confused, disliked by others, or treated like a child. A sense of lack of control of one’s life may lead to depression, isolation, anger, or hostility. Excessive emotionality and fatigue may be accompanied by physical or psychosomatic illness. Feeling as if one is being taken advantage of or being cheated is typical. Becoming overly sensitive, suspicious, and paranoid with fears of being robbed or assaulted are also typical reactions (Rhinesmith, 1985). One finds innumerable reasons to dislike and to criticize the culture. Plans for learning the language may be postponed, problems escalate, and depression may become serious; one generally wants to go home! Typical in this phase are maintenance and reparative behaviors (Wengle, 1988) designed to help reestablish one’s familiar habitual cultural patterns of behavior to provide insulation from the foreign culture.

The adjustment and reorientation phase. The third phase is concerned with learning how to adjust effectively to the new cultural environment. Resolution of cultural shock lies in learning how to make an acceptable adaptation to the new culture. A variety of adjustments will be achieved during cyclical and individually unique adjustment phases. There may be an adjustment without adaptation, such as flight or isolation. Many people who go to foreign countries do not adjust to achieve effective adaptation; instead, they opt to return home during the crises phase. Others use various forms of isolation, for example, living in an ethnic enclave and avoiding substantial learning about the new culture, a typical lifetime reaction of many first-generation immigrants. If one desires to function effectively, however, then it is necessary to adjust and adapt. One develops problem-solving skills for dealing with the culture and begins to accept the culture’s ways with a positive attitude. The culture begins to make sense, and negative reactions and responses to the culture are reduced as one recognizes that problems are due to the inability to understand, accept, and adapt. An appreciation of the other culture begins to emerge and learning about it becomes a fun challenge. During the adjustment phase the problems do not end, but one develops a positive attitude toward meeting the challenge of resolving the issues necessary to function in the new culture. Adjustment is slow, involving recurrent crises and readjustments.

The adaptation, resolution, or acculturation stage. The fourth stage is achieved as one develops stable adaptations in being successful at resolving problems and managing the new culture. There are many different adaptation options, especially given diverse individual characteristics and goals. Although full assimilation is difficult if not impossible, one will acculturate and may undergo substantial personal change through cultural adaptation and development of a bicultural identity. It is important to recognize and accept the fact that an effective adaptation will necessarily change one, leading to the development of a bicultural identity and the integration of new cultural aspects into one’s previous self-concept. Reaching this stage requires a constructive response to cultural shock with effective means of adaptation.

Causes of Cultural Shock

Stress reactions. Exposure to a new environment causes stress, increasing the body’s physiological reactions that can cause dysfunction in the rise of pituitary-adrenal activity (Levine, Goldman, & Cooper, 1972, as cited in Taft, 1977). Stress induces a wide range of physiological reactions involving mass discharges of the sympathetic nervous system, impairment of the functioning of the immune system, and increased susceptibility to all diseases (Guyton, 1986). Therefore, a normal consequence of living in and adjusting to a new culture is the experience of stress caused by both physiological and psychological factors. In a psychosomatic interaction, psychological states affect the body and its physiological reactions, which in turn increases feelings of stress, anxiety, depression, uneasiness, and so on. Cultural shock results in an increased concern with illness, a sense of feeling physically ill, a preoccupation with symptoms, minor pains, and discomforts (Kohls, 1979; Rhinesmith, 1985), and may increase both psychosomatic and...
physical illness from stress-induced reductions in immune system functioning.

Cognitive fatigue. A major aspect of cultural shock and the resultant stress is cognitive fatigue (Guthrie, 1975), a consequence of an “information overload.” The new culture demands a conscious effort to understand things processed unconsciously in one’s own culture. Efforts must be made to interpret new language meanings and new nonverbal, behavioral, contextual, and social communications. The change from a normally automatic, unconscious, effortless functioning within one’s own culture to the conscious effort and attention required to understand all this new information is very fatiguing and results in a mental and emotional fatigue or burnout. In my experience, this has been manifested in tension headaches and a desire to isolate myself from social contact, particularly in the latter part of the day as the cumulative information overload increases.

Role shock. Roles central to one’s identity may be lost in the new culture. Changes in social roles and interpersonal affects well-being and self-concept, resulting in “role shock” (Byrnes, 1966). One’s identity is maintained in part by social roles that contribute to well-being through structuring social interaction. In the new cultural setting, the prior roles are largely eliminated and replaced with unfamiliar roles and expectations. This leads to role shock resulting from an ambiguity about one’s social position, the loss of normal social relations and roles, and new roles inconsistent with previous self-concept. For instance, dependence relations may no longer be supported, or conversely, a previously independent person may have to accept a dependent relationship with an authority figure.

Personal shock. I suggest the notion of personal shock as an aspect of cultural shock resulting from diverse changes in personal life. This includes loss of personal intimacy (Adelman, 1988) and loss of interpersonal contact with significant others such as occurs in separation grief and bereavement (Furnham & Bochner, 1986). One’s psychological disposition, self-esteem, identity, feelings of well-being, and satisfaction with life are all created within and maintained by one’s cultural system. Losing this support system can lead to a deterioration in one’s sense of well-being and lead to pathological manifestations. Rhinesmith (1985) suggested that cultural shock may induce a “transient neurosis,” a temporary emotional disorder, with more critical cases having features resembling acute psychosis with paranoid features (see crises phase as previously described). Kohls (1979) suggested that the major and severe symptoms of cultural shock may include withdrawal and excessive sleeping, compulsive eating and drinking, excessive irritability and hostility, marital and family tensions and conflicts, loss of work effectiveness, and unaccountable episodes of crying. Although these symptoms can characterize a variety of other maladies, if “the symptoms manifest themselves while one is living and working abroad, one can be sure that cultural shock has set in” (Ferraro, 1990, p. 143). Awareness of the pathological aspects of cultural shock permits more effective management by reducing reactions and providing the basis for insight, change, and adaptation. Personal shock is augmented by occurrences in the new culture that violate one’s personal and cultural sense of basic morals, values, logic, and beliefs about normality and civility. Value conflicts contribute to a sense of disorientation and unreality, increasing the sense of pervasive conflict with one’s surroundings.

Strategies for Managing Cultural Shock and Adaptation

Although some aspects of cultural shock adaptation vary as a function of individuals’ characteristics, their intents and needs, and the cultural and social contexts of adaptation (Taft, 1977), others are universal. The universal features of cultural shock require adjustments based on an awareness of cultural shock, the use of skills for resolving crises, and acceptance that some personal change and behavioral adjustment is fundamental to cultural shock resolution and adaptation. This is not to say that an individual must assimilate, but one must accommodate (accommodate), understanding the local culture and the means of adapting effectively. Adaptation requires suspending at least some culturally based reactions (practicing cultural relativism) to become more tolerant of the local culture. This does not mean that one must give up one’s identity, values, or culture. Many individuals (e.g., international students) may effectively manage cultural shock without making major changes in their personality or preexisting lifestyle. The challenge is doing so in a new cultural environment that does not provide the accustomed supports.

Taft (1977) suggested that managing cultural shock and immersion in another society is a special case of human adaptation that should be addressed in the context of socialization, resocialization, and individual group relations. This requires adaptation in personality functioning to achieve emotional comfort; change in reference groups and social identity to achieve a sense of belonging; acquiring new cultural knowledge, skills, attitudes, and perceptions; and adopting new culturally defined roles to permit functional integration (Taft, 1977). Rhinesmith (1985) suggested cultural shock be resolved in a three-stage process of cause diagnosis, reaction analysis, and intercultural adjustment.

A social-learning-theory approach that combines cognitive and behavioral strategies is well suited for cross-cultural training and effectiveness (Black & Mendenhall, 1990). Successful management of cultural shock depends on awareness of the experience, a cognitive orientation that directs one toward successful adaptation, and the development of behavioral skills that lessen or resolve cultural shock. To successfully manage cultural shock, particularly in situations of cultural immersion, it is necessary to address a sequence of issues: predeparture preparation, transition adjustments, personal and social relations, cultural and social interaction rules, and conflict resolution and intercultural effectiveness skills. These are different points at which an individual, counselor, or trainer can assist with interventions for more effective management and resolution of cultural shock. The counselor’s job is first to stabilize the individual and then to facilitate his or her adjustment to a stable adaptation through cultural learning.

Predeparture preparation. Assessment of one’s ability to adapt to a new culture (e.g. Harris & Moran, 1987, Appendices A–D; Redden, 1975; Smith, 1986) is a good first step before even going to a new culture. Not all individuals are equally prepared to accept the rigors of cultural shock and adaptation, nor are they disposed to change in the ways necessary to acculturate effectively. One needs to be realistic about the necessary changes and aware of the problems inevitably encountered in living in a foreign country.

One can minimize cultural shock by preparing for problems and using resources that will promote coping and adjustment. It is necessary to recognize that problems that occur in cross-cultural contact necessarily involve cultural shock and necessarily affect one. The tendency is to deny that cultural shock has anything to do with the problems being confronted. As an adaptation strategy, one should accept that all atypical problems during cross-cultural adaptation are caused by or exacerbated by cultural shock, and that one’s typical negative reactions will be increased. This provides the perspective for reframing problems in a manner that fosters greater tolerance and implementing problem-resolution strategies.
The process of successfully adjusting to a new culture should be supported by cross-cultural training, because it broadly facilitates adjustment, skills development, performance, and effectiveness in a new culture (Black & Mendenhall, 1990). Black and Mendenhall concluded that cross-cultural training enables the individual to learn skills and cultural knowledge that reduce misunderstandings and provide the knowledge basis for appropriate behavior. Both general cultural orientations to the processes of cross-cultural adaptation and specific cultural orientations to the destination culture are necessary.

Awareness of the primary value conflicts to be encountered in the new environment is essential. Value assessments are an important tool for self-awareness. If one is unaware of one's own values, then one is unprepared to manage potentially conflictive situations. A broad study of the nature of social behavior in the new culture setting is necessary to prepare for the types of behaviors to which one will have to respond.

One's attitude about the new culture and willingness to change are vital for adjustment. It is essential that one acknowledge the benefits of living in a different culture and have a positive attitude about the culture and learning experiences rather than complain or make comparisons with life at home. One must also be prepared to deal with personal rejection, prejudice, and discrimination. Cultures are ethnocentric, and their members typically view their own cultural ways as superior. Psychological preparation for this outsider status is essential, because most people immersed in a foreign culture will experience a negative evaluation of their differences and a rejection by the members of the host culture.

Transition adjustments. Successful adjustment also depends on the availability of transition resources necessary for comfortable adaptation in the new culture. The needs of physical well-being—food and security—must be effectively met if one is to meet work requirements and address subsequent needs for social relations, self-esteem, and personal development. Assistance in managing fundamentals such as food, housing, and transportation then frees the individual to focus on the cultural adaptation issues. The importance of self-efficacy in learning suggests that the individual should immediately attempt to produce foreign cultural behavior they have previously mastered in order to boost the self-confidence necessary for persisting in the novel behaviors necessary for adaptation.

Management of stress is central to cross-cultural adjustment, adaptation, and effectiveness (Walton, 1990). Because ambiguity is a major source of stress, its reduction through understanding the cross-cultural adaptation process, developing accurate and realistic expectations, and learning how to tolerate ambiguity fosters adaptation (Walton, 1990). Effectiveness in dealing with stress requires that one recognize and understand general and cultural specific forms of stress and identity lifestyles that help reduce stress. Walton (1990) outlined procedures for incorporating stress management into intercultural training.

Both maintenance and reparative behaviors are necessary for stress management and for maintaining one's personal well-being in conditions of cultural immersion (Wengle, 1988). Maintenance behaviors are ongoing activities that are necessary for maintaining one's cultural sense of identity and sense of well-being. Reparative behaviors are activities that serve to reestablish those vital aspects of one's self that are being lost in the new cultural setting. Maintenance and reparative behaviors may include speaking one's own language, eating the foods of one's own culture, reading books and newspapers from home, talking and interacting with home nationals, writing letters or making phone calls home, excessive sleeping, dreaming and fantasizing, or a focusing on job activities that reinforce one's sense of self. These behaviors are important ways to maintain or reestablish a sense of stability and well-being, but may also be ways of resisting the changes necessary for adjustment to the new culture.

Personal and social relations. Managing cultural shock requires that one maintain or reestablish a network of primary relations—family or friends—who provide positive interpersonal relations for self-esteem and for meeting personal and emotional needs. My own unpublished ethnographic observations from students in foreign settings suggest that relationships with their placement families provided a primary source of support against cultural shock. The adjustment of one's family is also essential to one's own well-being because effectiveness in work requires interpersonal harmony. Emotional life may be maintained through writing letters or keeping a personal diary of feelings and experiences. Enjoying oneself in the new culture eases adjustment and helps to maintain a positive sense of well-being.

Social support networks ameliorate a variety of stressors (Cohen & Syme, 1985) and have direct application to the resolution of cultural shock and cross-cultural adaptation (Furnham & Bochner, 1986) through provision of tangible assistance; validation of self-worth through affirmation, acceptance, and assurance; and opportunities for venting emotions leading to understanding of stressful situations (Adelman, 1988). Social support may be found in "close ties" (family and friends) and in "weak ties" with those with whom one has secondary relationships. Adaptation requires satisfactory relationships and friendships with locals, in addition to fellow nationals, and international and multicultural individuals. Organizational support can be very useful, for example, clubs, social groups, sports teams, artistic and theatrical productions, social concern groups, and so forth. Activities that permit social interaction through nonverbal communication channels (e.g., dances, concerts, sporting events, festivals) provide important ways of developing social relations.

The nature of cultural social relations must be understood. For example, foreigners adapting to the United States should learn that Americans are more likely to form more superficial friendships than is typical in many countries (Stewart, 1972). Immigrants may be bitterly disappointed when they discover that Americans typically do not expect or accept the strong commitments and obligations frequently associated with friendship in other cultures.

Successful cross-cultural adaptation means that one becomes bicultural, integrating one's original identity with a new identity created in the new culture. Personal changes can be achieved by cognitive flexibility (openness to new ideas, beliefs, and experiences and the ability to accept these new conditions) and behavioral flexibility (the ability to change behavior as required by the culture). Emotional changes require more than knowledge, empathy, and understanding. One needs to simulate new behaviors and to express affective aspects (emotions, feelings) expected in the culture. For example, one may need to learn new emotional reactions (e.g., needing to be enthusiastically positive or needing to repress emotional expressions) that are not acceptable in the host culture.

Cultural and social interaction rules. Although language skills are a vital factor in being able to understand another culture, it is also necessary to learn a wide range of nonverbal communication patterns, including paralinguistic conventions; social interaction patterns; kinesics and proxemics; behavioral communication including gestures, gaze, and postures; emotional communication; interpersonal behavior patterns and rules; and patterns of social reasoning. Successful adaptation requires learning the host culture's styles of relating, communicating, reasoning, managing, and negotiating (e.g., see guidelines in Casse, 1982; Casse & Deol, 1985; Harris & Moran, 1987; Samovar & Porter, 1991).
1991). Flexibility in interpersonal styles and relations is a good general guideline for adaptation (Dodd, 1987).

Cultural adaptation requires understanding and manifesting behaviors that are understood in the host culture. One must accept the fact that cultures and the behavior of their members make sense and are logical, although the rules of logic differ from one’s own culture. Understanding the culture from the participant’s point of view helps to reduce stress and makes it easier to accept. One can learn aspects of a culture by studying publications on cultural and social behavior and norms (e.g., Stewart [1972] on the United States and Condon [1985] on United States-Mexico relations). Studying and reviewing written material and notes about the culture leads to a cognitive mastery that is the “best antidote for cultural shock” (Copeland & Griggs, 1985, p. 200). Participation in the daily life of the host culture is essential for cultural adjustment and adaptation, however, providing the opportunity to learn social behavior patterns by observation, practice, and questioning. For foreigners adapting to the United States, assistance in learning social behavior can be found in Social Skills Training (Furnham & Bochner, 1986) and programs for remedial social skills offered through some counseling centers. Because these types of programs teach basic social skills for Americans, they will directly relate to social skills necessary for social adaptation.

Conflict resolution and intercultural effectiveness skills. Successful adaptation requires accepting the fact that it is normal to face problems in a new culture and seeking solutions for problems instead of denying their existence. Adjustment to cultural shock can be eased by a problem-solving approach that anticipates difficult social situations, analyzes conflicts and identifies problems, develops potential means of resolving unpleasant experiences, and then engages in activities designed to resolve the problem. Harris and Moran (1987) suggested cross-cultural problem solving through describing, analyzing, and identifying the problem from both cultures’ points of view; developing a synergistic strategy; and performing a multicultural assessment of effectiveness. Understanding the inevitable conflicts from the point of view of the host culture is a good way to relax one’s own cultural definition, which views situations as problems. Developing a third cultural perspective (Hammer, Gudykunst, & Wiseman, 1978) different from one’s own culture and the host culture is useful in developing the tolerance of ambiguity and the detachment necessary to avoid being drawn into conflicts.

Effective adaptation requires that one avoid escalating the culture conflict that inevitably occurs in intercultural situations (Bochner, 1982). Attribution research (see Jaspers & Hewstone, 1982, for review) shows that when one does not know the actors or the actors’ reasoning, one tends to attribute the reason for the actors’ behavior to their (negative) personal traits. This attributional tendency has to be controlled in intercultural relations or conflicts will escalate. One should consciously adopt and apply a perceptual framework of cultural attribution that recognizes that culturally different actors are behaving in ways that are correct and meaningful from their cultural perspectives. It is necessary to be nonjudgmental and to practice cultural relativism—recognizing that cultural behavior is reasonable in the context of the cultural individual who produces it.

Because cultural shock derives from the distress of intercultural contact experiences, those abilities that make an individual effective in intercultural communication and adaptation should also reduce cultural shock, especially those aspects that reduce primary aspects of culture shock: stress reactions, communication problems, and disrupted interpersonal and social relations. Dimensions of intercultural effectiveness have been assessed in previous research (Abe & Wiseman, 1983; Hammer, 1987; Hammer et al., 1978). The primary dimensions of intercultural effectiveness include the ability to deal with psychological stress, the ability to communicate effectively, the ability to establish interpersonal relationships, the ability to understand and adjust to another culture, and the ability to deal with different social systems. Cui and Van den Berg (1991) confirmed that these constructs underlie intercultural effectiveness. Their empirical analysis indicated as central communication competence, based on language skills and the ability to initiate, establish, and maintain relationships; cultural empathy, based on tolerance, awareness of cultural differences and an empathy for the culture; and communication behavior, based on appropriate social behavior and display of respect. Such studies on individuals who valued their intercultural experiences positively illustrate that intercultural effectiveness skills not only remediates address cultural shock, but also facilitate cultural adaptation.

SUMMARY

The resolution of cultural shock requires an individual plan that selects among maintenance behaviors, adjustments, and adaptations, depending on personal circumstances, resources, and goals. Resolution of cultural shock is best achieved by a proactive cognitive orientation. An analytical approach that anticipates particular personal conflicts, determines conflict causes, and implements problem-resolution processes is necessary. This requires knowledge about cultural shock and the means of resolving it, combined with knowledge about the cultural values and social relations, particularly those areas in which one will most likely experience the greatest difficulties. Learning culturally appropriate behaviors and implementing problem-resolution procedures provides the basis for effective adaptation.

CONCLUSION

There has been little systematic research to assess the relative effectiveness of a variety of theories explaining cultural shock (Furnham & Bochner, 1986). Nevertheless, Furnham and Bochner (1986) have assessed the ability of various theories to account for both subtle and complicated differences in responses of different groups to cultural shock. They suggest that several theories account for a variety of factors, including locus of control, expectation (expectancy-value), negative life events, social support, and social-skills approaches. Black and Mendenhall (1990) reviewed evidence of the effectiveness of a social-learning approach to cross-cultural adaptation. The suggestions summarized earlier broadly encompass these perspectives. Needed are systematic evaluations of cultural-shock training programs to determine the factors that are most important for different types of individuals and situations.

REFERENCES


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Archetypes and Gender: Goddesses, Warriors, and Psychological Health

Carolyn Zerbe Enns

This article describes the principles and assumptions of Jung’s archetypal psychology and how they have been adopted and modified by feminist counselors and the mythopoetic men’s movement. It critiques each of these revisions of Jungian archetypal psychology and provides suggestions to counselors for modifying and implementing concepts and techniques that are based in archetypal psychology.

During the past decade, archetypal psychology has become the focus of popular psychology and self-help books (Nelson, 1991; Pearson, 1986, 1991; Woolger & Woolger, 1989), best-sellers (Bly, 1990a; Estes, 1992; Keen, 1991), and weekly news magazines (Adler, Duignan-Cabrera, & Gordon, 1991; Adler, Springen, Glick, & Gordon, 1991; Goode, 1992). Jungian archetypal psychology has also been chosen as a theoretical orientation by some feminist therapists (e.g., Bolen, 1984; Young-Eisendrath, 1984) and has provided inspiration to the mythopoetic men’s movement (Bly, 1990a; Keen, 1991; Moore & Gillette, 1990, 1992). The most prominent renditions of archetypal psychology have focused on how archetypal psychology can help individuals create new and more complete models of what it means to be a man or a woman. This article reviews the origins of archetypal psychology, describes and critiques current developments, and considers their implications for counselors.

AN INTRODUCTION TO ARCHETYPES AND THE COLLECTIVE UNCONSCIOUS

The collective unconscious and archetypes represent two concepts that most clearly differentiated Carl Jung’s version of psychoanalysis from the views of his early mentor, Sigmund Freud. Freud (1933) described the unconscious as consisting solely of forgotten or repressed personal experiences and as fueled by primitive, pleasure-seeking, and potentially destructive emotions that needed to be controlled. In contrast, Jung viewed the unconscious as a meaningful source of renewal that “harbors no intention to deceive, but expresses something as best it can, just as a plant grows or an animal seeks its food as best it can” (Jung, 1961, pp. 161–162). Jung divided the unconscious into two domains: (a) the personal unconscious, which is unique to each person; and (b) the collective unconscious, which is a deeper layer of the unconscious that represents an “ancestral heritage of possibilities” and the “true basis of the individual psyche” (Jung, 1931/1960, p. 152). Jung proposed that the collective unconscious consists of archetypes, or primordial images, myths, and evolutionary symbols that represent inborn and universal ways of perceiving and comprehending the world (Jung, 1954/1959a). The archetypes unite humankind through symbols that provide individuals with wisdom about the past and predispose people to experience the world as their ancestors did. Jung stated that “there are as many archetypes as there are typical situations in life. Endless repetition has engraved these experiences into our psychic constitution” (Jung, 1936–1937/1959, p. 48). Although the breadth of archetypal images is vast, Jung devoted special attention to archetypes that are highly important in the shaping of personality and behavior (Hall & Nordby, 1973). They include (a) the persona, which symbolizes the mask one wears to present a desirable impression of the self and to gain social acceptance; (b) the shadow, which personifies the negative, antisocial, animalistic side of each person that must be tamed to avoid destructive personal behavior; (c) the anima, which depicts the unconscious feminine side of the male psyche; and (d) the animus, which expresses the unconscious masculine side of the female psyche. The archetypes of anima-animus and shadow-persona embody opposing qualities that are present within each person. The mature person has integrated these polarities.

As part of a contemporary definition, Bolen (1984) described archetypes as powerful inner patterns or forces that influence what we do and how we feel. Although archetypes are universal, people show a wide diversity of personality styles that are based on their decisions about whether or not they will bring the collective unconscious to the conscious and develop attributes associated with specific archetypes. The activation of an archetype is like the germination and growth of a seed, which depends on soil, climate, nutrients, and the active nurture of a developing plant. One’s self-awareness and personality development are based on one’s willingness to attend to archetypal images and to nourish them (Bolen, 1984).

Jung (1961) stated that archetypes appear most frequently in the myths and primitive lore of cultures and in the myths that “are the first and foremost psychic phenomena that reveal the nature of the soul” (Jung, 1954/1959a, p. 6). Jungian counselors and psychotherapists believe that myths express abstract concepts in stories that ordinary people can understand and that these tales provide metaphors for how people act in real life. When personal dilemmas are mirrored in myths, the stories provide glimpses of “truth,” convey a larger meaning to everyday activities, and inspire deep creativity. Archetypal heroes that appear in these stories serve as role models and help individuals expand their emotional repertoires (Bolen, 1984). Archetypes are also seen as useful tools for diagnosing problems and understanding one’s struggle for mental health because they chronic illness, suffering, struggle, and endurance. They are seen as symbols that help people overcome adversity, reveal prescriptions for change (Nelson, 1991), and encourage ordinary individuals to access the “hero within” (Pearson, 1986).

Archetypes, Women, and Feminism

Archetypes and sexism. Many counselors and psychotherapists who work with women have embraced archetypal psychology because it defines receptivity and the “feminine” instincts as valuable assets for

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making meaning of one's life (Wehr, 1987). Nelson (1991) stated that contemporary women have been pressured to "do it all," and have found their deep feminine values to be questioned and devalued during the past several decades. Archetypal psychology provides a method for revaluing traditional feminine strengths and for healing misunderstandings between men and women. Jung's belief that an unconscious man exists within the woman (animus) and that an unconscious woman exists within the man (anima) implies that masculinity and femininity can be united in a balanced relationship. Feminist authors note, however, that the original formulations of many archetypes convey elements of gender bias and dualistic thinking about masculinity and femininity (Daly, 1978; Goldenberg, 1976; Lauter & Rupprecht, 1985; Romaniello, 1992; Wehr, 1987).

Although Jung's notion that mentally healthy persons have a well-developed anima or animus seems consistent with the goals of androgyny and equality, Jung associated masculinity with rational thought and viewed it as superior to femininity. He attributed a "magical authority" (Jung, 1954/1959b, p. 82) to the "feminine." In contrast to a man's "decisiveness and singleness of purpose," however, Jung associated femininity with characteristics such as "indeterminateness," "passivity," and "feelings of inferiority which make her continually play the innocent" (Jung, 1954/1959b, p. 90). Although a competent woman was thought to possess a well-developed masculine animus, a woman's knowledge, rationality, and objectivity were considered inferior to a man's competence because her animus is less conscious than a man's masculine self. Furthermore, Jung believed that women could become possessed by the animus, a state in which the animus is often corrupted, resulting in hostility, obstinacy, dogmatism, power-driven behaviors, and irrational and opinionated perspectives (Bolen, 1984; Jung, 1943/1953; Young-Eisendrath, 1984). The association of the animus with animosity persists in current dictionary definitions. Although no negative meanings are attached to the term anima, one of the meanings of animus, as identified by the Random House Dictionary (Flexner & Hauck, 1987, p. 82), is "strong dislike or enmity; hostile attitude."

In response to Jung's limiting views of women, contemporary Jungians have attempted to redefine the anima and animus in nonsexist ways. Even when sexist notions are removed, however, the Jungian definition of archetypes as universal and internal encourages individuals to ignore the reality that many aspects of men's and women's experiences are socially constructed rather than biologically based (Lauter & Rupprecht, 1985). Pratt (1985) suggested that the notion that an unconscious man or woman exists within each person's unconscious often leads to smoothness and distortion of human qualities. For example, the person who believes that the internal anima provides information about the full range of female experience may ignore the significance of external circumstances, such as socialization, sexism, and violence, and assume that women's difficulties are caused by internal difficulties or their inability to balance feminine instincts and the masculine animus. This view leads to victim blaming and the belief that "the problems associated with being a man or a woman in the social world will handle themselves" (Pratt, 1985, p. 98). A traditional Jungian framework does not provide a framework for understanding how socialization and institutional structures create personality "types," and offers no critical analysis of how masculine and feminine roles are perpetuated.

Feminist re-visions of archetypal psychology. Some feminist counselors and psychotherapists believe that although some aspects of Jung's theories are sexist, others lend themselves to the integration of feminist and Jungian principles. Consistent with feminist ideals, Jung emphasized that human pain and symptoms represent efforts of the psyche to regain balance and a healthy struggle toward wholeness rather than signs of internal pathology. He viewed individuals as essentially self-regulating and believed that persons move toward maturity through a natural and continuous exchange between the conscious and unconscious. Jung also deemphasized the authority of the analyst and accentuated the importance of the "analysand's" experience, self-understanding, and insight (Lauter & Rupprecht, 1985). Each of these values is consistent with the basic tenets of feminist psychotherapy.

A major problem of traditional Jungian psychology is that the archetypes, myths, and symbols that have inspired the work of many authors and therapists are based on patriarchal myths that undervalue women's experience and reinforce traditional visions of masculinity and femininity. A typical motif in fairy tales depicts the man as engaging in a heroic task, rescuing a woman, and sweeping her into an idyllic existence. In contrast, feminist Jungians have described nonsexist and woman-centered archetypes that can provide concrete and empowering visions of women's social, economic, political, and personal behavior. These liberating archetypes are found in diverse sources such as women's poetry, writing, painting, needlework, dreams, and quilts. In sum, the task of feminist archetypal theory is to redefine women's work of all kinds and to "disentangle feminine archetypes from the masculine warp of culture" (Lauter & Rupprecht, 1985, p. 19).

To accomplish this disentangling task, archetypes must not be viewed as "fixed entities with a life of their own" (Lauter & Rupprecht, 1985, p. 223), but as symbols that are embedded in the socialization and power dynamics of our culture. These images have been absorbed and internalized by men and women and eventually become misconstrued as objective, universal facts. By exploring the myths and experiences of female archetypes, women can see how culture is transmitted unconsciously and how difficult it is to change "realities" that have been accepted for centuries (Wehr, 1987). Women gain awareness of the specific behavior patterns that women have used to cope with their lower status and release self-blame for acting on cultural imperatives in their past experiences (Wehr, 1987). Through this form of "unconsciousness raising" (Pratt, 1985), women gain insights that allow them to transcend constraining roles and persist in their struggle to achieve equality.

Goddess psychology. Some feminists have sought to identify pre-patriarchal archetypes and goddess images as sources of inspiration for women (Wehr, 1987). According to Eissler (1988), early matriarchal societies were based on egalitarian, nonviolent, earth-centered values that revered the Great Mother and goddess figures. Humans lived in harmony with each other, and women exercised greater social power than in later patriarchal societies that led to widespread "spiritual bankruptcy" (Woolger & Woolger, 1989, p. 17).

Greek mythology has become another prominent source for discovering goddess archetypes. Although the goddesses of Greek mythology experienced lower status than did male gods, they also demonstrated greater power and diversity of behavior than women have historically exercised in Western culture and used creative ways of countering the negative aspects of male gods' power (Bolen, 1984; Woolger & Woolger, 1989). Knowledge of the psychic life of Greek goddesses can help women understand themselves and their relationships, as well as what motivates, frustrates, and satisfies them. The different styles and personalities of the Greek goddesses can also help women appreciate the diversity between women and their various means
of achieving fulfillment. Through exposure to these strong and powerful images, women experience greater freedom to search for new emotional and behavioral alternatives (Bolen, 1984).

Woolger and Woolger (1989) suggested that each woman is influenced by a combination of six major goddess types including Athena (intellectual life, wisdom, achievement), Aphrodite (love, intimacy), Persephone (spirit world and mystical experiences), Artemis (adventure, physical world), Demeter (nurturing, motherhood), and Hera (power, leadership). Bolen (1984) divided her list of seven goddesses into the categories of virgin goddesses (Artemis, Athena, Hestia), vulnerable goddesses (Hera, Demeter, Persephone), and a transformative goddess (Aphrodite). These authors encourage women to explore what goddesses they are ruled by, and how the different goddesses facilitate and influence specific developmental stages and turning points in women’s lives (Bolen, 1984; Woolger & Woolger, 1989).

**Limitations and critique.** Some of the feminist revisions of Jungian archetypal psychology have consistently emphasized the importance of seeing all archetypes as socially constructed and caution against essentializing masculinity and femininity (e.g., Lauter & Ruprech, 1985). Nevertheless, the revisions of archetypal psychology that are often referred to as goddess psychology frequently emphasize the special and unique qualities or “instincts” (Estes, 1992) of women that are presumed to be part of their essence. This position is most consistent with cultural feminism, which has focused on how women’s strengths are different from men’s qualities. Cultural feminism seeks to revere and to valorize women’s inner feminine strengths, and to identify ways in which women’s altruistic, cooperative, pacificistic, and life-affirming values can be used to better the world (Donovan, 1992). Tavis (1992) stated that this approach to feminism replaces a “woman-as-deficient” model with a “woman-is-better” alternative, which provokes “animosities across the gender line, instead of alliances” (p. 92).

Efforts to revalue traditional strengths of women can be inappropriately used to create new stereotypes of “woman’s nature” (Mednick, 1989). Goldenberg (1976) cautioned that any fixed or highly defined archetypes, types, or goddesses, limit the behavioral alternatives available to women by establishing new boundaries on women’s experience that can be as constricting as traditional female archetypes. The use of gender-specific archetypes may encourage women to internalize oppression by attributing relational, nurturing skills to innate qualities rather than viewing them as survival mechanisms that help women find meaning in a world in which they hold lower social status (Wehr, 1987). Methods that focus exclusively on looking inward to recover buried images of strength may encourage women to lower their expectations for external and social change (Walters, 1993).

A final criticism of goddess psychology is that women from multicultural backgrounds feel invalidated, excluded, or marginalized by a goddess psychology that is based solely on Greek mythology and the history of White women (Lorde, 1983). True (1990) noted that it is difficult for minority women to identify with “blond, blue-eyed goddesses” (p. 483). Ethnically and racially diverse women, however, often have rich heritages of mythologies in which powerful female images are prominently represented; these images can be used as role models to help women contend with the oppressive aspects of their own cultures and of the dominant White culture (e.g., Allen, 1989; Kingston, 1976; Larrington, 1992; Lorde, 1983). Comas-Diaz (1991) noted that many women of color look to spirituality that is embedded in their own traditions as a form of renewal; culture-specific archetypes can be used to enhance the power and relevance of this spirituality.

**Archetypal Psychology and the Men’s Movement**

A new definition of men’s problems. The popular mythopoetic men’s movement has borrowed extensively from Jungian psychology, and the discussion of myths and archetypes permeates the writings of best-selling authors (e.g., Bly, 1990a; Keen, 1991; Moore & Gillette, 1990, 1992). According to Bly (1990a), the “soft males” that emerged in the wake of the feminist movement and the Vietnam war are “lovely, valuable people” (p. 2) who “are not interested in harming the earth or starting wars” (p. 2) and demonstrate a “gentle attitude toward life” (p. 3). Bly (1990a), however, asserts that many of these men are deeply unhappy, lack energy, and experience little internal freedom. The soft male can empathize, feel pain, and show consideration for the needs of others, but has no access to the fierce resolve and resolve that would allow him to express himself fully. Much of the soft male’s pain was caused by the industrial revolution, which molded fathers into remote creatures who were distanced from their son’s lives. Through isolation from fathers, a loss of male initiation rites, and overidentification with the world of women, men learned to be passive and naive, to follow rather than to lead, and to absorb attacks from others rather than to act decisively (Bly, 1990a; Keen, 1991).

Several authors suggested that the oppression associated with patriarchy has been as painful for men as it has for women and expressed anger at radical feminists who have wounded “an already besieged authentic masculinity” (Moore & Gillette, 1990, p. xvii). According to Moore and Gillette (1990), patriarchy is “an attack on masculinity in its fullness” (p. xvi) and is built on a foundation of “boy psychology,” or immature masculinity that takes the form of “infantile grandiosity” (p. 20), the abuse of power, and the enactment of pretendious fantasies. Under patriarchy, men are unable to act creatively and effectively; their behavior alternates in a vicious cycle marked by passivity or weakness at one extreme and abuse or intimidation of others at the other extreme. By accessing mature masculine archetypes that are embedded deep within each man’s unconscious, however, Keen (1991) indicated that men can overcome the ways in which patriarchy has oppressed them and use positive forms of power to “bless the human community” (p. 21).

Keen (1991) proposed that men have been particularly victimized through performance expectations associated with work, sex, and war. In the work world, men are taught to compete, win, achieve success, and equate economic success with their worth as humans. Keen (1991) compared the bending and breaking of men’s souls as “success objects” (p. 61) to the foot binding of women in China. Moore and Gillette (1990) stated that “it is time for men—particularly men of Western civilization—to stop accepting the blame for everything that is wrong in the world” (pp. 155–156). Keen (1991) added:

> Until women are willing to weep for and accept equal responsibility for the systematic violence done to the male body and spirit by the war system, it is not likely that men will lose enough of their guilt and regain enough of their sensitivity to weep and accept responsibility for women who are raped and made to suffer the indignity of economic inequality. (p. 47)

In addition to naming ways in which women have contributed to men’s pain, Bly (1990a) and Keen (1991) believed that men must identify women’s power over men and escape that power. Keen (1991) proposed that men experience an unconscious bondage to women that is based on goddess or creation power, mother power, and erotic-spiritual power. He stated: “We are enmeshed, incorporated, inwombed, and defined by WOMAN’ and have ‘squandered so much
of our power in trying to control, avoid, conquer, or demean women because we are so vulnerable to their mysterious power over us” (p. 15). Because they lack awareness of women’s power, men spend “a lifetime denying, defining against, trying to control, and reacting to the power of WOMAN” (Keen, 1991, pp. 14–15).

**Solutions to men’s problems.** For men to discover their own identities, Keen (1991) asserted that men must rediscover initiation rites that mark their rejection of immature masculinity and their separation from the world of women. Bly (1990a) used the archetypal myth of Iron John to outline male development and healing experiences for men. At Stage One, the man bonds with and then separates from the mother; second, he bonds with and separates from the father. Third, the man is mentored by the “male mother,” who helps him discover his own greatness or heroic quest. Finally, the man becomes an apprentice to the “hurricane energy” (p. 182) of the “wild man,” who introduces him to a “certain form of spontaneity connected with the wilderness itself” (Bly, 1990b, p. 277).

Before men can be reborn, they must overcome their numbness to their own feelings. They must eschew artificial toughness and acknowledge feelings of emptiness and loneliness within healthy relationships with other men; they must replace false optimism with honesty and give up compulsive activity for a journey into the self. After experiencing grief, men can claim the virtues of wonder, empathy, moral outrage, friendship, enjoyment, meaningful work, ethical behavior, respect for the earth’s resources, appreciation for ritual, and “wildness” (Keen, 1991).

Similar to goddess psychology, the mythopoetic men’s movement has adopted a series of inspirational archetypal images, such as the **warrior**, that will lead to the redefinition of manhood. The warrior archetype is thought to help men practice perseverance, courage, fearlessness, and mastery over their minds and bodies. Men who are in touch with this internal model engage in decisive action, boundary-setting, self-discipline, and self-defense (Bly, 1990b; Moore & Gillette, 1990). Although Moore and Gillette (1990) acknowledge the existence of the shadow warrior who has been responsible for raping conquered women and other acts of abuse, they are convinced that when fully developed, the warrior becomes a positive model of mature masculine energy that overcomes the “soft masculine” (p. 75).

Other images of positive manliness include the **king**, **lover**, **magician**, and **wild man**, each of which plays a special role in male development (Bly, 1990a; Moore & Gillette, 1990). The warrior provides men with the skills of self-discipline and self-defense; the lover encourages passion and creativity; the magician allows individuals to mediate between spiritual realms and ordinary events; and as procreator and structurer, the king exudes confidence, makes decisions effectively, and helps men organize other archetypes within themselves. When all four archetypes are expressed appropriately, men are thought to live fully integrated lives (Moore & Gillette, 1990).

**Limitations and critique.** Although authors such as Bly, Moore, Gillette, and Keen claim that the mythopoetic men’s movement is consistent with the aims of the feminist movement, both feminist women and proflaminist men have charged that this movement obscures the critical issues facing men and women or represents a backlash against efforts to equalize men’s and women’s power (e.g., Faludi, 1991; Kimmel, 1991; Walters, 1993). A major criticism of the mythopoetic movement arises from its use of archetypes that are more likely to reinforce traditional masculinity rather than to allow for more flexible patterns of behavior. The reformulated, romantic, idealized images of the wild man, king, and warrior are designed to help men affirm their virility, decisiveness, heroic qualities, and power. Archetypes that demonstrate compassion, caring, and empathy are largely absent. Moore and Gillette’s (1990) description of the warrior stated that:

> He is emotionally distant as long as he is in the warrior. . . . He does not make his decisions and implement them out of emotional relatedness to anyone or anything except his ideal. . . . He looks at his tasks, his decisions, and his actions dispassionately and unemotionally. (pp. 85–86)

This description is highly consistent with the existing patriarchal heroes of our culture. Ruth (1990) described these heroes as the following:

**Soldiers (warriors), cops and detectives (warriors against crime), cowboys (pioneer warriors against bad guys, Indians) warriors of the untamed environment), tough doctors (warriors against disease, ignorance, or the hospital administration), and rough but basically good crooks (warriors against . . . fill in the blanks).** (p. 47)

It is rare for the warrior hero to demonstrate affective qualities such as delicacy, emotional fearlessness, need, or tenderness, “qualities that would render him unfit for battle” (Ruth, 1990, p. 47). It is unlikely that images of warriors and wild men and experiences of fierceness will help men feel more positively about sharing power with women in the work world, become more comfortable with emotions related to vulnerability and responsiveness, or assume greater responsibility for providing emotional nourishment to the next generation.

In choosing new initiation rites for warriors, the mythopoetic men’s movement has borrowed heavily from Native American traditions, traditions that warriors of European descent attempted to crush through colonization (Walters, 1993). The current adoption of Native American warrior traditions by a primarily White, middle class group of men seems somewhat inauthentic and at worst could represent a new form of colonization. The use of these traditions must be matched by efforts to avoid borrowing these traditions merely as a form of convenience.

A second criticism of the mythopoetic men’s movement focuses on what some see as misplaced blame for men’s pain. Bly (1990a) attributed men’s lack of manliness to the lack of fathering in their lives; fathers have often been negligent, abusive, or absent. Rather than elaborating on fathers’ contributions to this problem and the ongoing socialization factors that reinforce existing patterns, Bly (1990a) emphasized the role of women in promoting men’s “softness.” Mothers are blamed for trying too hard, for overidentifying with their male children, stifling their independence, feminizing boys, and creating a codependent relationship with them (Doubiago, 1992). This analysis borders on the type of mother blaming that permeated the psychological literature several decades ago and gave rise to phrases such as “momism” and the “schizophrenogenic mother” (Caplan, 1989).

The description of men as soft and overly dependent on women runs counter to feminist developmental theories of Chodorow (1978) and Dinnerstein (1976), who proposed that because women are primary parents in our culture, girls learn to define themselves like their mothers, or in relational terms, and boys learn to define themselves as different from their mothers, or in separate terms. In contrast, Bly (1990a, 1990b) believed that men are too closely connected to others and too influenced by others’ needs because they are raised and influenced by women. Chodorow (1978) suggested that family structures can only become more egalitarian if patriarchal-capitalistic systems are overhauled and
shared parenting practices are implemented. The male initiation story described by Bly, however, is likely to reinforce the tradition of distance, separation, and inequality: the boy seeks, the mother holds him back, and the girl represents the prize (Caputi & MacKenzie, 1992; Johnston, 1992). The mother stays at home and lets go while the male mentor shows the boy how to survive in the larger world. The success of this solution is contingent on women playing their traditional roles at home, which merely reinforces the status quo.

The theme of men as oppressed individuals and victims permeates much of the mythopoetic men’s movement literature. Many psychologists acknowledge that men have experienced pain and stunted growth due to the rigidity of their socialization. They have been oppressed by each other for straying from traditional gender roles. Some women have also colluded in maintaining traditional roles to preserve a life that feels safer and more secure than its alternative. The claims of oppression seem overstated, however, when held up against current realities: Approximately one fourth of all women are sexually assaulted during a lifetime; about one half of all working women experience sexual harassment at some point in their careers; domestic violence represents one of the highest causes of physical injury to women; and working women complete 75% of household tasks during their “second shifts” (Hochschild, 1989; Steinem, 1992). Rather than blaming radical feminists for hurting men, it would seem more productive for men to acknowledge their historical male privilege and power that has become so automatic or unconscious that it is difficult to recognize (Starhawk, 1992). To avoid uninformed blaming, Gill (1992) indicated that a complete analysis of men’s and women’s experience must focus on defining male privilege, making tacit assumptions explicit, exploring what positions it forces men and women into, and understanding how it both grants men power and “cracks a great price” (p. 152). The first step to freedom for men is not through the reassertion of power and privilege but through letting go of privilege and sharing both highly valued and undervalued life experiences with women (Starhawk, 1992).

A final criticism of the mythopoetic men’s movement is that it proposes only individual solutions to social problems that require the overhaul of social institutions. Spretnak (1992) identified this approach as “treating the symptoms, ignoring the cause” (p. 169), and bell hooks (1992) charged that masculinity is “utterly depoliticized” by the mythopoetic men’s movement (p. 113). The increased permission that many men have felt to explore their inner experiences and to experience emotional closeness with other men is certainly an important positive contribution of the mythopoetic men’s movement. Nevertheless, male bonding, personal self-actualization, and efforts to tap the deep masculine spirit within must also be linked to commitments to social change and to the creation of equitable power relationships in the family and in the workplace.

The criticisms of the popular mythopoetic men’s movement should not be read as efforts to discount men’s emotional pain. Empirical research documents that gender-role strain and conflict in men are linked to depression in college men (Good & Mintz, 1990); lower psychological well-being (Sharpe & Hepner, 1991); and physical strain, physical illness, or poor self-care (Stillson, O’Neil, & Owen, 1991). It is also important to avoid confusing the popular men’s movement with men’s efforts as psychologists and counselors to identify restrictive aspects of men’s roles and redefine masculinity in a manner that is consistent with the goals of feminism and egalitarianism (e.g., O’Neil, 1981; Pleck, 1981). Profeminist efforts of men that complement the women’s movement identify women as potential allies, refuse to divide human experience into masculine and feminine categories, explore ways for men to take on undervalued nurturing roles as well as warrior and hero roles, avoid blaming women for men’s softness, focus on the importance of social-structural change, and engage in antiviolence activities that seek justice for both women and men (Reuther, 1992).

IMPLICATIONS AND APPLICATIONS FOR COUNSELORS

Each of the previous sections notes that archetypal psychology has assisted men and women to tap previously unacknowledged aspects of themselves but also tends to reinforce traditional gender differences or dualistic thinking by suggesting that there is a genetically coded, innate biological essence that defines sex and gender. Although Woodman (1992) argued that the Jungian concepts of femininity and masculinity are not bound to the physiological aspects of sex, the very labeling of certain qualities as masculine or feminine encourages individuals to see certain traits as opposites, which may lead to selective perception and distortions of the actual behaviors of men and women. For example, when a quality is labeled “masculine,” observers are cued to see that trait in men and are likely to remain less aware of the so-called “feminine” traits that are also exhibited by the same person. Numerous psychological studies demonstrate that men and women are far more similar than different; statistical differences between men and women are often “trivially small and useless in predicting differential behavior” (Unger & Crawford, 1992, p. 69). Thus, revaluing important human qualities in both women and men may be more important than identifying gender-specific archetypes. Counselors should be cautious about using myths and archetypes that magnify gender differences or seem to limit the behavioral and emotional repertoires of individuals. Counselors should convey to clients the complexity and diversity of normal human behavior and encourage them to think creatively about how they want to define themselves.

Instead of drawing on the highly gendered images of some Jungian approaches, counselors may want to use some archetypal images that are not highly linked to sex and gender. For example, Pearson (1986) described the archetypes of warrior, magician, orphan, innocent, wanderer, and martyr as human qualities that can be found in all people and modified to fit their specific needs. The orphan image helps the individual get in touch with abandonment and betrayal; the innocent archetype connects the person to trust and safety; the wanderer helps the person understand loneliness and alienation; the warrior increases one’s awareness of achievement and assertiveness options; the martyr heightens the person’s awareness of sacrifice and responsibility; and the magician allows the person to encounter wisdom and creativity. These metaphors allow both men and women to identify with the vulnerability of the orphan as well as the power of the warrior.

Although gender-neutral archetypes are useful, there are occasions when it is helpful for women to see heroism in other women and men to see heroism in other men. Gender-specific images of men and women are most likely to be useful when the archetypes model resistance to cultural mandates about masculinity and femininity. Noble (1990) indicated that our images of heroic women are “impoohaalzed” (p. 5) because heroines are frequently portrayed as passive or as “the prize to be won or fought over, the maiden in distress” (p. 7). Given the limited images of women and men in fairy tales, it is important for counselors and clients to identify contemporary archetypal models who defy stereotypes. One potential source of contemporary archetypes may be found in autobiographical and biographical accounts of diverse groups of women and men. Counselors may wish to assign the reading of such materials as a form of bibliotherapy. Through the reading of these accounts, clients become aware of new possibilities in themselves by vicariously experiencing how others have resisted cultural mandates of
masculinity-femininity, overcome adversity, and become active agents on their own behalf.

In their use of archetypes as metaphors, counselors should consider drawing on the personal experiences of clients and the myths associated with their traditions. Clients can be asked to identify favorite fairy tales and mythical characters. Alternatively, clients can be encouraged to describe role models that they have become acquainted with through actual interaction, in the media, or in biographies. Through guided questions and reflection, clients may identify strengths and limitations of their favorite character, what attracts them to this image, how this person deals with adversity as well as triumph, and how this individual transcends stereotypes and establishes his or her individuality.

Clients can also create their own mythic journey (Keen & Valley-Fox, 1989) by describing or drawing themselves as they would like to be. After noting important qualities of their ideal image, they can be asked to identify characters from books, television, or fairy tales that exhibit similar qualities. By shuttling between their own ideal images and their visions of cultural archetypes, clients can begin generating personal goals and objectives for themselves. A major goal of using personal archetypes is to help individuals create their own stories. In his book titled Every Person's Life Is Worth a Novel, Polster (1987) suggested that personal storytelling is about "transforming the ordinary into the remarkable" (p. 8). Through storytelling, individuals begin to recognize the drama of their own lives, see themselves as protagonists rather than as pawns, and experience the courage to change.

Fantasy, imagery, drawing, writing, dramatic enactment, and internal dialogue represent some of the many tools that counselors can use to help clients interact with archetypal images. For example, active imagination can be used to create the characteristics of an archetype as well as to engage in dialogue with, seek advice from, and claim the power of a tangible image. Role playing can be used in groups to help clients dramatize aspects of themselves that are difficult to verbalize. The tool of acting "as if" can be used to encourage the clients to try out new behaviors without feeling that they must enact an archetype in well-developed form. The tools of gestalt therapy that use awareness training, dialogue, and enactment may also be integrated with these activities.

In sum, the metaphors of archetypal psychology provide a variety of concrete images that can be used to enrich counselors' use of symbols and rituals in counseling (see also Ardringer, 1992; Combs & Freedman, 1990; Imber-Black & Roberts, 1992). When clients with weak or fragmented identities project themselves on images that they can identify with, these tangible symbols can serve as transitional objects that help individuals experience greater self-certainty and self-esteem (Hill, 1992). The developmental paths of most mythical archetypes include crisis, joy, suffering, and persistence. When clients project themselves into such a journey, they are able to imagine how human struggle is a necessary step toward resolving problems. This helps them normalize their issues and feel hopeful about the outcome of their human struggles (Pearson, 1986).

CONCLUSION

Many Americans have adopted Jung's archetypal, mystical psychology as a way of dealing with their disenchantment with the limited answers provided by science and technology, the paucity of positive and heroic role models in their lives, and the fragmentation of 20th century living. People have also increasingly recognized the limited nature of the earth's resources and the incomplete satisfaction associated with pursuing materialistic goals. In the midst of decreasing material resources, many individuals may be interested in psychologies that emphasize the importance of "meaning making," the soul, or spirituality. The ordinary events and struggles of life take on meaning when they are seen within the context of a story or a life path that is inspired by archetypes, myths, or real-life role models. Pain is no longer an overwhelming obstacle, but can provide a catalyst for growth. Archetypal psychology invites the person to look inside themselves for the hero within, and to place less faith in materialism and external satisfactions. For those individuals who are seeking an approach to counseling that emphasizes the soul, archetypal psychology may be particularly useful (Goode, 1992; Pearson, 1986).

On a cautionary note, many aspects of feminist Jungian psychology and the mythopoetic men's movement treat gender as a highly salient, internal aspect of men's and women's beings without paying adequate attention to social and cultural factors that influence the inner self. Counselors who desire to draw on the concrete metaphorical images of archetypal psychology should attempt to balance their use of gender-specific archetypes with those that transcend gender associations.

REFERENCES

Once-Married Lesbians: Facilitating Changing Life Patterns

Karen L. Bridges and James M. Croteau

Many women have undergone a significant life transition from a heterosexual marriage to a lesbian life pattern. As facilitators of life transitions, counselors can play an important role in minimizing the pain and maximizing the growth involved in such a change. This article provides counselors with information about the diversity of this life transition and then discusses three areas in which counselors may facilitate this process by helping clients to (a) develop a positive identity as a lesbian, (b) adapt to their relationships with women partners, and (c) deal with work-related issues arising from the changed life pattern.

We come from many parts: out of the Left, out of the ghetto, out of the Holocaust, out of the churches, out of the marriage, out of the gay movement, out of the closet, out of the much darker closet of long-term suffocation of our love of women. (Rich, 1977, p. 2)

Although the diversity of lesbian experience has begun to be documented (Bell & Weinberg, 1978; Faderman, 1991; Falco, 1991), the counseling literature remains particularly scarce on one group of lesbians, those who have been previously involved in a heterosexual marriage. Several sources have established this lesbian subgroup as a sizable minority. For example, Bell and Weinberg (1978) found that more than a third of their sample of 229 White lesbians and almost half of their sample of 64 Black lesbians had been married at least once. In her 4-year study of 201 lesbians in London, England, Ettorre (1980) established that 23.9% had been married before.

Despite the magnitude of the once-married lesbian population, published information on this subgroup is sparse. We found only one empirical study that concentrated specifically on once-married lesbians (Charbonneau & Lander, 1991; reviewed later in this article). Another study (Wyers, 1987), which addressed the marital and parental behaviors of both lesbian women and gay men who were separated or divorced from heterosexual spouses, provided additional empirically based information. The remainder of the information available on this group is found in brief references embedded in research, theory, or practice literature concerning lesbians in general. No published literature has focused primarily on counseling this subgroup of lesbians. Therefore, uniquely, this article extrapolates from the sparse literature about once-married lesbians as well as from literature about lesbians in general to provide counselors with information that will be useful to them in understanding and easing this important life transition.

In the first section of this article, we explore the change in life pattern from heterosexual marriage to lesbian identity with a focus on the diversity of experience among once-married lesbians. With such insight into the different ways this change may occur, counselors are better prepared to facilitate the transition. In the second section of this article, we discuss three areas in which counselors may assist once-married lesbians: (a) helping clients develop a positive lesbian identity, (b) helping clients adapt to their relationships with women partners, and finally, (c) helping clients deal with work-related issues arising from their changed life pattern.

DIVERSITY OF EXPERIENCE AMONG ONCE-MARRIED LESBIANS

Falco (1991), in her book about psychotherapy with lesbian clients, stated that because lesbians come from all socioeconomic classes, educational levels, religions, races, upbringing, and career directions, no single description fits lesbians as a group. Although the once-married lesbian population may be as diverse regarding these variables, these women are also undergoing or have undergone a transition from a heterosexual to a lesbian life pattern that can be quite varied in and of itself. This section helps counselors recognize and understand how diverse this experience can be by (a) exploring the reasons for heterosexual marriage among lesbians, (b) discussing possible paths that lesbians take in shifting from a heterosexual to lesbian life pattern, and (c) presenting various life events that once-married lesbians remember as turning points that supported the process of change.

Reasons for Marriage Among Lesbians

Theoretical and empirical literature have identified several reasons accounting for the fact that women who presently identify themselves as lesbians were once involved in heterosexual marriages. Female socialization has often been cited as one of these reasons. Gramick (1984), who investigated social factors influencing lesbian identity development through interviews with 97 lesbian women, noted that during adolescence women are often socialized into heterosexual social behavior by a strong emphasis on heterosexual dating. She stated the following:

Repression or even denial of same-sex feelings and attractions may result from societal expectations, particularly from family and peers, of heterosexual patterns. Because she operates primarily in the heterosexual and heterosocial world, which insists that female sexual satisfaction is dependent upon a male, she does not recognize her own homosexual sources. She may even marry heterosexually or become physically involved with a male. (p. 34)

Lesbian activist and writer Rich (1980) labeled this societal training of women as "compulsive heterosexuality." One theorist of lesbian identity formation posited that this training may cause women to disregard cues, such as emotional attachments to women, that might lead them to seek other women as sexual partners (Elliott, 1985).

In addition to heterosexual socialization, other reasons have been given for the high incidence of marriage among lesbians. In her account...
of lesbian life, Lewis (1979) cited a lack of awareness of the concept of homosexuality as a reason why lesbians often marry. Green and Clunis (1989), who wrote about their experience doing therapy with married women who are also involved in lesbian relationships, added economic factors to the list of reasons to explain why lesbians marry. They stated that especially prior to the 1960s there was little support for many of these women to pursue a career. This left such women vulnerable to poverty and often dependent on men for financial survival, a situation that is not altogether uncommon today.

In her review of studies comparing divorced lesbian mothers and their children with divorced heterosexual mothers and their children, Kirkpatrick (1988) reported that most of the lesbian women in these studies married for the same reasons as the majority of their heterosexual counterparts, i.e., for love of their husband and desire for marriage. The lesbians did not report coerced marriages or marriages of convenience, but desired marriage (p. 202). She also reported that the marriages in which the wife was lesbian were no more conflicted than were heterosexual marriages and endured for the same average length of time. Wyers (1987) exploratory research concerning the marital and parenting behavior of 66 lesbian and gay men who were separated or divorced from their heterosexual spouses supported Kirkpatrick’s observations. He found that love of the other-sexed spouse was the second main reason why lesbian wives married, personal and social expectation to marry being the first reason.

Counselors need to be aware of the various reasons for heterosexual marriage among this population. Without such an understanding, counselors can too easily make simplistic assumptions about why a particular client married in the first place. An understanding of how a particular client came to marriage is an important first step toward an accurate understanding of the transition process.

Two Explanations for the Shift in Sexuality

Counselors can begin to picture the transition itself from the only study that intentionally focused on the once-married lesbian population (Charbonneau & Lander, 1991). Charbonneau and Lander interviewed 30 women who had spent half their adult life as heterosexuals, married and had children, and then in midlife became lesbian. The authors reported that these women explained the shift in sexuality in two general ways. One group described the change as a process of self-discovery. Because these women felt they had always been lesbian, but had not known it before, they found the transition to lesbianism immediately satisfying and very natural, like a “ship coming into harbor” (p. 42). Although this self-discovery group had been very committed to the idea of the nuclear family and motherhood, they had not been deeply involved in the sexual aspects of heterosexuality. They also were relatively quiet and cautious about sharing their new identity with family and friends.

The second group of women was more political and regarded their change more as a choice among several options of being lesbian, bisexual, celibate, or heterosexual. These women stayed more connected to men and had more difficulty adjusting sexually to being lesbian than did the self-discovery group. The members of this group also were consciously looking for more egalitarian relationships and showed more involvement in women’s culture and politics. They were more vocal about their new identity to their former husbands, children, and colleagues.

These two paths identified by Charbonneau and Lander (1991) can provide counselors with some initial guidance in helping clients make sense of and direct their own transitions. They show clients and counselors that there are different frameworks by which a client may construct her transition. As with any research in which general patterns are found among a group, these two paths must be used as general guides that open possibilities and not as definitive categories into which all clients must neatly fit.

Several Turning Points That Supported Change

In working with a once-married lesbian client, it will become evident that the transition from heterosexual marriage to lesbianism occurs in the context of certain life events. Charbonneau and Lander (1991) found that their sample of midlife once-married lesbians experienced five types of life events that supported their transitions. One typical life event that served as a turning point was a serious illness of a parent or oneself that led these women to look at their lives more carefully and decide how they wanted to spend their remaining years. Another transitional life event for some women was when they left their marriages and reevaluated their expectations of relationships with men. These women had grown up believing in marriage and had derived much of their identity from the role of heterosexual wife and mother. Following their separation, they often got the chance to be independent for the first time and to plan for their own needs. Some of these lesbians experienced a period of celibacy when they worried if they could have meaningful relationships with men. This period was the third contextual life event cited by the researchers during which women often became intensely involved with other activities and realized they could be happy and productive without men in their lives. The impact of the women’s movement was the fourth contextual event framing the change. Reading feminist books, working on issues such as abortion and violence toward women, attending women’s studies classes, consciousness-raising groups, concerts, and cultural events all provided circumstances for change. Rethinking the lesbian stereotype was a final and very important common turning point for women making the transition to becoming lesbian. Charbonneau and Lander (1991) stated the following:

A theme that emerged from the interviews concerns the distorted view of lesbians with which all the women had grown up. Most of the women assumed that lesbians were so foreign that there could be no possible connection. The moment, then, at which each woman recognized a lesbian as less alien was significant. (p. 40)

These five types of contextual events illustrate the range of situations that can occur in a client’s life that may stimulate or support reconsideration of one’s life pattern. Counselors need to recognize this variety so they can help clients maximize their opportunities for constructive self-evaluation and emotional support amidst transition.

FACILITATING THE TRANSITION

Schlossberg (1984), a significant contributor to theory concerning adult life transitions, has described change and transition as universal adult experiences. She has asserted, however, that it is not the actual transitional event that creates difficulty for an individual, but rather the event’s impact on one’s relationships, routines, roles, and assumptions about oneself and the world. Because a change from heterosexual marriage to a lesbian sexual orientation touches all of these areas, coping with this particular transition may be especially difficult. In their book about counseling lesbian women and gay men, Moses and Hawkins (1982) noted some of the emotions that newly divorced gay and lesbian parents may experience.

There may be relief about being out of the marriage, joy at being able to express one’s sexual and affectional feelings, guilt about feeling happy in a situation that is painful for others, fear of what it means to be
They have learned and accepted the negative social view of gayness and apply it to themselves and others who are gay. Those who are struggling with self-definition are almost always struggling with their perception of what it means to be gay, in terms either of mental health or of how they think they will have to live and act. (p. 84)

The once-married lesbian’s struggle to unlearn negative views of lesbian orientation can occur several ways. Charbonneau and Lander (1991) described how the once-married lesbian women in their study experienced a change in their perceptions of lesbians.

Another participant in the study was stimulated toward self-exploration when her older married sister became a lesbian. The authors continued their examples.

A characteristic of all these examples from once-married lesbians was exposure to more accurate and affirming notions about lesbianism that contradicted previously learned negative notions. This positive contact can take the form of information taught directly by the counselor, books, music, and especially by meeting other lesbian women. Both Cass (1979) and Sophie (1982), in widely cited models of identity development, saw positive contact with other lesbians as playing the primary role in moving to full acceptance of a same-sex orientational identity.

A primary task for the counselor is to help these women to plan contact with people and resources that will help them change their negative and inaccurate perceptions about lesbians. Therefore, counselor knowledge of resources such as books, support groups, community events, and peer counseling is vital. Counselors of once-married lesbians may find helping to plan such contact especially difficult because a heterosexual marriage situation may have isolated such women from contact with lesbians or lesbian-affirmative resources to a greater extent than nonmarried clients. Furthermore, once-married lesbian clients may see themselves as more alien to the lesbian community than their nonmarried counterparts because of their recent involvement in marriages that so clearly defined them as heterosexual.

In her suggestions to therapists working with women who are having difficulty accepting their lesbianism, Sophie (1988) encouraged the use of cognitive restructuring to change negativity toward lesbianism. Negative beliefs about lesbians can be uncovered and challenged in therapy. For example, the once-married lesbian may express strong reservations about any contact with the lesbian community because she thinks the women she meets will be “different” from her. The counselor who asks the client to explore expected differences may hear such negative stereotypes as the fact that lesbians are “unfeminine,” “too political,” or “militant.” These stereotypes can then be examined and questioned as appropriate.

Narrow definitions of sexual orientation. In addition to their own internalized negative beliefs, once-married lesbians may also have